

# Malherbe Monthly

Number 254  
September 2025



**Jenny Palmer aged 90**  
Never too old to have fun

## Useful contact names and telephone numbers

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Borough Councillors	Martin Round martinround@maidstone.gov.uk Ziggy Trzebinski ziggytrzebinski@maidstone.gov.uk	890276 07852 492770
Member of Parliament for the Weald of Kent	Katie Lam <a href="mailto:katie.lam.mp@parliament.uk">katie.lam.mp@parliament.uk</a>	01580 388344
Church Wardens	Kenneth Alexander Vanessa Goodwin	859549 858372
Parish Council Clerk	email boughtonmalherbepc@gmail.com	
Village Hall General Enquires	Jon Thompson Email: jon@griftygreenalpacas.co.uk	07932 112730
Gardening Club	Doreen Hulm	850287
Church Choir	Doreen Hulm	850287
Dance Fit	Sharon Harris	890170
Craft Group	Jan Carter	850898
Yoga	Sue Burch	07803 962339
Farmers Market	Tara Musson <a href="mailto:info.griftygreen@gmail.com">info.griftygreen@gmail.com</a>	
Parish Council Website	www.boughtonmalherbe.co.uk	
Priest in charge	Dr John Huggins email: vicar@lvb.org.uk	850280
Pilates	Cheryl Stubbs email: c.stubbs8@btinternet.com	07852 602369
Art Class	Cathy Hill email: cathyonthehill@hotmail.com	07927 045708
Tai Chi	Rhonda Bailey	07985 001782
Benefice Office	Sarah Hills email: churchoffice@lvb.org.uk Answer phone available out of hours	850604
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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 **October** edition should be sent to the Editor Carol Hulm via email ([carolhulm@gmail.com](mailto:carolhulm@gmail.com)) by **25<sup>th</sup> September**

## **Summer 2025 update from your Maidstone Borough Councillors MBC Mayor Martin Round and Ziggy Trzebinski**

It has been a busy year so far with one or two upsets from our perspective. A major one is that MBC are behind on housing targets and five-year land supply. This is the result of a scaling down in numbers of existing housing units on one or two sites as well as the current economic situation, making developers loathe to start developments which either they may not be able to sell, or make little profit. The knock-on effect is that even though MBC may refuse unsuitable applications, the Building Inspectorate may agree them just to get the numbers up.

The council has also, much against our own wishes, agreed to pump £7.5m into the de-carbonisation of Maidstone House, when its value is currently only £4m. With only two years remaining for Maidstone Borough Council to run, this is a folly, as no-one knows what will happen to the building after local government re-organisation.

Additionally, 3 Independent Councillors have resigned from Lenham which will lead to a by-election costing the council in excess of £50k. It would seem that the current administration has some challenges!

The good news? Well, our Mayor, Martin Round, has been busy promoting Maidstone to businesses, supporting local charities and generally attending many civic events. The VJ day celebration in Headcorn was well attended and a very good afternoons entertainment after the serious matter of remembering our fallen war heroes.

Ziggy has been involved in a fair number of planning matters and ward casework. Positive news is that there is now a project to alleviate the effects of flooding in both Headcorn and Ulcombe, in which he has been involved. It is hoped that the many properties in the area will be protected sufficiently to withstand flash floods within the next 18 to 24 months.

Both Martin and Ziggy have attended as many parish council meetings as possible and contributed positively to the meetings.

## Message from Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS)

"We've had a great response to the consultation, so thanks to all for your support.

Please see below to learn about our new seasonal newsletter – **featuring vital content for parish magazines and community newsletters** throughout the year:

*"With around 40% of businesses in Kent located in rural areas, Kent Fire and Rescue Service is working to help landowners and rural businesses stay safe from fire and other emergencies.*

*To support this, the service has launched a **seasonal newsletter** that will include relevant safety advice and updates - such as wildfire warning advice, changes in fire safety legislation, and the latest developments in rural firefighting equipment and vehicles.*

*The aim is to help farmers and rural business owners **prepare, act, and protect what matters most.***

You can sign up to this newsletter by clicking here:

<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKORGKF/signup/46917>

There's also now a dedicated web page with lots of useful guidance and advice

- <https://www.kent.fire-uk.org/farms-agricultural-and-rural-businesses>



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### Message from David Jenkins, Stream Farm

A resident, considering involvement into a speed watch campaign supported by the Kent Police has asked for the following to be included in this month's magazine.

