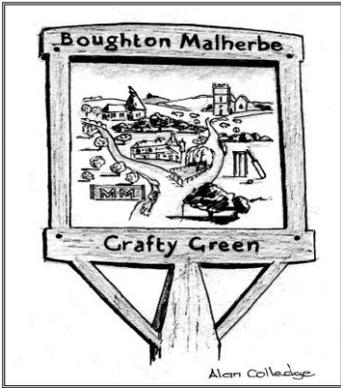


# Malherbe Monthly

Number 201  
April 2021



**Incorporating Liverton Street & Platts Heath**

Useful contact names and telephone N<sup>os</sup>.  
BOUGHTON MALHERBE/GRAFTY GREEN

County Councillor	Shellina Prendergast Shellina.Prendergast@kent.gov.uk	07970 461160
Borough Councillors	Martin Round martinround@maidstone.gov.uk Karen Chappell-Tay karenchappelltay@maidstone.gov.uk	890276 07918 675619
Church Wardens	Kenneth Alexander Vanessa Goodwin	859549 858372
Parish Council Clerk	Chris Hume email boughtonmalherbecp@gmail.com	07972 630555
Village Hall bookings	Carol Hulm email carolhulm@gmail.com Mobile 07990 574214	853583
Village Hall General Enquires	Jon Thompson email bromley@ashleylaw.co.uk Mobile 07932 112730	851351
KM Correspondent	Joan Drury email: jdrury23@btinternet.com	853766
Gardening Club	Sue Burch	850381
Church Choir	Doreen Hulm	850287
Dazzle	Gail Kelly	850671
Yoga	Sue Burch	850381
Parish Council Website	www.boughtonmalherbe.co.uk	
Priest in charge	Dr John Huggins email: vicar@lvb.org.uk	850280
Curate	Charlotte Coles	07805 092823
Reader	Joan Drury email: jdrury23@btinternet.com	853766
Benefice Office	Sarah Hills email: churchoffice@lvb.org.uk Answer phone available out of hours	850604
St. Edmunds Centre	Kate Stansfield	07500 895831
Fresh Fish delivery	Tuesday at approx. 3pm by Post Office	01580 754300
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John Collins	Treasurer	850213

The views expressed in "Malherbe Monthly" are not necessarily those of the Production Team; publication of articles/adverts does not constitute endorsement and we reserve the right to edit!  
Anything for the **May** edition should be left in Grafty Green Shop, or contact Mike on 01622 858937 (mfhitchins@btinternet.com) by **20<sup>th</sup> April**

**Front Cover:** Snow Moon on the 27th February above the Boughton Malherbe Church. Picture courtesy of Ashleigh George

## News from St. Nicholas Church

**Good News!** On **Easter Sunday** we are able to celebrate with an Outdoor Service at **10.30am!** Alleluia!

Sadly, there will be no singing.

There will be outdoor services through April:

**11th April at 6.30pm Evening Worship**

**18th April at 9.30am Communion**

**The Porch** is open for private prayer as always. A great place to enjoy the landscape, the daffodils and the latest lambs gambolling in the field.

Please note there are safety restrictions by the West Door and tower area. A piece of masonry has been dislodged from the tower and repairs are in hand. Take care!

**Morning Prayer** is said daily, on-line, at 9.30am. Please contact Rev.Anne Price on 01622 924963 or [revanne@lvb.org.uk](mailto:revanne@lvb.org.uk) if you would like to join in any day. If you have prayer requests do contact Rev.John Huggins, Rev.Anne Price or the churchwardens at any time and prayers will be said in Morning Prayer time, or in private if you wish.

**Other Services** are available on-line, television and telephone. Please contact the church office for information about these regular event, including Prayer Times and services throughout the benefice, and how to access them, by phone, email etc. The Church of England has links to regular services on their website and how to access them. There is a daily prayer on Facebook.

**The Lent Study 'Growing in Hope'** series of reflections on Tuesday evenings has been well received. Many thanks to all those who prepared them.

**St. Nicolas in the community.** Vanessa Goodwin (our churchwarden) writes: 'The Covid outbreak has given us time to reflect and plan how we can best serve the community in the future, so that we can play a more relevant role. We have been immensely fortunate that the sale of a piece of land in Lenham has released funds for new church projects and we hope to use this money wisely to benefit everyone.

Inspired by all the brilliant programmes on conservation by David Attenborough, we are hoping to turn the church into a beacon of conservation and protection of the beautiful world we live in.

There are many ideas on how we can best do this.

**Step1** involves making our churchyard into a haven for wildlife. We are incredibly grateful to Grafty Green Garden Club, especially Sue Burch for helping us plan how to use flowers and shrubs. The hope is to make the churchyard even more beautiful for people, but also fill it with flowers that will provide for bees, butterflies and birds.

We are also very excited about the project which has already started with St.Nicolas and Platts Heath School.

Some of the money from the Lenham fund has been used to buy seeds and compost for every family at the school. The idea is that the children will be encouraged to grow bee and butterfly friendly flowers during lockdown and come and plant them in flowerbeds and in planting pots around the church. We are incredibly grateful to Lesley Unsworth-Brown and Catherine Motley for their enthusiasm and for moving this community project forward. More plans include creating an insect hotel.

