

The Lenham Focus

AUGUST 2025 issue



Green Room Concerts *p4-5*
Kent Loves... 5th Anniversary *p8-9*
Crazy Golf World Championships
p12-13

Stay Scam-Savvy *p20*
Art Society programme *p57*
Girl-guiding *p73*

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Editorial

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

The fabulous **Green Room concerts** are back in Lenham this month from 29th-31st August, performing in the lovely Tithe Barn. On Friday 29th world famous saxophonist **Leo Green** is fronting the **Van Morrison Alumni band** – not to be missed – and this is followed by a series of **concerts** and a **classic car** meet during the rest of the weekend. Even better, as a **FOCUS** reader, you claim a 10% discount on all tickets. Full details inside.

Also at the Tithe Barn in August, there's the **Changeling Theatre's production of Shakespeare's Twelfth Night** to look forward to. And on the same day (16th August) we have the annual **Lenham Garden Show** in the community centre. Plan carefully and do both!

Congratulations to our local shop and designers' outlet '**Kent Loves...**' which celebrated its 5th anniversary in July with a party, competition and raffle. *Focus* donated

a raffle prize worth £50 – a voucher towards a night out at The Wishful Thinker.

Also inside, we cover the **World Crazy Golf championships** – and the chairman of the British Minigolf Association, Martin Greenhead, lives right here in Lenham.

Heathlands! Read the latest update from your parish council on developments following the recent events held in our village and hosted by Maidstone Borough Council.

David Jackson | Editor

Save the Date – 4-11th October

The **Maidstone Literary Festival** is back with a line up of big names and best sellers to put on your summer reading list. Join acclaimed actress and bestselling author *Celia Imrie* and director and writer *Fidelis Morgan* for a compelling discussion about their collaboration on *Meet Me at Rainbow Corner*, a novel inspired by true stories from wartime London.



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Circulation 2,300 to Lenham Village (plus shops, library, pubs etc.), Lenham Heath, Platts Heath, Sandway, West Street, Woodside Green, Warren Street and to various Harrietsham outlets.

Copy Deadline:

By 1st of the preceding month to editorialslf@outlook.com or by phone/text on **07714 311008**. Photos of the village and local events are welcome.

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Green Room is back!

GREEN
ROOM

**August 29th – 31st at the
beautiful Tithe Barn, Lenham**

Van Morrison Alumni Band will be opening the festival at 19.30 on Friday 29 August. The Van Morrison Alumni Band is a remarkable ensemble of all-star musicians, who have between them accompanied Van Morrison in more than 2500 concerts around the world.

2025 coincides with the year of Sir Van's 80th birthday, and we are so lucky that **Leo Green**, saxophonist and long time collaborator has agreed to bring this project to Green Room with Sir Van's personal endorsement, underscoring its authenticity and significance

Saturday 30 August sees the return of the ever popular **Bach to Baby** with music for the whole family at 11.00. All ages, 0-100, welcome. This will be followed later at 19.30 by something a little bit different as we transform the barn into a 1920s cinema.



Sit back, relax and watch 3 iconic silent films, on our very own cinema silver screen. Broadcaster **Neil Brand** introduces alongside three of the greatest ever silent comedians, Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton and Harold Lloyd, who will come together for one awesome show. Neil, considered one of the finest improvising piano accompanists in the world, will tell the stories behind these iconic slapstick classics and accompany on the piano



in his inimitable style. This Comedy Triple Bill, 'The Rink', 'The High Sign' and 'Never Weaken', represent the Golden Age of silent comedy and is a guaranteed laugh-maker for a Saturday night!

Sunday 31 August is now 'Jazz Sunday' at Green Room – whether you like your jazz energetic or chilled, we have a brilliant selection. Back by popular demand for 'Second Helpings' is **Jay Rayner and his Sextet** for brunch at 11.00 bringing jazz into some of their favourite 80s classics.

Then it's the **Classic Car Meet** from 13.30, accompanied by live music and great refreshments. An addition to our Sunday schedule this year is a tea-time gig by the brilliant 'The Dime Notes'. New Orleans jazz, with the propulsive grooves and sultry melodies from these guys who perform to critical acclaim all

over the world. "Swings from start to finish" – JUST JAZZ.

And finally, we will be welcoming the fabulous **Joe Stilgoe and The Entertainers** to close our festival at 19.30, fresh from sell-out shows at Cadogan Hall, Birdland New York, Cheltenham Jazz Festival and Ronnie Scotts.

'So from the moment you step into the barn it will feel like the greatest night at the greatest jazz club on earth'.
We cannot wait!

As readers of the Lenham Focus, we would like to offer you a 10% discount on tickets, please just enter the code LENHAM10. For tickets and more information go to our website: greenroomconcerts.com

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NEXT SESSION 21st August (1:30–3pm) Lenham Community Centre

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Kent Loves... celebrates fifth birthday!

Made in Kent, with Love



Kent Loves..., the fabulous treasure trove located at 11 High Street, has turned 5 years old. The shop opened on 5th July 2020 and owner Jo Glazebrook is thrilled that it's gone from strength to strength.

The birthday celebrations over the weekend of 5th and 6th July were delightful, assisted by glorious summer weather. The Town Crier attended, with bunting and balloons creating a suitably party atmosphere. Cakes, strawberries, wines, and soft drinks were offered; with seating in front of the shop and in the courtyard, there were plenty of spots to enjoy a drink.

Several makers from the shop demonstrated their crafts, including stained glass, crocheting, resin shell production, ceramics and natural & vegan skincare products. It was wonderful to see the makers in action. Jo had arranged a kids' colouring competition, offering £10 Kent Loves... vouchers as prizes.

There was a fabulous raffle, with over 25 prizes donated by the designers from the



On the left is Jo, proud owner of Kent Loves... and on the right is Sue from Mulberry Glass Art

shop, plus a £50 voucher for the Wishful Thinker donated by The Lenham Focus. The raffle was extremely popular and raised a wonderful sum, with proceeds donated to two local families affected by a house fire in Douglas Road in June.

Looking for a new challenge, Jo had a 'light bulb moment' late one night and the idea of **Kent Loves...** was born – to offer space to local designers who don't need a whole shop; they just need a shelf to sell their crafts. The shop opened with an initial roster of 20 designers.

The birthday party weekend was a great celebration of this Lenham gem. Let's look back at the history of this delightful shop.

Since opening, designers have come and gone, which means that there is always something fresh on the shelves. The shop has grown to showcase 75 makers, all based in Kent and many local to Lenham. Over the years, Jo has supported 127 makers in total! The shop's reputation is such that designers now come to Jo, rather than the other way around. Many of the makers choose to work a shift in the shop.

Jo is committed to evolving the business whilst also offering a great variety of goods for sale. Behind the shop, there's a courtyard with a separate room; once used to serve afternoon teas, it now houses beautiful Frenchic chalk paints.

The flower-filled courtyard has been transformed with outdoor cushions and garden items from Your Paradise at Home and Jo will soon sell coffee, making it a perfect shopping pit stop.

Kent Loves Catering, run by Anna Livesey alongside Jo, provides catering services for functions in the local area. They offer delicious bespoke spreads for any occasion, gaining new customers through word of mouth.