Calling for volunteers to help with a speed watch campaign, if interested please use the following link to register [www.communityspeedwatch.org](http://www.communityspeedwatch.org)



### Community Speedwatch Online

#CommunityEngagement: Speeding has reached epidemic proportions and calls for a paradigm shift in the way we tackle it. That shift must include a change in the perception and management of community volunteers involvement with road safety. [https://web2.communityspeedwatch.org/FRONT-v2-The Scheme.php?m=20..](https://web2.communityspeedwatch.org/FRONT-v2-The+Scheme.php?m=20..)

[www.communityspeedwatch.org](http://www.communityspeedwatch.org)

## **The Grafty Green Wanderers cricket match against Smarden goes down to the very last ball.....**



As the Grafty Green Wanderers gathered outside the oak framed Pavilion, the late evening sun glistening as it hit the wicket of Smarden Cricket Club there was definite tension in the air.....

Where were the opposition? Were the Wanderers at the right ground ?

The visible strain on the face of the Match organiser, Paul “ The Brickie “ faded away as the Smarden Team arrived, a young, fit and very athletic group of players...!

The Grafty Green Growlers gathered on the edge of the outfield and were again joined by David Chantler, a player from the 1950's, who remarked that there were 4 Chantlers supporting the Wanderers Team tonight, himself and 3 in the Smarden Church graveyard !

Carol took her seat, as the traditional barrel of Harvey's was gently placed on the steps to the Pavilion, The Wanderers won the toss and decided to bowl.... Game on!

The Wanderers opening bowling pair of Josh “ Hanky Panky “ and Gary “ Gray by Night “ Thompson tore into the Opening Batsman, one being caught off a great delivery by “ Hanky Panky “ and the other being clean bowled by a magnificent delivery from “ Gray by Night “ leaving Smarden at 6 for 2. The opening Bowlers finished their 4 overs with exactly the same stats of 16 for 1, an excellent start.

The Wanderers were delivering a much improved fielding performance with everyone committing to save every run, the highlight of which was a “Simone Biles” like gymnastic tumble by “ Hanky Panky “ on the boundary to save a definite 4 to the obvious delight of the Growlers.

Smarden's number 3 and 4 batsman, namely Hooton and Hope had to steady the ship and they did so by slowly putting on runs until Hope was clean bowled by Matt “ The Beef “ Iles for 20 with a classic Bothamesk like delivery.

Toby joined Hooton at the wicket until “ The Brickie “ delivered a teasing delivery that Hooton sent miles into the air, it hung for what seemed an eternity until it landed into James “Baby face “ Iles, safe pair of hands, with “The Brickie “ ending up with excellent bowling figures of 1 for 17.

Smarden were now 69 for 4 with just 5 overs to spare when their leading Batsman, Andy Underwood strolled to the crease. He made his intentions clear from the start when hitting 3 boundaries in his first over, a couple of quick singles in the next, then 2 sixes in the third and another 2 sixes in the last.

He stood on 47 with the last ball to come, the Wanderers set out to stop a final boundary, Steve "The leg " Legon delivered a looping spinning delivery which only gave up a single, denying the batsman his 50 to leave Smarden with a final score of 123 for 4.

Knowing what was required The Wanderers opening batsmen took to the field. Over the years, many a young youthful cricketer had learned their stroke play under the tutelage of Jack "The Prof " Geary but today was his day and it was his time. A quick single and then he was in his stride keeping the scoreboard ticking over with boundary after boundary.

Nick "The Chairman " Eastwood was struggling to find the rhythm and panache he'd shown in the nets a few weeks before and was eventually bowled by Hope in the 8th over leaving The Wanderers at 37 for 1 just slightly behind the required run rate.

"Baby face " The Captain, strolled to the crease to face Hope. Three good length balls were just pushed away and then BOOM! "Baby Face " drove one to boundary, the Growlers erupted, he meant business.

The partnership with "The Prof " lasted until the 15th over when "The Prof " on a fabulous 45 was caught off the bowling of Leggis. A great innings which included 8 boundaries leaving The Wanderers on 81-2.

Dean "Scratchin Tendulkar " made his way to crease, he was lucky to survive the first delivery which struck his toe, swung wildly and missed at the second which safely reached the keepers hands, the third cleanly removing his middle stump meant a long walk back to the Pavillon and a "Bombay " duck.

Ada "The Hook " then nicked a good delivery from Wilding which was caught by an excellent wicket keeper much to the frustration of his grandchildren who missed his time at the wicket.

The Wanderers having lost a quick succession of wickets found themselves at 86 for 4.

Niall "The Ginger " joined "Baby face " in the middle and played a great supporting roll running between the wickets as "Baby Face " kept the scoreboard ticking over. "The Ginger " was finally caught off the bowling of Andy Underwood.

"Hanky Panky " then joined the fray until he was run out for 5 after chasing down every opportunity.