The final part of **Step1** is to order and put up around £200 worth of birdboxes to provide more nesting sites in time for this breeding season. If anyone would like to be involved in putting up these boxes please contact Vanessa.'

**Eco-spot** we can't wait for news of **Step 2**, in the church and churchyard!  
Have you been out in the garden planting flowers and vegetables too?

**Wishing everyone a very Happy Easter!**

**Sally Alexander**



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St. Nicolas, Boughton Malherbe

# Happy Easter



Outdoor Service 10.30am

Easter Day 4th April

Alleluia! Christ is risen!

## **Kings Head Pub – Grafty Green**



Please be aware that we are still cooking Fish & Chips for takeaway on Friday Lunch and Evening.

Please order in advance by calling on **01622 850259** and we wish everyone to stay safe and well and thank you for your support.

## **Yoga and Mindfulness**

Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way, on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgementally. Part of a yoga practice is to encourage the mind to stay focused on what is happening in the moment; this gives the mind chance to come away from the 'to do list' thus bringing a sense of calmness.

It has been observed that taking time to meditate is beneficial for mental health and opportunities to be mindful are presented to us every moment of every day and night yet being 'busy' appears more important and eventually life becomes stressful.

I am hoping that I can, once again, be teaching yoga in the village hall very soon – if you would like me to let you know more details please give me a call on 01622 850381.

**Sue Burch**  
**British Wheel of Yoga Teacher**

## **Sue's Nature notes – Summer Visitors**

I always happy to notice the return of our summer visitors; the day I wrote this I had heard the distinctive song of two chiffchaffs in Coldbridge Lane. Chiffchaffs migrate from West Africa and the Mediterranean. Another early arrival is the blackcap which has quite a range of notes; both birds feed mainly on small insects, flies, aphids, caterpillars and spiders although the blackcap will eat berries and fruits (they love mulberries!) Hearing their song gives you the opportunity to see these birds as the trees and bushes have less dense cover.

Early April, around the 9<sup>th</sup>, brings the arrival of the house martin, which for years, have used my soffit boards to build their nests. About 10 days later the swallows arrive and both these birds will inspect the nests they built last year and make the necessary repairs with mud carried up from the stream that runs nearby.

Last year the house martins' arrival was much later, in fact after the swallows; apparently, this delay was attributed to a violent storm over Italy.

**Sue Burch**

## **Village Hall News**

Dear All,

I hope you are all keeping safe and well.

I am pleased to advise you that the Village Hall will be open for the Local Government elections on the **6<sup>th</sup> of May** and for the Village Hall annual general meeting at 7.30 pm on Monday **24<sup>th</sup> of May**.

**The Village Hall AGM** is a public meeting, so if you have any ideas as to how best to use the hall in the future, would like to meet the village hall committee, find out more about activities at the hall or would like to help with the running of the hall please come along you will be very welcome, but please remember to bring a mask as the usual COVID secure protocols will be in place to keep everyone safe.

**Kind regards,  
Jon Thompson  
Village Hall Chairman**

**Boughton Malherbe  
Parish Council  
Contact Details**

**Ron Galton, Chairman**

- Tel: 01622 850369

[ron@boughtonmalherbecp.org](mailto:ron@boughtonmalherbecp.org)

(Finance, Planning, KALC)

**Robert Turner**

- Tel: 01622 850325

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(Finance, Planning, KALC)

**Barry Adams**

**Nick Eastwood**

**Grant Kennaird**

**Chris Hume, Parish Clerk**

- Tel: 07972 630555`

[boughtonmalherbecp@gmail.com](mailto:boughtonmalherbecp@gmail.com)

**A short update from  
the Parish Council**

**Annual Parish Meeting and Annual  
Parish Council Meeting, 17th May**

-----

**Helen Whately**

**MP for Faversham and Mid Kent**

I work for you. If you have a problem you think I can help you with, please contact me or visit me at one of my surgeries

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London, SW1A 0AA

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**"Dover Bill" -**  
**the Highwayman!**



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# Grafty Green Dog Walking Club



Due to the risks for dogs and owners that has hit the news, we thought it would be a good idea to set up a dog walking group.

**This will be from the 29th March adhering to Covid 19 restrictions. From the 29th March the rule of 6 will allow 6 people from different households to meet outside.**



We are planning for this to be a daily walk (Weather permitting) and approximately 30 to 45 minutes.

This is only open to residents of Grafty Green so address confirmation will be required to join.

The appropriate arrangements can be set up on a particular day, there can be more than one time set for each day.

You don't even have to have a dog to join.

If more than 6 people show up, groups can be separated, until further Covid restrictions change.

This is experimental to start with so changes can be made to work for everyone who wishes to take part.

Interested walkers can contact Doreen Hulm on 07748 592281 to be added to a WhatsApp Group

Those who do not have WhatsApp please see the Grafty Geeks section in this magazine.



**Meeting place, times and routes will not be added to any public websites or social media. These will all be arranged via the WhatsApp group.**



## Parish Council Elections - 6th May 2021

**Parish Councillors serve a four-year term.** But due to the pandemic elections were postponed by a year. A new Parish Council will be elected on May 6th this year. Volunteers are invited to consider serving their community on this important body.