Jo places significant emphasis on supporting the local community any way that she can. She has made afternoon

teas for individuals as recommended by the Parish Council, she is a great supporter of local charities The Friends of St Mary's and Lenham Meadows Trust, selling their products and event tickets, she supports Wooden Tots Nursery with donations, operates a well-received community library book swap and has provided a work experience placement for a student from The Lenham School. She is an advocate for supporting small local businesses and is keen to collaborate to try to ensure that we have a vibrant Lenham high street that is a draw for locals and visitors.

Shops may come and go, but it is safe to say that Kent Loves... is here to stay.



Outside of the shop

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Lenham Meadows Trust

Countryside and community

Updates from the Trust

We have a new Membership Secretary who will be looking after new and renewal memberships to the Trust.

So it's a big welcome to **Tracey McIntyre** – to get in touch with Tracey about your membership or to discuss new membership opportunities, please email: **tracey_mcintyre_uk@hotmail.com**

'Kent Loves...' now stocks duck food!

Looking to feed the ducks? Our special mix of duck and wildfowl food is now available at two High Street outlets: From 'Kent Loves....' and from the parish council office. Still only 50p a bag, with all profits going to the Trust.



Following our hugely successful – and first – *Lenham Meadows Trust quiz* last month, we are now making detailed plans for the October apple-pressing fun day. As always, we need volunteers to help organise this and to help on the day.

If you can help, please email our chairman, Danny Matthews, at: **chairman@lenhammeadowstrust.org** who would love to hear from you.

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



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It's not-so-Crazy Golf!



Martin Greenhead

You may think that 'crazy golf' is a pastime to keep the children amused at the seaside.

Not so! Crazy Golf – or Minigolf as it's more accurately called – is a serious sport played in a highly competitive way and in international competitions. And here, based in Lenham, we have the Chair of the British Minigolf Association, Martin Greenhead.

Martin has been playing competitively since 2011, ever since he played at the Hastings pirate adventure golf course and now represents Great Britain internationally.

He explains: 'Whilst the game is great fun and has a great community atmosphere, it is also a serious and skilled sport. I have just returned from the World Minigolf Championships held in Gothenburg, Sweden where over 100 representatives from countries from as far away as the USA, Portugal and Japan played games over a two-week period to claim the world title.

I was one of two teams of four players representing the UK and claimed a place in the top 10 finalists.'

'Tournaments take place across the globe organised via the World Minigolf

Federation and sponsored by 'Urban Crazy', a company that builds crazy-golf courses.

I have recently played in Portugal and I will be competing in the British Open championships in Hastings on 27th and 28th September 2025 where I hope to guarantee my spot in the world adventure golf tour finals.

Next year, I'll be off to a competition in Germany. We're even working on an application to get the sport recognised for the Olympic Games. '

Martin, ranked number 3 in Great Britain, works as an accountant for BP and spends most of his holidays touring with the UK team and loves every minute of it. Media interest has been high with reports of the game in The Times and The Daily Mirror plus a feature on Good Morning Britain.

There are several courses in Kent if you want to give it a go. As well as several courses in Hastings, there are sites at Leeds Castle, The Ridge golf course and Margate.



To find out more, go to the British Minigolf Association's website at www.bmga.online or contact **Martin** directly at martin@greenhead.co.uk who will be delighted to tell you how to get involved.

The UK team at the world championships in Sweden



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Hello, I am Cassie, a portrait photographer local to Lenham.
I have an art and design background, I graduated from a University in
North Wales in 2013. There I studied Design: Creative Media where
I specialised in hand drawn animation.

I purchased my first professional camera 8 years ago. Since then, I have been
offering wedding and special occasion photography, couple,
family and baby photo sessions.

I enjoy capturing those special moments at weddings and special events.
Most of all, I love capturing natural, unposed photos. It shows the real, raw emotions
of the people, giving more significance to my photos.

All my photo sessions are on location; I meet my clients at a place suggested by them
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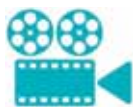


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Bridget Jones: Mad About the Boy

Friday AUGUST 8th

**Performance begins 19.30,
doors open 19.00**

**Running time 2 hrs 5 mins,
Director: Michael Morris**

For August, we turn to the brand-new chapter in the Bridget Jones story, which is bound to bring a dose of comedy and romance. Bridget is played wonderfully as always by Renée Zellweger. In **Bridget Jones: Mad About the Boy** (2025), the final instalment in the story, Bridget is trying to cope with life as a single working mother, with support from her friends and family. Ex-love Daniel (Hugh Grant) and new romantic interests add further complications to her life. A heart-warming British comedy; come along for that feel-good factor.

Our September 12th performance is **California Suite** (1978) which was the winning film in our audience vote for this season. The late Dame Maggie Smith is part of an all-star cast in this fabulous comedy.

We'd like to thank everyone who joined us for our June performance of *Wicked*. Between the takings from the night and an additional gift from Lenham Film Club, we were able to donate the wonderful sum of £500 to Lenham Nursery School in the name of Ian George, our late treasurer.

Please get in touch for more information or to join our mailing list.

Admission: Adults £5, under 16s £2;
cash only, card payments not accepted.



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By Matthew & Adele, B&S Building Supplies

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Every year, scammers steal an estimated **£3.5 billion** from people across the UK. These criminals don't just stop at one victim – they often share your personal details with others, making you a target again and again. *Neil Butcher*, Victim Safeguarding Officer at Kent Trading Standards, shares his top tips to help you stay safe and one step ahead of the scammers.

Golden Rule: Never share personal details with strangers

If someone contacts you out of the blue – by phone, text, email, or even letter – and asks for your **bank details, passwords, or money, don't engage**. Even if they claim to be from your bank, HMRC, or say you've won a prize, it's likely to be a scam.

Protect your personal information

Before throwing away old bills, receipts, or prescription bags, make sure your personal details are unreadable. Use a shredder, cut them up, or black out information with a permanent marker.

What to do if you're targeted:

Think you've been scammed? Call **Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline: 0808 223 1133** or contact your bank directly by dialling **159**.

Online scam? Call **Citizens Advice Scam Action Line: 0808 250 5050**

Helpful resources

Teacher in Your Pocket (TEPO): A great tool for sharing scam awareness with those who aren't online. Ask a friend or family member to help you access it at:

www.kent.gov.uk/tepo

Need local support?

Contact your KCC Community Wardens: **03000 41 34 55** or visit **www.kent.gov.uk/communitywardens**

Stay informed:

Sign up for scam alerts from Kent County Council: **www.kent.gov.uk/consumeralerts**

Final word

If it sounds too good to be true – it probably is.

Want a talk for your local group or community?

Email: **trading.standards@kent.gov.uk**

Common scams to watch out for:

Phone Scams

You might get a call from someone claiming to be from Amazon, saying there's suspicious activity on your account. **Hang up immediately**. Always wait for a dial tone before making another call or ring a trusted friend to make sure the line is clear.

Register your landline with the **Telephone Preference Service: 0345 070 0707**. Text **"TPS"** and your email address to **85095** to block mobile spam.

Text Scams

Texts that appear to be from HMRC demanding immediate payment or threatening arrest are **fake**. Don't click any links or respond.



WhatsApp & Messaging Scams

Scammers often pose as a family member or friend, saying they've lost their phone and need money urgently. If you get a message like "Hi Mum/Dad/Gran," **pause and check** who is calling you before doing anything.