“Baby Face “ continued dominating the strike with 2 fabulous sixes until he launched another Underwood delivery high towards the boundary. The Growlers willed it over, alas it fell through the oak tree to be caught magnificently just inside the boundary rope. A fantastic Captains innings of 59 including 3 sixes and 5 fours had come to an end.

The Wanderers were 119 for 7 requiring 5 runs to win the game with just 1 ball remaining.

As the light started to fade, The Beef “ was on strike, he knew what he had to do as the Smarden team spread themselves around the boundary, camouflaged by their green tops they seem to disappear into the green foliage like the Japanese in the Burmese jungle.

Underwood came into deliver the final ball, it fizzed on the pitch but just didn’t pop onto “ The Beef’s “ swinging willow bat, no run.

Smarden were returned the victors by 4 runs, a fabulous game taken down to the very last ball of the day.

I would like to mention Mark “ The Essex Swinger “ who gallantly stepped in as umpire delivering an authoritative and phlegmatic “Dickie Bird “ esk performance, “Dangerous “ Dave Ryan who took control of the sophisticated electronic scoreboard in the Clubhouse and finally “ The Docker “ for his thoughtful motivational speeches and general barracking both at the match and in the Chequers afterwards.

Man of the match was your beloved Captain, “ Baby face” Iles with a true Captain’s innings of 59 peppered with multiple boundaries and an outstanding catch whilst fielding deep in the outfield.

A village cricket team is all about engaging with the community, and fostering a sense of belonging, so if you have some cricketing prowess and want to come along to join the Team practice sessions, please feel free to contact Paul on 07803 610800.

Our next match is against Egerton at 2pm on Sunday 21st September so please come along and join the “Grafty Green Growlers “ in supporting your village Cricket Team.



## Village Hall News – September Newsletter

Dear All,

At the time of writing this newsletter having consulted with our electrician Tim I am pleased to inform you that we appear to be on track to re-open the hall after the electrical rewire the week beginning the 1<sup>st</sup> of September and on behalf of the trustees I would like to thank you all for your patience and understanding whilst the hall has been closed for these works to be undertaken.

I should also like to thank Tim for his hard work with the project. As a community we are reliant on the work to be completed in a timely manner and Tim has been most diligent in working towards achieving this goal. The lighting, sockets and kitchen should all be fully completed and safe to use, there will be a slight delay whilst the heating is fully connected, tested and signed off for use, but this should all be fully operational shortly after the hall opens for business again at the beginning of September.

There will be some superficial damage to the internal decoration to the hall following the works, and pictures etc. may not be immediately returned to the walls but this will be rectified as soon as possible.

As part of the refurbishment, we will have this damage made good and the hall redecorated over the Christmas break. Colour choices will be displayed at the hall which everyone can consider, and there will be an opportunity to vote on your preferred colour scheme so, if you have the time please come along to the hall and cast your vote. The last time the hall was redecorated internally was probably 20 years ago so if the majority vote for bright pink be careful what you wish for as you may be stuck with it for a very long time!

Finally, we have a mysterious benefactor, who wishes to remain anonymous, has very kindly donated several hundred pounds to the village hall. They have enjoyed using the hall over many decades and wished to give something back to the community. You know who you are and on behalf of the trustees I wanted to acknowledge your kindness and generosity which is very much appreciated. You can be sure we will put your donation to good use for the community's benefit.

The trustees look forward to welcoming you all back to the hall and as always, we thank you for your ongoing support.

Kind Regards

Jon Thompson Village Hall Committee Chairman

[jon@graftygreenalpacas.co.uk](mailto:jon@graftygreenalpacas.co.uk) Tel 07932 112730

[www.graftygreenvillagehall.co.uk](http://www.graftygreenvillagehall.co.uk) facebook – [graftygreenvillage](https://www.facebook.com/graftygreenvillage)