**What Does the Parish Council Do?** Parish Councils are the lowest tier of local government and have an extensive range of potential powers. Their aim is to use their powers to benefit their local community. Our Council maintains the village green and supports local amenities such as the Village Hall. The Council is a statutory consultee for all planning applications and its comments are generally influential regarding planning decisions. Other main functions include ensuring that KCC Highways addresses issues regarding roads, ditches and gullies. **What do Parish Councillors Do?** Parish Councillors main role is to attend council meetings and take decisions on behalf of the community. They also ensure that the council's budget is spent appropriately. Each Councillor has a portfolio and represents the parish community at meetings with bodies such as Maidstone Council, the Police and KCC.

**How much time will it take?** As little or as much as you want. There is plenty to do, but the minimum requirement is to prepare for, and attend, Parish Council meetings and these are normally 6 a year plus approximately a dozen committee meeting. Meetings take place in the evenings in the Village Hall .

**What do I do if I am interested?** Parish Nomination papers and candidates' guidance are available on the Electoral Commission website or from the Clerk. You will need to complete a nomination form and submit it to Maidstone Borough Council who manage the election process. The nomination period runs from **Monday 22 March through to Thursday 8 April at 4pm**. Elections may not be contested if there are five or less nominees for the five positions on the council. If you are interested in standing, have any questions, or would like more information, contact the Clerk, at [boughtonmalherbecp@gmail.com](mailto:boughtonmalherbecp@gmail.com) or on 07972 630555 to find out exactly what is involved.

## Other Parish Council Notifications

### **Annual Parish Meeting and Annual Parish Council Meeting, 17th May**

These important meetings, which did not take place in 2020 due to the pandemic, will take place on the evening the 17th May in the village hall- unless there are new restrictions. The Annual Parish Meeting is an opportunity to hear about a range of activities and clubs in the parish and take stock of any actions required to improve the quality of life in the locality. The Annual Parish Council Meeting follows the Annual

Parish Meeting and elects council and committee chairmen and approves the council's policies and procedures. Please put this important evening in your diary and let's hope we can meet in person in the village hall.

### **Stiles on Local Footpaths**

Following a representation from Mike Hitchins, the Parish Council resolved, on the 8th March, to work with KCC and local landowners to replace a small number of stiles with metal kissing gates. A number of stiles are difficult to navigate and are not dog friendly. The Parish Council would like to hear from anyone who uses the paths for views regarding which stiles they think are a priority for upgrading to kissing gates.

### **Road Closure – Message from Contractor**

This closure is just outside Boughton Malherbe Parish by the railway line as you come into Lenham. However, it will clearly have a significant impact on residents driving to and from Lenham.

“We would like to advise that Walker Construction are arranging to close Headcorn Road between the junctions of Robins Close/Mill Close and Boughton Road, Lenham near Maidstone, (ME17 2HT). The planned closures are due to come into effect from 0500hrs **Monday 29th March** through to a planned completion by **Monday 19th April** 0500hrs. The works are to enable service connections to the new housing development on the land just south of the Headcorn Road Rail bridge in Lenham.

Walker Construction are working collaboratively with a number of service providers to complete the works quickly and efficiently within one single road closure - unfortunately due to the nature of the works required there is no possibility of using any other form of traffic management. It is with every intention that Walker Construction and our collaborative partners complete soonest to then be able to open the road as quickly as possible.

We are aware this will have an impact on the local community and therefore wish to advise you of the upcoming planned closure. We are also in liaison with the local public transport network to manage bus route diversions too. Walker Construction will be providing advanced signing of the closures in the coming weeks, and also completing a letter drop to the local community.



# Boughton Malherbe Parish Council

www.boughtonmalherbe.co.uk

## Minutes of the Extraordinary Parish Council on Monday 8th March 2021, 7.30pm held by teleconference

**Present:** Cllrs R Galton (Chair); R Turner; B Adams; N. Eastwood; G Kennaird  
Clerk Mr Chris Hume

Two members of public

Cllr Galton opened meeting at 7.32pm

1. **Anybody filming or recording this meeting to declare it.** - none
2. **Apologies** – none
3. **Declarations:**
  - Any lobbying** – none declared
  - Any interest in items on the Agenda** – none declared
  - Any changes to the register of pecuniary interests** - none declared
4. **Approval of Minutes** – approved the Minutes of 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021, 8<sup>th</sup> February and 25<sup>th</sup> February
5. **Matters Arising** – the Clerk apologised that the agendas for tonight’s meeting, and for the meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> February, were not posted on the website. This was an error and it is a legal requirement. However, legal advice obtained from KALC has confirmed that the meetings themselves were properly convened in line with primary legislation as notice was given three clear days before the meeting. The Clerk outlined how he intends to ensure this won’t happen again.
6. **Purdah** – noted the advice from KALC and NALC guidance.
7. **Public Session** - Chris Wheal said he has submitted a note which the Clerk has circulated. Chris asked that the Council amend the reference to the 40mph limit on Headcorn Road to the South of the village to extend to Crumps Lane. It was resolved that the Clerk will amend the HIMP to encompass this.
8. **Planning Outcomes since 25<sup>th</sup> January 2021** – none reported, Clerk to check MBC portal
9. **Local Policing/Community**
  - 9.1 Police/Crime Report – noted stats previously circulated
  - 9.2 Speedwatch – nothing to report
10. **Highway and Footway Matters**
  - 10.1 **Liverton Hill, Ditches, gullies, potholes** – Cllr Adams to investigate road breaking up in Woodcock Lane and report to KCC. Cllr Kennaird to report missed repair markers in Southerndon Road. Noted new posts at the Coldbridge Lane triangle. It was agreed to keep this solution under careful review
  - 10.2 **59 Bus** - noted that KCC have announced that the pilot will be extended until July
  - 10.3 **Litter** – noted a number of residents have been voluntarily picking up litter. A working party will be convened once the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.
  - 10.4 **Highways Improvement Plan** – noted the latest version of the plan. Clerk to submit to KCC.