Postal Scams

Letters claiming you've won a lottery you never entered, or from clairvoyants offering to reveal your future, for a fee, are classic scams. Reduce junk mail by registering with the **Mail Preference Service: 0845 703 4599**

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changeling-theatre.com

Earley Springs Hosts Inspiring Information Evening at Tudor Park

On Thursday 19th June, prospective parents, professionals and members of the community gathered at Tudor Park Marriott for an evening hosted by Harriet Carter, founder of the soon-to-open Earley Springs School in Harrietsham.

The event provided a heart-warming insight into the story behind Earley Springs – a specialist provision for children aged 5 to 13 with communication and interaction difficulties.

Harriet shared her personal journey, which began in mainstream secondary education and evolved through SEN leadership and consultancy, leading to the creation of a vision built from lived experience and professional dedication.

Attendees were introduced to the school's bespoke curriculum, which is underpinned by the SCERTS framework and tailored across three distinct pathways: Explorers, Discoverers, and Investigators.

These are designed to support children from early developmental stages through to preparation for adulthood, with an emphasis on real-life learning, communication and independence.

The purpose-built setting due to open in September 2025 includes a sensory room, immersive classroom, soft play and multiple breakout areas, all created to ensure each child thrives in an environment built around their needs.

Earley Springs is passionate about ensuring that learning is truly purposeful, and the immersive classroom will enable children to engage in real-world scenarios, such as visiting a supermarket or hairdresser.



The school is also committed to working closely with the local community to enrich these experiences and foster meaningful connections.

The evening concluded with a Q&A session and the opportunity to explore detailed plans for the school's environment, curriculum and assessment tools, including 'B Squared.'

As the final preparations for opening continue, the school warmly welcomes

...we welcome support from local volunteers who may be able to offer help with light DIY tasks or gardening throughout July and August.

support from local volunteers who may be able to offer help with light DIY tasks or gardening throughout July and August. If you are interested in lending a hand and being part of this exciting journey, please do get in touch.

To find out more about Earley Springs, visit www.earleyspringsschool.com or email: admin@earleyspringsschool.com.



Recipe of the Month

Carlsbad Plums

This recipe depends on the jar you are going to use and to the quantity of port wine you have available! It also needs patience but is well worth the wait!

Method:

Using the best quality dried prunes, put into a screw top jar and dredge with a generous amount of soft, brown sugar. Fill to the brim with ruby or tawny port wine (better quality if you feel like it). Leave for six months.

Throw a party and serve with cream.



Countryways Quilters and Stitchers

From Pamela Gillard

August is the start of our home hosted meetings. We will be hand stitching out in the garden, weather permitting. Please contact me to find out the location if you want to come along. I hope you'll come and join us and try your hand at something new or just enjoy the company, have a chat and a cup of tea. An enjoyable way to spend an afternoon.

Our meetings are on the first and third Tuesdays of every month except December, we'd love to see you. We meet in the Osborne room in the Lenham Community Centre 1:30 to 4:30pm. Sometimes we move location, please contact me, Pamela Gillard at 07914 809946 or email moonbeamspinner@gmail.com if you plan to drop in, for more information on the group or a copy of our 2025 programme.



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The Friends of
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ANNUAL VILLAGE BARN DANCE

20TH SEPTEMBER 2025

Grab your partners, the ever-popular **Annual Village Barn Dance** returns on Saturday 20th September! The dance takes place in the beautiful setting of the Tithe Barn, Lenham ME17 2QD and is set to be a great night as usual, with dancing to 'Whirling Skirmish' and instructions from their excellent caller. The dance is great fun for all ages; no experience is necessary. We will, of course, be holding our magnificent raffle during a break in the dancing, with a huge selection of prizes donated by local businesses.

Tickets for the dance are £15 for adults and £5 for under 16s; they are on sale now, cash only, from Kent Loves... 11 High Street, Lenham.

Bring your own drinks & nibbles or order supper from Chequers Fish Bar.

Doors open at 19.00 and the dancing begins at 19.30. Tickets always sell quickly, so round up family and friends and get your tickets before they are gone; checked shirts and cowboy hats are optional!

The Friends of St Mary's is a registered charity, set up with the single purpose of preserving and maintaining our Grade I listed church building, so that it can stand at the centre of the village for future generations. Events like the Barn Dance are vital in helping us raise funds to be able to fund our work, like the recent renovations to the West Door. Please email us if you would like to sign up to receive regular updates about our latest projects or if you would like to become a member. You'll also find more information about us and a membership application form on our website.



www.friendsofstmaryslenham.org



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Len Valley Surgery – August update

From Elaine Moles, Practice Manager

We do appreciate all the support that is given to us. However, our task is overwhelming and most days we leave at the end of the day, way past clocking off-time, exhausted. For example, this week a colleague and I have had to cover reception and dispensary due to a shortage of staff and sickness.

Unfortunately, there will be times when dispensary will be closed due to staffing levels which is unheard of for our practice.

Recruitment is a headache and time consuming. Right now I am trying to recruit two nurses, following recent resignations, a lead receptionist following the departure of another member of the team, two dispensers and administrators, and a paramedic.

Failed appointments are still an on-going problem. In June there were 23 failed GP appointments and 124 failed nurse/HCA appointments.

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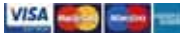


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You will see regular updates on all the parish council's activities in the *Focus*, our website and social media.

Heathlands – a picture emerges

Some of you may have visited the two recent events organised by Maidstone Borough Council and its delivery partner, Homes England. Predictably, these contained little new detail about the Heathlands development although it was part of the exercise to create a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The SPD is supposed to contain the detail about Heathlands which was missing at the inspection of the local plan in 2023. We remain concerned that it will not.

The local plan containing the Heathlands proposal was adopted by the previous (Conservative) MBC administration just ahead of the local election, in May 2024, where they were voted out. It was accepted by the current (Green, Lib-Dem, Independent) administration which is now rolling it out.

While the parish council acknowledges there is a national issue with housing, and the neighbourhood plan sets out how the parish will contribute to that, we also think there is an issue with affordability and placement: that requires the right homes, at the right price, in the right place. In our view this is not what Heathlands will be.

The parish council, along with our elected borough and county councillors (including our former county councillor Shellina Prendergast), have attended meetings since November 2024 to

examine the detail. What follows is our assessment of that process and what we believe is ahead.

We have challenged those proposing this development with our assessment and there was no push-back on our assumptions, so I am sharing these with everyone now.

Be under no illusion, this is badged as a “Garden Community” – that is “code” for the creation of a new town.

We are told the new town will have up to 5,000 homes, 2,000 of which will be some form of social housing (yet to be determined), create 5,000 new employment opportunities (also undetermined) three new service centres (although at present it is not clear exactly what these will contain) and a new water treatment works. During the lifetime of the project there will also be new schools (both primary and secondary) and, critically, a new railway station will have to be delivered during the first phase.

There is not enough space here to detail other issues, such as GP services. That will be a matter for the Strategic Health Authority to resolve. I have also not mentioned the issue of traffic; we have repeatedly raised concerns about this but there has been little meaningful response. That, along with where the water for 12,000 souls is going to come from, or exactly how any of this is going to be paid for clearly sits in the “too difficult to do” box...