- 10.5 Footpaths** – Received a representation from Mike Hitchins. It was agreed that Mike will be asked to suggest which stiles should be a priority for replacement with gates. Clerk to contact KCC to enquire about funding and process to be followed.
- 10.6 Representation from Sue Burch: Junction of Eastwood Road and Headcorn Road** - It was agreed that the Council would write to KCC asking if it can place a planter on the grass triangle at Eastwood Road. Cllr Kennaird to circulate a draft letter for the Clerk to submit.
- 11. Councillor Reports on any External Meetings attended** – Grant Kennaird Reported back from the KALC/KCC Road Safety event on 3<sup>rd</sup> March
- 12. Finance**
- 12.1 Noted** the Balances at the Bank:
- |                        |             |
|------------------------|-------------|
| Nat West               | £70,941.46  |
| Nationwide             | £14,150.58  |
| Cambridge and Counties | £ 22,963.65 |
- It was agreed that the internal auditor would be asked to advise whether to move funds back to the savings accounts in view of the revised cost of the traffic calming scheme.
- 12.2 Income since the last meeting:** noted none received
- 12.3 Bank Reconciliation** – agreed the statement circulated with the agenda
- 12.4 Any cheques to sign:** none
- 12.5 Authorisation of any payments since the last meeting:** Noted Rosemary Smith £355.50 which includes repairs to the notice board
- 12.6 Expenditure compared to budget, year to date** – noted the current position showing a projected underspend of £759K
- 12.7 Arranging Outstanding payments before the year end** – noted that the Village Hall are not expecting a payment, payments still outstanding for the Church, Clerk salary and the Christmas Tree. Cllr Turner to contact Richard Tew about the tree.
- 13. Traffic Calming Update** – Clerk reported that a cheque has been delivered to KCC
- 14. Speed Indicator Device (SID) Update** – nothing to report
- 15. Litter Bin Outside the Church** – no further problems to report.
- 16. Quinn Donation** –
- (i) The Council considered a proposal from Chris Wheal for a lengthsmen.
- It was agreed that the Clerk will make enquiries to neighbouring parishes to establish the potential cost, sources of funding, employment arrangements and opportunities for collaboration.
- (ii) Sue Burch explained that the Points of Interest Stone was no longer an option as Mr Clark was unable to provide access to his land. Instead, Sue suggested a map on the village green showing local footpaths and places of interest. It was agreed to proceed with a proposal and estimate from KCC for a footpath and local features map for the village green. Cllr Galton will work with Sue Burch to prepare photographs and illustrations to send to KCC after reporting back to the council. Sue also suggested a leaflet of walks. The council will look into this idea once the footpaths map is in place
- 17. Forthcoming Elections – 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021** – noted timetable and process
- 18. Date for the Annual Meeting 2021** – agreed as 17<sup>th</sup> May
- 19. Correspondence** – received requests for donations from The Samaritans and the Kent, Sussex and Surrey Air Ambulance. It was agreed to donate £50 to the Air Ambulance.
- 20. Further Information** – as this was the end of an extra-long election cycle the Clerk was thanked for supporting the council through a challenging period.

The meeting closed at 9.13pm



## **Dear residents**

Since our last update, we have been waiting for Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) to complete their analysis of the Regulation 18b consultation responses.

Approximately 3,200 responses were received in total to the consultation on the Local Plan Review's Preferred Approaches which ran from 1 December 2020 to 8 January 2021. 2,300 responses related specifically to the two proposed garden communities in Lidsing (1,700 responses) and Lenham (500 responses).

The Council's report summarising the responses and the key findings was considered at the Strategic Planning & Infrastructure (SPI) Committee on 9th March.

SOHL addressed the SPI Committee meeting last Tuesday. We expressed concern that the officer's report was lacking in any analysis and provided councillors with an ambiguous summary of the responses. The report overlooked the very many issues that have been raised by residents and consultees. We tried to encourage committee members to challenge the officer's report, enable full public scrutiny and have a detailed debate on the Council's strategy and of the Local Plan Review. SOHL believe the debate should have happened last November before the Preferred Approaches were finalised. We continue to be deeply disappointed by the lack of transparency and democracy from MBC.

The 500 responses received for Heathlands are unanimous; Heathlands is not the right solution.

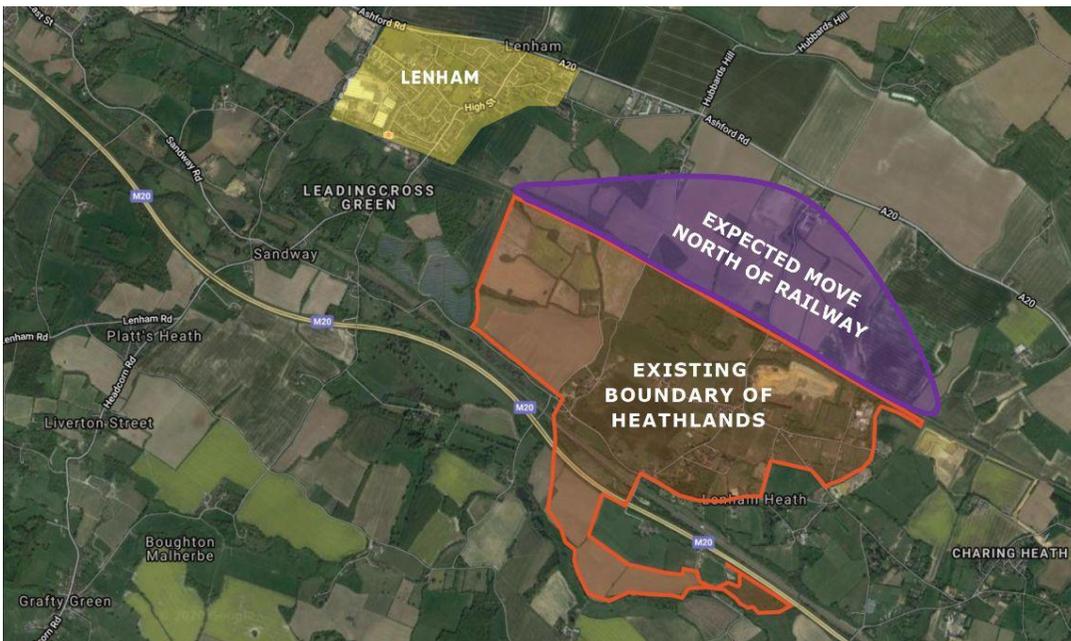
The pivotal new railway station that the promoter is desperately relying upon to support the development and it's desperate sustainable transport strategy is not supported by Network Rail. Highways England confirm there will be no new motorway junction at Lenham Heath for the scale of development currently being proposed. Natural England and the Kent AONB Unit have very strong concerns with the siting of the development at the foot of the

Downs. Neighbouring authority, Ashford's entire response to the consultation was raising significant concern with the proposal. KCC, CPRE, and Southern Water all have concerns. Lenham, Charing, Harrietsham and Egerton Parish Councils also all have major concerns. Even housing developers oppose the development. The list goes on and on.

SOHL have urged the Council to go back to the drawing board and come up with another approach on how the borough housing need is going to be met. It will prove the Council has listened to public opinion which is the real purpose of effective consultation rather than simply box-ticking.

### **What's next:**

Updated masterplan due to be published by the end of March 2021: MBC, in their promoter capacity, has been busy working on their third iteration of the Heathlands masterplan. This is likely to include a recasting of the 'red line boundary' of the proposed development site where we are expecting the proposal to move northwards, between the slow rail line and the A20. As soon as this is published we will share with you.



## **Next Public Consultation - Regulation 19**

The consultation on the Preferred Approaches (Regulation 18b) represented the first stage of informal stakeholder and public involvement in the Local Plan Review process. MBC should be taking the representations into consideration and updating the draft Local Plan accordingly. The next public consultation is due to take place in the summer and will give residents another opportunity to comment.

## **Dates for your diary**

**6 May 2021 - Referendum on the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan (LNP).** The LNP is important in order to control where the new housing already agreed for Lenham is going to go and what it will look like. The Parish Council has set out a clear strategy on how our village will absorb a further 1,000 new homes over the next ten years. Importantly, it doesn't make any provision for a new garden community like Heathlands and never will. Having an adopted LNP will ensure local residents are in control of planning in Lenham rather than leaving it to MBC to do as they choose. SOHL strongly recommends residents say YES to the LNP at May's referendum.

**June 2021 - Next public consultation on the Maidstone Local Plan Review (LPR).** Following December's public consultation (Regulation 18b), MBC are aiming to go back out for a further consultation (Regulation 19) in June. As a reminder, the Local Plan Review sets out where house building will occur across the borough up until 2037. The Regulation 19 consultation will be the final draft of the emerging next Local Plan and this will go to the independent Planning Inspector to examine in public and ultimately approve (or not) for adoption. MBC should be using the recent Regulation 18b consultation responses to review and refine the Plan. We will need residents to write to MBC in a similar fashion as you did for the December consultation. SOHL will provide all the details closer to the time and again will publish all the information on our website

# Helen Whately's Parish Update – Easter 2021

## Turning the tide on Covid

It finally feels like spring is on the way. The warmer weather and longer days have arrived in time for friends and family to meet up outside in groups of six, and the return of outdoor sport.

While life is still a long way from being normal, we are in a much better place than we were this time last year in terms of controlling the virus.

In the past year we have increased our testing capacity to over 1 million tests per day, we're on track to be producing 70% of our PPE demand in the UK, and over 860,000 people have stepped forward as NHS Volunteer Responders.

It's also been a year since the UK's Vaccine Taskforce was created. We now have three vaccines approved for use in the UK, with over 30 million people across the country having received their first vaccination, including 800,000 people in Kent.

One of the highlights of the past few weeks has been meeting people involved in the vaccine rollout. When I visited the Glebe Medical Centre in Harrietsham in February, volunteers were clearing snow from the roads and scraping icicles off the roof to make sure not a single day was lost in getting these life-saving vaccinations into people's arms.