Instead, I will focus on something which has become clearer as we have listened and questioned the details of this proposal as these have come forward (such as they are), that is

“density” – specifically, how this number of properties are going to fit onto the available land. So, we need to get a little technical to realise exactly what is being proposed.

This site is roughly 360 hectares (900 acres in old money). Once all the natural “constraints” are accounted for (that is woodland, listed properties, streams, ponds and other places where it will not be possible to build, including rehoming the travellers who own a site on Forstal Road) and then factoring in the infrastructure to support the new households, (such as the schools, the station, new workplaces (warehouses?), the new water treatment works -and cordon-sanitaire around that- plus the necessary greenspace) what we reckon is that around 100 hectares remains for housing.

This equates to an average of 50 dwellings per hectare.

The homes proposed under the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan, which will deliver 1,000 new homes in a structured way up to 2031, do not exceed 28 homes per hectare. For an urban comparison, the extension to the west of Ashford, known as Repton Park, is around 45 dwellings per hectare. That development is perfectly appropriate for its setting as an extension of Ashford. Something of that density, or greater, is unlikely to sit well in what are presently open fields and grassland.

We understand the area between the A20 and the railway, which is closest to the

Be under no illusion; this is badged as a “Garden Community” – that is “code” for the creation of a new town.

Downs, will need to be “softer” (presumably a lower density or height of dwellings to achieve that) which means that the area between the railway and the M20 will therefore need to be a higher density, with more

height, to maintain the overall number.

We are assured the Heathlands development will be “an exemplar”, quite of what is unclear. What we think will emerge this autumn is a slick brochure extolling the “exemplar” nature of this proposal, while glossing over the awkward issues of creating a new town with a reliance on multi-storey, high-density buildings for 12,000 people in the countryside.

We suspect MBC and its delivery partner, Homes England, will be referencing a Poundbury-style approach to Heathlands (this is the development in Dorset created by the Duchy Estates formed by Prince, now King, Charles as his vision of an ideal place to live). Our assessment is it is going to have to be more like Thamesmead, the ultra-urban, high density, high-rise development bordering the Thames in southeast London.

Once this proposal has been adopted, an Outline Planning Application will then be pulled together and that is likely to be discussed at some point in 2026. We think this will describe four “phases” of development, stretching well into the 2050s.

Our opportunity to make further comments will come when the Supplementary Planning Document is circulated for public comment probably later this year. It’s then we will see whether our assessment was right, or not.

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Badminton Club Feathers	Robert Day	07984-948524
Borough Councillors	Tom & Janetta Sams	01622-859412 / 0789-1901831
Bowling Club	Lyn Fuller	01622-851538
Bridge Club	Keith Rylands	01622-891964
Brownies (2 nd Lenham)	Andrea French	01622-851646
Cat Protection	Mid-Kent Branch	0345-3712758
Church Office	Sarah Hills	01622-850604
Dog Warden (Louise Duke)	Community Protec'n	01622-602117
Drama	Gail Kelly	01622-850671
Friends of St Mary's Church	Andrew Barr	enquiries@friendsofmaryslenham.org
Gardening Society	Margaret Baines	01622-431649
Guides (1 st Lenham)	Jo Homes	07887-877814
Ham Lane Allotment Association	Doug Matthews	01622-297692
HAMS Productions	David Penny	07731-455677
Harrietsham & Lenham Beavers	Duncan Keenan	07768-926654
Harrietsham & Lenham Cubs	Mrs A Seales	01622-859829
Hub Club	Nina Kent	01622-851970
KCC for Maidstone Rural East	Sarah Emberson	sarah.emberson@kent.gov.uk
Kent Highway Services	Roads, paths etc.	03000-418181
Kent Wildlife Trust		01622-662012
Lenham Country Market	Sandra Woodfall	07775-736116
Lenham Community Centre	Carol Higgins	01622-853800 (am)
Lenham Cricket Club	Alex Gray	07760-132803
Lenham Film Club	Danny Coorsh	lenhamfilmclub@gmail.com
Lenham Heath Memorial Hall	Rosemarie Pomeroy	07572-911396
Lenham Heritage Society	Henny Shotter	01622-851355
Lenham Lifts scheme	Phil Hollier	01622-859154 / 07542 625277
Lenham Meadows Trust	Danny Matthews	enquiries@lenhammeadowstrust.org
Lenham Nursery	Sarah Siddens	07967 128056
Lenham Parish Council	Lisa Westcott	01622-829034 (M-F 9am-1pm) clerk@lenhamparishcouncil.org.uk
Quilters & Stitchers	Pamela Gillard	01233-879507
Lenham Social Club	Sue Neaves	01622-532409
Lenham Toddlers Group	Irene Hine	01622-858919
Lenham Wanderers FC	Anna Russell	07747-844785
Len Valley Health Walks	Jan Enever	01622-851623
Len Valley Practice	GP surgery	01622-858341 / 859204
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Pilates Classes	Vivien Elcomb	01622-853887
Redback Explorer Scouts	Mark Horlock	redbackesu@hotmail.com
St Edmunds; Platts Heath	Kate Stansfield	07500-895831
Save Our Heathlands (SOHL)	Kate Hammond	07925-606236
Sing & Shake / Make & Shake	Steph Richardson	07894-160906
Sittingbourne Valley FC	Paul Hewish	07795-324062
Vicar	Rev Dr. John Huggins	01622-850280
Wellbeing Community Group	Ellie Stevens	07952-594655 / (Vladimir 07877-143088)
Women's Institute	Chris Godden	01622-858658

Lenham Community Centre - Regular Clubs/Classes/Societies - August 2025

ACTIVITY	WHEN HELD	DAY	CONTACT NO
Abundant Energy Tai Chi	Weekly Monday	0930-1030	07985 001782
Abundant Energy Qigong	Weekly Monday	1045-1145	07985 001782
Country Ways Quilting	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday	1330-1630	01233 879507
Country Ways Rugmaking	2nd & last Wednesday	0900-1300	07784 892160
Feathers Badminton	Weekly Monday	2000-2200	07984 948524
Gardening Society	3rd Thursday	1845-2200	01622 430649
Hatha Yoga	Weekly Monday	1815-1945	07850 355918
Kent School of Bridge	Weekly Thursday	1330-1730	01622 891964
LenARA Bowling	Weekly Tuesday	1330-1700	01622 858439
LenARA Line Dancing	Weekly Wednesday	1845-2115	01622 859725
LenARA Members	4 th Wednesday	1230-1700	01622 851763
LenARA Petanque	Thursday if weather permits	0900-1300	01622 858439
LenARA Zumba Gold	Weekly Wednesday	0900-1030	01622 850468
Lenham Art Group	Weekly Thursday	1000-1300	01622 858238
Lenham Badminton	Weekly Tuesday	2000-2200	01622 858561
Lenham Ballet School	Monday/Tuesday	1700-2030	07866 316056
Lenham Ballet School	Thursday	1630-2100	07866 316056
Lenham Ballet School	Weekly Saturday	0900-1530	07866 316056
Lenham Heritage	4 th Thursday	1900-2130	01622 850228
Lenham Toddlers pre-school	Weekly Tuesday	0930-1130	01622 858919
Lenham Meadows Trust	3 rd Thursday	1900-2100	07831 308267
Lenham Toddlers Pre-school	Weekly Tuesday	0930-1130	01622 858919
Lenham WI	2 nd Thursday	1845-2200	01622 858658
Make & Shake (Pre-school)	Weekly Wednesday	1030-1300	07894 160906
Parish Council	1 st Wednesday	1930-2230	01622 829034
Parish Council F & G P	3rd Wednesday	1930-2200	01622 829034
Parish Council Planning	1 st Monday	1930-2200	01622 829034
Pathways Church	1st & 3rd Sunday	0830-1330	07708 754672
Pilates	Weekly Tuesday	0900-1100	07495481726
Sing & Shake (Pre-school)	Weekly Monday	0930-1300	07894 160906
Telisa Tai Chi	Weekly Wednesday	1730-1830	07734 108683
Zumba with Rosie	Weekly Tuesday	1830-1930	07809 490982

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The latest news from Chris Godden

What an interesting meeting we had in June! **Neil Butcher** from *Trading Standards* came to talk to us about 'scams'. We learnt a great deal about what to do and what not to do. If you need to find out further information and helpful contacts please go to – Neil Butcher, Trading Standards Officer, Trading Standards, Economy and Community Protection, Growth and Communities, Kent County Council, PO Box 320, Ashford, Kent TN24 8AS Tel: 03000 412020

www.kent.gov.uk/tradingstandards

As we do not have a meeting in August we are off to Dobbies in Ashford for a cream tea.

Next month we welcome **Peter Woodley** who is giving us a talk on "*Behind the Scenes at the BBC*". Peter was a camera man and worked on *Only Fools and Horses* (1981) pictured below.



Only Fools and Horses (1981); *Ever Decreasing Circles* (1984) and *Clarence* (1988).

We're looking forward to 7th October and Halloween when we have a talk on '*Bats in Kent*'. That should be very interesting.

The **Kent Bat Group** have their AGM in Lenham Community Centre on 2nd October, so if you are interested in finding out more about their conservation work go along for a chat.

Kent Bat Group was formed in 1983 to conserve bats across the county, following a significant decline in bat populations across the UK. Since then we've been working to protect and conserve bats in Kent. This includes protection or improvement of their roosts and feeding areas.



If you want to join us, we meet at Lenham Community Centre on the second Thursday of the month at 7.30pm. Please come along and see what we get up to. To find out more please contact rrgodden@btinternet.com

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Lenham Cricket Club News

From Sally Maestri

It was a busy time in June for the club. Many matches were played and the teams are doing well, even managing to get two teams out on a Sunday. Thank you to all the players who have made themselves available. An even bigger thanks to the people who came up and watched. Trust me it makes a difference.

Results:-

1 June - Charing won by 109 runs.
Charing 202 for 4. Lenham 93 all out.

8 June - Milstead win by 36 runs. Milstead 166 all out. Lenham 130 all out.

8 June - East Sutton won by 4 wickets.
Lenham 126 all out. East Sutton 128 for 6.

14 June - Lenham win by 41 runs. Lenham 224 for 2. Eynsford 183 for 9.

21 June - Lenham lose by 8 wickets.
Lenham 66 all out. Marden 71 for 2.

22 June - Lenham lose by 34 runs. Easter Sutton 215 for 5. Lenham 181 all out.

28 June - Lenham win by 132 runs.
Lenham 239 for 7. Four Elms 107 all out.
Our first win against Four Elms.

5 July - Lenham win by 10 wickets.
Bidborough 65 all out. Lenham 68 for 0.

On 29th June, the club hosted our annual **Fun Day**, sponsored by the parish council. This consisted of a rounders tournament, bingo and a raffle, with inflatables for the kids. It was a great turn out on a nice sunny day.

Special thanks go to Jack Skylark and Louise from 'Lovly Craft'. Let's not forget Pip the ice cream lady, who was in high demand. Lastly, a huge thank you to all the volunteers who made the day run as smoothly as it did.

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Update from your local Councillors

John Britt, chair of the Parish Council has given a full update on the Heathlands situation.

We wanted to reflect on what the administration has covered in the past year. We have:

- Stabilised the new refuse collection service.
- Invested in our parks.
- Enhanced enforcement on litter and fly tipping.
- Natural Flood Management schemes being devised.
- Carried out a significant amount of work to instil better minimum standards for HMOs in the Borough.
- Put a bid in to extend the National Landscape designated area
- Delivered a balanced budget for 2024/25.
- Commenced work on our social housing plans at a number of sites
- Planted a memorial to Covid-19 victims.
- Reversed the council's position on the destruction of an ancient woodland.
- Built an arts hub in the town centre.

As we start this New Year, with much work due on Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution for the county, MBC will also hold a Community Governance Review to ensure that local democracy, community cohesion & engagement and delivery of local services are preserved and improved in areas with parish councils in place and those without.

We also plan to deliver: a vibrant town centre, a revised climate change and biodiversity strategy, a voluntary and

Your Independent Councillors for Harrietsham, Lenham & North Downs Ward		
		
Cllr. Janetta Sams e: janettasamscllr@gmail.com Cllr. Tom Sams e: tomsamscllr7@gmail.com tel: 01622 859412 & 07891 901831		Cllr. Kathy Cox e: kcox.mbc@gmail.com t: 07724 021659
www.hl-nd.co.uk Maidstone Borough Council, King St, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6JQ		

community services grant scheme and a citizens assembly on Violence Against Women and Girls.

Also we are to open a Housing Revenue Account to support the council's social and affordable house building scheme, to identify and acquire a new, high quality public Gypsy, Roma and Traveller site and to promote Coronation and Jubilee Squares for events and markets throughout the year.

As ever, get in touch if you need any help. Janetta, Tom and Kathy

Here's how to get in touch:

Your independent councillors for Harrietsham Lenham & North Downs Ward:

- Cllr Kathy Cox
kcox.mbc@gmail.com & 07724021659
- Cllr Janetta Sams
janettasamscllr@gmail.com
- Cllr Tom Sams
**tomsamscllr7@gmail.com
01622-859412 / 07891901831**

Our evolving website is www.hl-nd.co.uk

Email addresses: janettasamscllr@gmail.com | tomsamscllr7@gmail.com | kcox.mbc@gmail.com

Lenham Gardening Society

From Margaret Baines

On 21st August **Jude Lawson** will talk about 'Garden Lore – True, False or a Matter of Opinion.' If you want to take part in the competition, it's for one rose and/or three carrots. The meeting starts at 7.30pm in the Community Centre.

All are welcome to most meetings except those in February, July and November which are for members only. Members pay £1 entrance with non-members paying £1.50. Annual subscription is £7 per person.

Tea/coffee and biscuits are available in the interval and a raffle held before the evening's close.

Diary Dates:

Lenham Garden Show – 16th August (see also separate poster in this issue) - held in the Community Centre. Entries are open to everyone, of all ages and abilities, in the Len Valley area. Each exhibit entry costs 25p and entry to the afternoon session is 50p.

Exhibitors – 10am to 12noon. Doors will be open to all at 2pm. Raffle and prize-giving is at 3.45pm. Programmes are available from the Community Centre, Library, Kent Loves... and The Chequers fish & chip shop.