This hard work and dedication can be seen by NHS staff and volunteers in vaccination sites across the country – many have been working flat out since December.

The success of the vaccine rollout has helped us take the first steps out of lockdown. As long as progress continues, we can look forward to further restrictions being lifted in April – with more shops reopening, pints in pub gardens, and people finally able to get a haircut!

Everyone can play their part in helping to control the virus by following the guidance, taking up the offer to get vaccinated, and getting tested regularly.

Together, we can turn the tide on Covid.

## **Budget helps businesses back on their feet**

I know the past year has been incredibly tough for tourism and hospitality businesses, and the reopening of pub gardens in April can't come soon enough for many.

In the meantime, the extension of business rates relief is welcome news. And continuing a lower rate of VAT for the hospitality sector and a freeze on beer duty will give a boost to our pubs when they are finally able to reopen. Restart grants to help businesses back on their feet were also announced as part of the Budget.

## **Clearing up Kent's roads**

The amount of litter on some of Kent's roads is shocking. I've written to local councils and Highways England asking them to take action.

I know that a number of volunteer groups are organising litter picks, which is fantastic, but we also need help from our local authorities.

I'm pleased that Highways England have begun work to clear up the M20 between Junctions 8 and 13, and Maidstone Borough Council have committed to regular litter picks on the A20.

## **Fixing bottlenecks in Maidstone**

Major road improvements in Maidstone have been given the green light as part of the Keep Maidstone Moving schemes. Upgrading the Ashford Road and Sutton Road junctions on Willington Street should make a big difference to people locally – with less traffic and better air quality.

I'll continue to work with local councillors, our local enterprise partnership, and colleagues in Government to drive forward these improvements. People in Maidstone are fed up of sitting in traffic.

## **New powers to tackle unauthorised encampments**

New powers will make it quicker and easier to take action against unauthorised encampments on private land, but I know this is only one part of the problem. People want to see planning rules enforced equally across the board, including at Gypsy and Traveller sites.

I'm continuing to work with local residents and councillors in Headcorn and Ulcombe as well as officials from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to help make the planning system fairer and simpler.

I'm pleased that Ministers are committed to introducing new enforcement powers as part of much needed reforms to the planning system.

### **Helping our high streets**

Help is on the way to revive our high streets after the pandemic.

Maidstone Borough Council is getting £153,551 from a new £56 million Welcome Back Fund to boost tourism, improve green spaces, and provide more outdoor seating areas for friends and family to meet up safely.

In addition to extra funding, planning rules are being relaxed to allow businesses such as pubs and restaurants to serve more customers outside, and councils are being encouraged to extend opening hours for shops.

### **Action on pet theft**

I know pets mean the world to people. Having a much-loved dog or cat stolen is truly heart-breaking. I'm pleased that Ministers are looking at introducing higher sentences for pet theft, and the Government are also setting up a Taskforce to help tackle the problem.

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## Link Word Puzzle - Answers at the back (don't look first!)

<b>Find the missing word?</b>	
1	___ Martin, TV Comedy Drama set in a Cornish village
2	Francis ____, Lead singer in Status Quo
3	___ Fonda, Actress in Barbarella and Cat Ballou
4	Sporty ____, Name by which singer Melanie C was known
5	___ Army, Classic sitcom with Captain Mainwaring
6	John ____, Star of 'Saturday Night Fever'
7	Christopher ____, Architect who designed St Pauls Cathedral
8	Sydney ___ House, Australian landmark
9	___ Allen, Singer of 'Somewhere only we know'
10	Nigel ____, A TV chef

	Word 1	Word 2	Word 3	Answer
1	Writer	Split	Smoke	<b>Screen</b>
2	Rough	Jubilee	Industrial	
3	Block	Map	Hog	
4	Worm	Quake	Shattering	
5	Sake	Left	Fit	
6	New	Stream	Pressure	
7	Master	Police	Power	
8	Pole	Stone	Ship	
9	Uniform	Public	Play	
10	Waiter	Figure	Scarf	
11	Painting	Value	Coal	
12	Pitch	Tuning	Lift	
13	Magic	Tile	Red	
14	Green	Party	Iced	
15	Wrought	Flat	Cast	
16	Sausage	Drum	Pay	

## Grafty Green Gardening Club Programme 2021

Date	Speaker/Event	Topic
5 <sup>th</sup> January	Kevin Tooher	Pruning
2 <sup>nd</sup> February	Lucy Adams	Dry Gardening
2 <sup>nd</sup> March	Laura Brady	Vegetables & Herbs – Growing & Cooking
<b>6<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<b>Group Zoom 7.30</b>	<b>Flower Arrangements with a Spring Theme</b>
Sat 8 <sup>th</sup> May	Plant Sale, on the green if fine and in Hall if wet	
15 <sup>th</sup> May	Visit to Leonards lee Gardens	
1 <sup>st</sup> June	Visit to The Croft at Thurnham	
12 <sup>th</sup> June	Grafty Open Gardens	
6 <sup>th</sup> July	Visit to Godinton Garden	
3 <sup>rd</sup> August	Visit to Horton Farm	
7 <sup>th</sup> September	DeJaeger – Bulbs	
10/11/12 Sept	Weekend away in Herefordshire	
5 <sup>th</sup> October	Ian Gray (Mammal Society)	Hedgehogs
2 <sup>nd</sup> November	TBC	
7 <sup>th</sup> December	Visit Winter Event at Kew.	