Outing to Great Comp – 16th September. Our coach leaves Lenham at 9.30am from the Dog and Bear Hotel, stopping at Charing and Harrietsham if required.

Cost: Members £25 and Non-members £35. This includes coach, entry and a cream tea. There will be a raffle on the coach before we depart.

For further information please email: gardenlenham@gmail.com or call: **07917401228**.

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An update from your local MP, Helen Whately

Do you want to see Eurostar calling at Ebbsfleet and Ashford again? Is it a service you would use if it was reinstated, or does it make no difference to you at all?

If you have strong opinions about the Eurostar service, I'd love to hear from you. It was not that long ago when Kent residents could just hop on a train at Ebbsfleet or Ashford and be in Europe within hours. I want to understand how this change is impacting your life.

Eurostar currently connects London to Paris, Lille, Brussels, Amsterdam, Rotterdam and has plans to extend its service to Frankfurt and Geneva. According to their website more than 280,000 passengers travelled on the London-Paris route last year and 250,000 on the London-Brussels route, and crucially they are making money again.

It's not just holiday makers and day trippers who want Eurostar to stop in Kent. Businesses chose to locate in the county due to our easy access to both London and Europe. When Eurostar called at Kent stations it boosted our economy by encouraging tourists from Europe, took pressure off the Dover crossing and provided a more environmentally friendly way to travel.

It was understandable that services stopped calling at Kent stations during the Pandemic, but that was 5 years ago, and I know peoples' patience is wearing thin. That's why I have been pressing Eurostar and Rail Ministers to reinstate services for some years now, and it seems like finally we might be making progress. New potential operators (Virgin, Heuro, and Evolyn) have



expressed an interest in running cross-channel trains. And the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) found that some capacity could be made available at the Temple Mill maintenance depot in north-east London – the only facility in the UK which can accommodate European-style trains.

I recently pressed Ministers for progress, and they told me that there are several potential new operators being considered. But the jury is still out and the Minister's response didn't convey a sense of urgency or commitment. So, I will continue to press them by asking parliamentary questions about their next steps and a timeline.

I would be grateful if you would take part in my 'Helen Whately Eurostar survey'. I can then use your contributions as evidence.

To help me build the argument I would be grateful if you could tell me your views by taking part in my survey which you can find by searching on the internet for 'Helen Whately Eurostar survey' or typing this link:

www.helenwhately.org.uk/news/tell-me-your-views-bringing-eurostar-back-kent

I can then use your contributions as evidence to press the Government and rail operators to bring back our services to Ebbsfleet and Ashford.

Best wishes, Helen

e: helen.whately.mp@parliament.uk

t: 0207 219 6472

The Arts Society Egerton



**The Arts Society brings people together
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We are taking a summer break until 10th September when Dr John Stevens will present 'Architecture of Mughal India: Palaces, Mosques, Gardens and Mausoleum' at Egerton Millennium Hall at 2.30 pm. Details of all our lectures to June 2026 are shown below.

Membership is £45 for 10 lectures. Visitors are always very welcome at £8 refunded if you join.

Our 2025/26 season begins in September. Our lecturers are renowned experts. They share their knowledge in ways that are stimulating, educational and, most importantly, fun. The cost to join is £45 (visitors £8). New members and visitors are always welcome; just come along and pay at the door.

2025-26 PROGRAMME

Lectures are held in the Egerton Millennium Hall, Elm Close TN27 9DS and begin at 2.30 p.m. on the second Wednesday in the month. Parking is free.

10th September: John Stevens
Architecture of Mughal India: Palaces, Mosques, Gardens and Mausoleums

8th October: Siobhan Clarke
King and Collector: Henry VIII and the Art of Kingship

12th November: Susan Kay-Williams
Every Colour under the Sun

10th December: Tyler Butterworth
Pantomime – when the Fairy's over Fifty

14th January: Nick Salmond
The Painted Hall at Greenwich

11th February: Vicky Bailey
Ancient Egypt at the British Museum

11th March: Hilary Williams
Visual Proverbs: Dutch genre in the 17th Century

8th April: Ian Swankie
Pots and Frocks – the World of Grayson Perry

13th May: Harry Venning
The Art of the Cartoonist

10th June: Alexandra Epps
Priceless Peggy – Peggy Guggenheim

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



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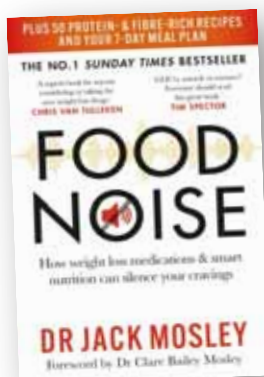
Book Review from the Lenham Library

Sometimes a book from our non-fiction shelves captures your attention and this month I picked up a book entitled *'Food Noise: How weight loss medications & smart nutrition can silence your cravings'* by Dr Jack Mosley. If the name sounds familiar, Jack is the son of the popular presenter and author, the late Dr Michael Mosley.

There has been much publicity about the new weight loss drugs, said to be the biggest medical breakthrough in decades, helping to combat the rising levels of obesity and diabetes in the population. Although the drugs are reported to banish food cravings and encourage weight loss, the question remains how you lose the weight in a healthy manner and sustain it for life.

This book is clear and easy to read. The information is backed by rigorous scientific research and explains how constant, unwanted thoughts about food can be impossible to silence in our world of compelling marketing messages and ongoing temptation.

The book gives some guidance on the use of the drugs and the possible side effects of this medication. However, the most



useful information concerns the diet and nutritional information essential to keep us healthy, whether we need to lose weight or not. The author stresses the importance that a non-medicated route (such as 'The Fast 800') may be just as effective and professional advice should be sought before using medication. I found the book interesting as it sets out to empower

people with the knowledge and practical tools to take some control of their health and make informed decisions when taking these new drugs.

The book provides a seven day meal plan and lots of healthy recipes to maintain weight loss including black bean brownies and high-fibre crackers for gut health.

Remember your local library has a good selection of recipe books to help you eat healthily and to prepare family meals on a budget.

A reminder that throughout August, Kent libraries will be hosting The Summer Reading Challenge. It's a free activity for all 4- to 11-year-olds. This year it is called Story Garden so look out for adventures in Nature and the Great Outdoors.



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**Please see the notice boards and website for
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Contact details: Lisa Westcott

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clerk@lenhamparishcouncil.org.uk

www.lenhamparish.org.uk

Nature Watch

From Darren Hammond

Meet the Finches

The next family we visit is the finches. There are more than fifteen types of finch in the UK and they have quite a range of different appearances. Some of them can be found commonly in your garden like the chaffinch or goldfinch, while others are more at home in woodlands or open fields. They are a small to medium size bird and have a sweet song. They can have short triangular beaks which are perfect for eating smaller seeds, or larger beaks meant for crushing hard seeds. Others still have crossed bills for prying open cones.



The Brambling



The Goldfinch

A small, slender bird that has a pale bill and a red, white and black face. Its body has a brown back and breast with black wings that have bright yellow (or gold) bars. They can be found in both garden and field and love seeds, especially thistle in the fields but they do like sunflower hearts if you put seeds out in birdfeeders. In recent years their numbers have been increasing as they benefit from garden bird feeding.



The Chaffinch

A very common bird that is seen and heard a lot in the garden. The male and female look quite different; the male's plumage is a smart blend of slate and terracotta while the female is more subdued with olives and browns. Chaffinches often feed on the ground beneath hedgerows and trees, performing a distinctive double-hop forward as they search for seeds and insects, which they also do underneath bird feeders. I also think they have a bit of a clumsy flight. During winter, they form loose flocks in farmland and woodland edges, sometimes joining other finch species in mixed feeding groups.



The Greenfinch



The Lesser Redpoll



The Siskin

The Brambling

Most often seen within a flock of chaffinches and during the autumn and winter months. The brambling is a winter visitor from Scandinavia and it resembles the chaffinch so much that it can be hard to see in the midst of a flock of them, but they sport a distinctive orange-buff breast and white rump that is visible in flight. They'll fly to the ground to look for tasty morsels and seeds and often wait for some time while making sure the coast is clear. Initially they look fairly plain but you will soon see that they have a beauty all their own.

The Greenfinch

The greenfinch has had a tough time in recent years as it has been the victim of a disease but lately it's been slowly increasing in number. The male and female are different in appearance but only in colour, both are still green but the male is quite a vibrant green while the female is a dull green or even olive. They have a fairly vibrant yellow edging to their wings and while they are fairly brave with other birds, they tend to be a bit nervous around humans.

The Lesser Redpoll

Again this little bird can be hard to tell from some of the other little brown birds in our gardens but the distinctive red cap it has gives it away and gives it the name. They have a bouncing flight and an acrobatic feeding style, often hanging upside-down

from the thinnest of twigs. Numbers of Lesser redpolls grow in gardens during late winter and early spring as they make use of bird feeders and some of the trees and plants there.

The Siskin

These small but very bright birds are more common around autumn and winter. Streaky yellow-green finches with black caps (in males) and distinctive forked tails are primarily woodland birds that increasingly visit gardens during winter. The males are very bright yellow and have a black cap on their head while the females are a little less brightly coloured and have a streaky appearance.

There are many other varieties of finch and some are startling like the bullfinch or the hawfinch with their looks or colours, or both. Keep your eye out for them and your ears too, for their beautiful song. The behaviour of finches does change with the season. In spring you will see them become more territorial and they sing more to attract mates. In summer they will be nesting and rearing their chicks. But as autumn moves in they can form larger feeding flocks that will have many birds in them and even different types of finch banding together. In winter they will then be joined by finches from all over the UK and even other countries. If you keep bird feeders and use sunflower hearts and nyjer seed you will attract them to your garden -and sometimes in large numbers.

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Climate Change is Happening

**Pat Crawford provides the RURAL FOCUS PRESS
GROUP COMMENT AND ADVICE COLUMN**

According to a report issued by the IMF (International Monetary Fund) at the end of May, debt is higher and rising faster in 80% of the global economy. The study involved 175 world economies, two-thirds of which have higher public debt than before the pandemic. (The IMF is a reliable source of information.)

What has this got to do with climate change? A lot because beleaguered governments delay or even cancel plans that could be deemed not immediately urgent. No doubt a lot of the ambitious promises made at the last COP (Conference of the Parties) held in Baku last November will fall into the 'not urgent' category. The next climate change conference is due to be held in November in Brazil; it will be interesting to see how attitudes have changed, meanwhile some disillusioned observers suggest COP is a Cop-out!

Canada, a big wheat producing country, is suffering terrifying wildfires with over 200,000 hectares already burnt, triple the five-year average. Climate change is reported to have fuelled both the scale and severity of the fires. Meanwhile here in the UK human actions (careless disposal of barbecue residues, cigarette butts, etc) continue to account for most of the wildfires to date this year.

New South Wales is one of the latest regions to suffer extreme flooding. An estimated 10,000 buildings were damaged of which 1,000 were left uninhabitable; saddest of all, five people died. The Australian government reports that the country's land surface has warmed 1.5C since 1910 and confirms that climate



change is responsible for an increase in the numbers and severity of Extreme Weather Events.

Farmers Guardian (30th May) published a report by Chris Brayford drawing attention to farmers' fury concerning the way in which the UK government is prioritising solar farms over food production, thereby impacting food security. Observers point out that the UK needs more houses, more wind farms and more solar farms; meanwhile public access to the countryside and consideration for wildlife and biodiversity are also important factors. Food security is vital. The ways land is used must be subjected to increasing scrutiny.

The Financial Times special report 'Europe's Climate Leaders' is a fascinating read and not just for those interested in climate change. British farmers produce food to the highest ethical standards. They need – and deserve – our appreciation and support.

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Girlguiding

Len Valley District is lucky to have an amazing team of volunteers - and we're looking for more friendly faces to join us! Whether it's helping to run meetings, keeping things organised behind the scenes, or managing finances, there's a role for everyone.

If you'd like to get involved, please get in touch with one of our **District Commissioners: Karen – 07533-375481 or Louise – 07590-037693.**



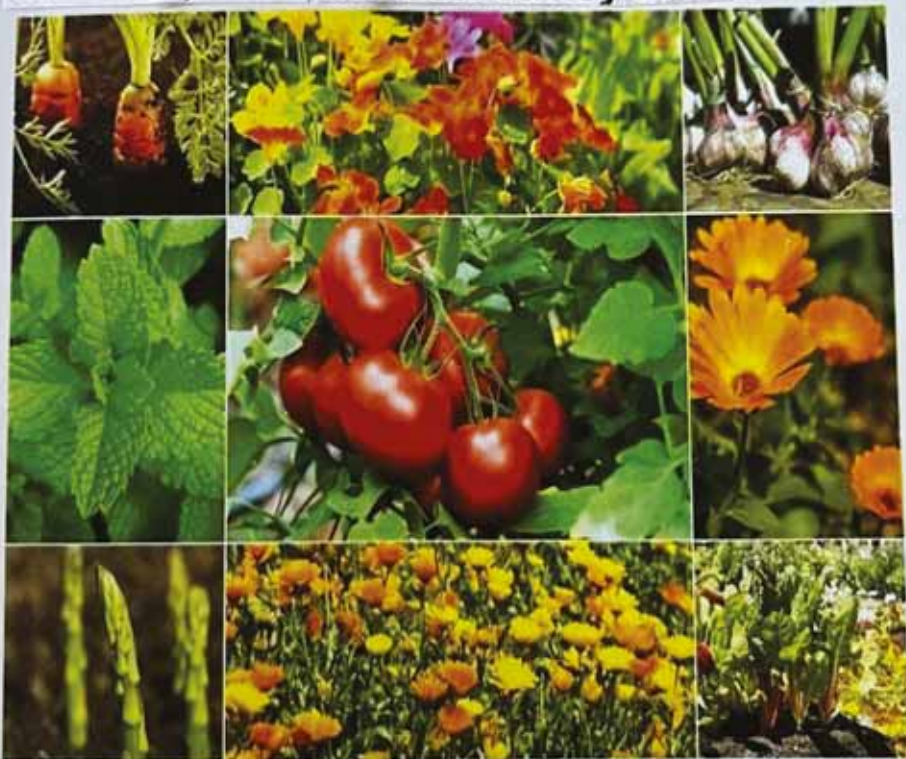
Lenham Garden Show

Saturday 16th August 2025

2.00 pm – 4.00 pm

Lenham Community Centre

Entries open to everyone, of all ages and abilities, from the Len Valley area



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North Downs Walk – the sun shone on the righteous

The Rotary Club of the Weald of Kent held its annual North Downs Walk on Sunday 8th June. After a week of dodgy weather, and a Met Office warning of thunderstorms the day before, the 340 walkers were blessed with superb weather – dry, sunny and with a cooling breeze.