### Grafty Green Gardening Club - Update for April

**GROUP ZOOM 7.30 on 6th April** - Flower Arrangements with a Spring Theme. Sue will host this event and a quick call or message to her will ensure that you receive a link on the night. Its been a while since we got together so we thought it would be good to meet up via zoom with a vase or arrangement of Spring flowers, buds etc and share in each others arrangements. Whilst our planned programme has been interrupted due to shutdown we intend to postpone any visits that are affected to next season.

**PLANT SALE on the VILLAGE GREEN - 8th May** - we are hopeful that this very popular event can take place next month, so, keep the morning free and if you have plants to sell please bring them along. We will be putting out a few chairs (distanced) a bit so we can catch up with gardening friends.

**In our Gardens:-** We can prune spring-flowering shrubs as soon as the flowers fade to encourage new growth to flower for next year, and trim grey-leaved shrubs to keep them bushy. Continue, sowing and planting vegetables outdoors and plant container

fruit trees. Watering is important for new trees and shrubs during dry spells. New aquatics can be purchased now. Spot treatment weedkiller will minimise damage to grass in lawns with few weeds.

If you would like to join the Gardening Club a subscription to our Treasurer Doreen Hulm at Lavender Cottage, Grafty Green of £5.00 will secure membership.

**Carole Frost - Secretary - Grafty Green Gardening Club.**

---

## **Grafty Gourmet**

This is a classic English dessert with an Italian twist. Another simple seasonal dish, that is great served with Vanilla Ice Cream.

### **Rhubarb with Amaretti Crumble**

#### **For the Filling:**

400g of rhubarb, cut into 5cm pieces  
1 large red eating apple (or 2 small),  
cut into chunks  
5 tablespoons of maple syrup  
4 tablespoons of demerara sugar, plus  
extra for sprinkling  
Finely grated zest of 1 orange  
½ teaspoon of ground cinnamon

1 teaspoon of vanilla bean paste or  
vanilla extract

#### **For the Amaretti Crumble:**

110g of plain flour  
75g of unsalted butter, cubed  
50g of amaretti biscuits, crumbled  
2 tablespoons of light muscovado  
sugar

1. Heat the oven to 190°C (170°C fan oven). Put the rhubarb, apple, maple syrup, demerara sugar, orange zest, cinnamon and vanilla in a oven proof dish.
2. In a separate bowl, rub together the plain flour and butter with your fingertips until it resembles breadcrumbs. Then stir in the amaretti and the light muscovado sugar.
3. Cover the fruit mixture evenly with the crumble mixture, then bake for 30 minutes or until the fruit is juicy and bubbling and the top is golden. Before serving, sprinkle over extra demerara sugar for crunch. Serve with Vanilla Ice Cream

## Grafty Geeks

**WhatsApp Messenger**, is a cross-platform, instant messenger for smartphones, so it works with both iPhones and Android phones.



### How to Set up WhatsApp

You can download WhatsApp from your phone's player (eg: App Store or Google Play).

WhatsApp will pick up existing contacts in your phone so you will be able to message them to let them know you are now on WhatsApp.



To add a new contact, use the new message icon, you will then have an option to add a new Contact.

WhatsApp voice and video calls use your phone's Internet connection (WiFi), so you can talk to your friends and family for free even if they're in another country, and it doesn't use your text message allowance. *note: data charges may apply, check with your provider for details*

It's simple to send photos and videos, which download quickly and are saved automatically into your gallery, which can then also be backed-up onto your computer or the cloud, if desired.

You can see when the messages have been received and read by the recipient with a double (blue) tick image on the message.

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## Music Notes for April 2021

Rumour has it that people are planning concerts in the Maidstone area in July, if progress on taming the virus continues as at present. I'll keep my ears open and hope to get you all up to date in future Music Notes. Meanwhile I will continue to regale you with musical anniversaries in April. There are lots so here are just a few:

- 6<sup>th</sup> April - 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Igor Stravinsky, Russian composer, pianist and conductor
- 15<sup>th</sup> April – 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1<sup>st</sup> performance of G F Handel's opera *Muzio Scevola*
- 23<sup>rd</sup> April – 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Sergei Prokofiev, Ukrainian & Soviet pianist and composer
- 24<sup>th</sup> April – 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Luigi Infantino, Italian opera singer

Some readers may need to look up the Handel opera, but I am going to guess that Infantino is the least well known of my short list, and so it is his Wikipedia biography I will summarise this month.

**Luigi Infantino** was born in Racalmuto, and studied at the Parma Conservatory with Italo Brancucci. He made his debut in 1943, at the Teatro Regio in Parma, as Rodolfo in *La Bohème*, which was also his debut role at the Teatro San Carlo in Naples, in 1945. With that company, he appeared in London as the Duke in *Rigoletto*, and Rodolfo. In 1948, he made his debut at the Teatro alla Scala and he sang that same year at the Verona Arena.

The tenor sang regularly in Naples and Bologna and made guest appearances at the New York City Opera in 1947. In 1949, the tenor went on a concert-tour of England and Australia and he toured England again in 1957 giving a concert at Cheltenham among others. In 1964 Infantino reprised his role of Edgardo at the Bombay Opera in India. He was also active throughout his career singing on Italian Radio (RAI), where he gave his last performance in 1973.