The event is a **sponsored** walk in support of **Cancer Research UK** and of the walkers' own choice of good causes. With a variety of routes from 1 mile (fully paved, therefore suitable for wheelchairs or baby buggies) to 9 miles including a climb up the North Downs, we attracted a full range of ages and abilities of walkers, including Scouts, Guides, Air Cadets, keen hikers and some family teams.

Early indications, based on the pledges on walkers' sponsorship forms are that the Walk will have **raised about £20,000** once Gift Aid is included, of which about two-thirds will go to CRUK and the rest to causes nominated by the walkers (many of which are also cancer-related).

Jean Shrubb, president of the Weald Rotary Club, said, "This is a fantastic result and a real community effort involving the walkers, volunteers, local farmers and of course our sponsor. Well done everyone who made the walk happen".

Chas Bedford, chairman of the organising committee paid tribute to the small army of volunteers, drawn from families and friends of members, other Rotary clubs and the sixth form of Oakwood Park Grammar School.



They acted as route marshals, greeted walkers at checkpoints, registered walkers and sponsor forms, and staffed the kitchen – producing 450 ploughman's lunches, strawberries and cream, and hot and cold drinks. "A lot of walkers have praised how friendly and professional our helpers were. I want to thank all of them. I also want to thank Family Funeral Service, our event sponsor, who has underwritten all our expenses again, meaning that every penny raised in sponsorship has gone to the charities and not to overheads".

Rotary is committed to protecting the environment; all of the disposable lunchboxes, cups and cutlery were Vegware compostables. Other waste was separated into categories for recycling, leaving almost no 'general waste' going to landfill.

Weald of Kent Rotary have been running the North Downs Walk since 1985, missing only 2020 due to lockdowns, and intend to continue running it as long as there are walkers.

Planning for the 2026 walk has already started. Save the date: 14th June 2026.

Christian Message

Rest for the Soul - Ben Doggett, Pathways Church

August is here! The days are longer, the sun is shining and it's (usually) warm and pleasant!

For many, August brings a much-needed chance to slow down. With my children on school holidays it's great fun to spend more time together as a family, though I must admit, the noise levels around the house do rise a bit! August often means time off work, whether you're heading away on holiday or simply enjoying a slower pace at home. It's a natural moment to pause, breathe, and reset.

Going on holiday often gives us the space to stop, enjoy and rest from the busyness of life. But there is a kind of rest that goes even deeper; a rest that no exotic destination, full-board hotel, or lazy days on the beach can provide.

As the psalmist writes:

"Truly my soul finds rest in God; my salvation comes from Him. Truly He is my rock and my salvation; He is my fortress, I will never be shaken."

(Psalm 62:1-2)

Our souls were made to find their deepest rest in their Creator. These verses reveal a God who is not distant or indifferent to our wellbeing. Instead, He desires to shelter us so that we may find strength in His presence. In Him, our souls can be refreshed and renewed, no matter what life's external circumstances might be.

So, whether you're jet-setting off to sun, sea and sand or facing a summer with little physical rest in sight, remember that God's rest is always available.

Whatever your situation, this summer offers the chance to experience a deep peace, a peace that reminds us we are loved and steadies us amid life's pressures. It's a rest that lasts beyond the final day of holiday; a rest for our souls.

Len Valley Benefice

Everybody is welcome

For I am the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, do not fear; I will help you. *Isaiah 41:13*

Sunday 3 August

9.30 am Lenham: Breakfast Church

11.00 am Lenham: Holy Communion

Wednesday 6 August

9.30 am Lenham: Holy Communion

Sunday 10 August

9.30 am Lenham: Breakfast Church

11.00 am Lenham: Holy Communion

Sunday 17 August

8.00 am Lenham: Holy Communion (BCP)

9.30 am Lenham: Breakfast Church

11.00 am Lenham: Morning Worship

Sunday 24 August

11.00 am Benefice Holy Communion at All Saints, Ulcombe

'Re-Sourced in Christ – Boldness'

Sunday 31 August

11.00 am Benefice Taizé Service at St Mary's, Lenham

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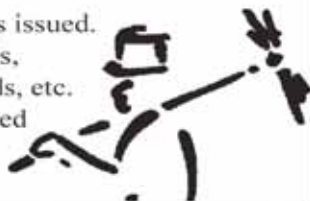
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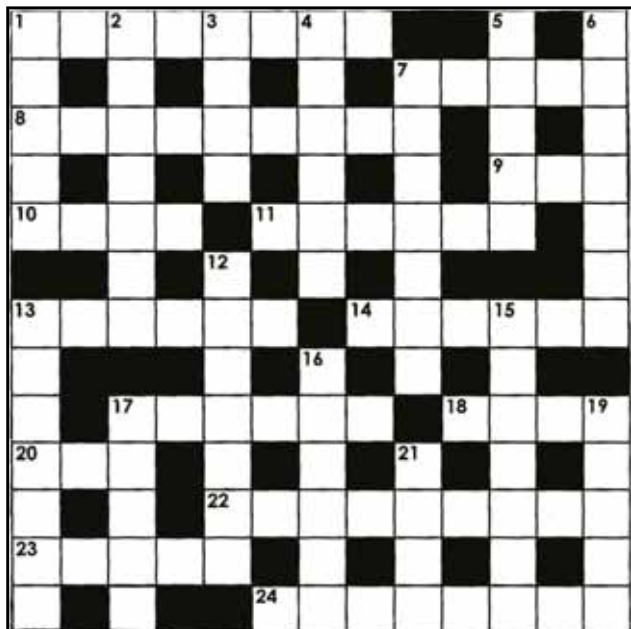
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Focus PRIZE Crossword August 2025

The winner of the May crossword is Roger Evans of Lenham – well done!



Across clues

1. A letters board game. (8)
7. The 1st of this month is 'Fool's Day'. (5)
8. Totally needed. (9)
9. A mineral spring with health-giving properties. (3)
10. Insect that flies towards a light. (4)
11. The weeks before Christmas. (6)
13. Goes too fast. (6)
14. Thought the same. (6)
17. Occurring frequently. (6)
18. Not straight. (4)
20. Madame Peron's shortened first name. (3)
22. A fruit like a peach. (9)
23. Lived in. (5)
24. More peculiar. (8)

Down clues

1. Vapour produced by boiling water. (5)
2. A coloured decoration sometimes given to a horse rider. (7)
3. The tibia is one. (4)
4. Owners of large Scottish estates. (6)
5. Have faith in someone or something. (5)
6. Happy about something. (7)
7. In the spring sneezing is sometimes caused by this. (7)
12. A little bit of material that is left over. (7)
13. Protects. (7)
15. Time that is late in the day. (7)
16. A male feline. (3,3)
17. Provide food for people in restaurants. (5)
19. Belonging to others. (5)
21. A farmyard ditch with a wall on its inner side. (4)

Answers for July 2025 Focus Crossword





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