A stylish lyric tenor with an attractive voice, Infantino can be heard in complete recordings of *La traviata* (EMI, 1946) and *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (Cetra, 1950.). There is also a live recording of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, sung in Italian (Melodram, 1962).

By popular request the alphabet continues: **Consumption:** The act of reverence which unites musicians and alcohol in large quantities.

**Brian Hardy**

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## Christian Message April 2021

Somebody challenged me the other day to define what I meant by 'shame'. I was stumped because I'd never thought about it although I had felt it! Here's what the dictionary says; *"A painful feeling of humiliation or distress caused by the consciousness of wrong or foolish behaviour"*.

We don't talk about it, but I think there's a lot of shame around. There's shame that we haven't done well enough in education or in life, there's shame that we have been too privileged when others in the world are so poor, there's shame that we haven't done as well as our parent would have expected, and so on. The list is huge. Nearly everybody feels shame because we are all messed up people. We're not only messed up: we're also full of potential and hope – but we know we're messed up too. The Bible calls this messed-upness "sin".

The things we're ashamed of are getting much bigger these days as we realise the mess we've made of the planet and the danger of actually destroying it. Sin isn't just individual, it's also communal.

Easter turns this around. Easter is hope like a yellow daffodil blooming on a dark day. Easter is when Christians remember that Jesus, as God-on-earth, died a nasty and messy death, but then overcame all that messiness and rose again to life. If we look into the face of Jesus on the cross, or walking with his disciples after he rose again, our shame can be removed and released.

For those of us who feel we have personal reasons to feel shame, experiencing God's goodness as that shame is released can be utterly transformational. It is like feeling the warmth of the sun for the first time. Gratefulness is good but gratefulness leads us to live transformed lives, individually and communally.

How is your home, school, workplace and village doing its part to slow down global warming this Easter?

**John P Huggins 01622 850280**

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# Len Valley Benefice Apr 2021

*Everybody is welcome*

Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint.

*Isaiah 40:31*

***Important – Please note:***

***Given the frequently changing national situation, please continue to check notice boards, website and Facebook for the latest information.***

Our **Online Worship** will continue so please join us for our weekly service. **Traditional services** can be accessed by searching for 'Len Valley Benefice YouTube' and then looking for the correct date.

Breakfast Church are meeting by Zoom beginning at 9.30am each Sunday. Please email [vicar@lvb.org.uk](mailto:vicar@lvb.org.uk) for the link.

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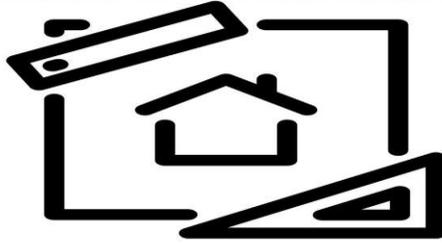
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First Aid Support – when **an ambulance has been called using 999** - Interim emergency support (first aid and AED defibrillator), prior to arrival of paramedics / ambulance, may be available (not 24/7) by calling Chris Wheal on 01622 858100 -this is a voluntary 'good Samaritan' facility for residents. It is hoped a SECAMB (ambulance) community first responder scheme may start in future

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Maidstone & Pembury Hospitals	<b>0845 155 1000</b>
William Harvey Hospital	<b>01233 633331</b>
Headcorn Surgery (out of hours listen to -	<b>01622 890294</b>
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## Answers to the Quiz and Missing Word Puzzle

	<b>Word 1</b>	<b>Word 2</b>	<b>Word 3</b>	<b>Answer</b>
1	Writer	Split	Smoke	<b>Screen</b>
2	Rough	Jubilee	Industrial	<b>Diamond</b>
3	Block	Map	Hog	<b>Road</b>
4	Worm	Quake	Shattering	<b>Earth</b>
5	Sake	Left	Fit	<b>Keep</b>
6	New	Stream	Pressure	<b>Blood</b>
7	Master	Police	Power	<b>Station</b>
8	Pole	Stone	Ship	<b>Flag</b>
9	Uniform	Public	Play	<b>School</b>
10	Walter	Figure	Scarf	<b>Head</b>
11	Painting	Value	Coal	<b>Face</b>
12	Pitch	Tuning	Lift	<b>Fork</b>
13	Magic	Tile	Red	<b>Carpet</b>
14	Green	Party	Iced	<b>Tea</b>
15	Wrought	Flat	Cast	<b>Iron</b>
16	Sausage	Drum	Pay	<b>Roll</b>

	<b>Find the missing word?</b>
1	<b>Doc</b> Martin, TV Comedy Drama set in a Cornish village
2	<b>Francis Rossi</b> , Lead singer in Status Quo
3	<b>Jane</b> Fonda, Actress in Barbarella and Cat Ballou
4	<b>Sporty Spice</b> , Name by which singer Melanie C was known
5	<b>Dad's Army</b> , Classic sitcom with Captain Mainwaring
6	<b>John Travolta</b> , Star of 'Saturday Night Fever'
7	Christopher <b>Wren</b> , Architect who designed St Pauls Cathedral
8	Sydney <b>Opera</b> House, Australian landmark
9	<b>Lily</b> Allen, Singer of 'Somewhere only we know'
10	<b>Nigel Slater</b> , A TV chef

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