# **Grafty Green Village Hall**

Bookings 07932 112730

## **Regular Weekly Events**

**Yoga – mixed ability**  
Susan Burch 07803 962339

**Mondays and Thursdays 9.30 – 11am**  
**Wednesdays 7 – 8.30pm**

**Pilates**  
Cheryl Stubbs 07852 602369

**Tuesdays 9.30 – 10.30 am**

**Post Office**

**Tuesdays 12.45 – 2.15pm**  
**Thursdays 11.15 – 1.15pm**

**Coffee morning**

**Tuesdays 12.00 – 2.00pm**

**Short Mat Bowls**  
Joan Marriott 07503 568874

**Tuesdays 2.30 – 5.30pm**

**Dance Fit**  
Sharon Harris 01622 890170

**Wednesdays 11 – 12.30pm**

**Tai Chi**  
Rhonda Bailey 07985 001782

**Thursdays 2.00 – 3.00pm**

**Craft Group**  
Janis Carter 01622 850898

**Fridays 10 -12.00pm**

**Art Class**  
Cathy Hill 07927054708

**Alternate Wednesdays 1 – 3.30pm**  
**Alternate Thursdays 7-9pm**

**Farmer's Market**  
Tara – graftygreen.info@gmail.com

**Friday 1- 3pm**

## **Regular Monthly Events**

**Gardening Club**  
Doreen 01622 850287

**First Tuesday 7.30 - 9pm**

**Digital Kent**

**Fourth Tuesday 12 – 2pm**

## **Tai Chi – restarts on 25<sup>th</sup> September in the Village Hall**

### **From Liz Burgess**

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of September a new term of Tai Chi starts in the village hall. As a class we have enjoyed an hour of gentle movements from a lovely Rhonda Bailey of Abundant Energy.

If you would like an hour of peace and calm learning the moves, then why not join us in the hall, for me it's an hour of gentle movement and concentration. We are a very friendly group, and it would be good to have you join us. Just come along, we are all in the early stages of learning just a few moves so no fears of joining an advanced group.

If you would like further information, contact Rhonda by email at [bex.taichi@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bex.taichi@yahoo.co.uk) or call 07985 001782.



# The Grafty Gourmet

This is another very simple yet great recipe. Honey and Mustard are always a great partner for sausages.

## SAUSAGE, APPLE & BUTTERNUT SQUASH TRAY BAKE

1 small [butternut squash](#), about 750g  
2 [red onions](#), sliced into rings  
2 [apples](#), unpeeled, cored and sliced  
12 [pork sausages](#)  
3 tablespoons of [olive oil](#)  
1 tablespoon of runny [honey](#)  
1 teaspoon of [English mustard](#)  
salt and freshly ground [black pepper](#)  
15g fresh flatleaf [parsley](#), finely chopped, to garnish

1. Preheat the oven to 200C/180C Fan. Cut the butternut squash into quarters and leave it unpeeled. Remove the seeds then cut each quarter into 5mm slices.
2. Place the butternut squash a large baking tray with the onion, apple and sausages. Drizzle with 1 tablespoon oil and season well with salt and pepper. Roast for 20 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, whisk together the honey, mustard and remaining oil in a small bowl. Drizzle over the sausages and vegetables and turn to coat everything in the dressing.
4. Return to the oven for 10 minutes until the sausages are browned and cooked through and the vegetables are tender. Sprinkle over the parsley and serve.

The Grafty Gourmet

## Grafty Green Gardening Club

Meetings take place in Grafty Green Village Hall, usually on the first Tuesday of the month and begin at 7.30. Members contribute £2 for each meeting where we have a speaker and guests (always welcome) £4.

Outings take place from May to August this year and the cost and final details will be sent out prior to the event.

Membership £5 - contact Doreen Hulm (Treasurer) 01622 850287

### Programme for 2025

Date	Speaker/Event	Topic
2 <sup>nd</sup> September	Autumn Show & Rachel Castle (Swallowfields Nursery)	Shine a light on bulbs!
7 <sup>th</sup> October	Kevin Tooher	The Edwardian gardens of Sussex
4 <sup>th</sup> November	Ed Flint (head gardener at Tidewell Manor Robertsbridge)	Roses and friends
December	Leeds Castle light show	

## Gardening Tips

### Gardening tips for September

- Clear spent crops in the veg plot. Mulch after rain or sow green manures.
- Continue to sow hardy annuals, direct or in modules.
- Order or buy spring bulbs. Daffodils can be planted later in the month.
- In flower borders, divide perennials that have got too big for their space to rejuvenate their growth.
- Plant any new perennials. Both jobs need to be done once it rains!
- Cut back top dead/spent growth of perennials that look untidy but leave any with interesting seed heads.
- Plant containers for spring and winter interest once summer bedding has finished flowering.
- Sow oriental leaves.....mizuna, mustard and pak choi.
- Take cuttings of tender plants, eg. fuschias and pelargoniums.
- Cut down wildflower areas of lawn and leave for a few days for seeds to drop before composting the top growth.

It's been difficult to remain positive in the garden when so many plants seem to be suffering from lack of water. I have been cutting back dead growth and hoping that perennials will revive once the rain comes and will spring back into life next spring. Focus on the plants and crops that have enjoyed the hot, sunny and dry weather. I've had a bumper crop of figs!

## **Sue's Blog – nature notes**

This month I have noticed that I have a willow warbler in the silver birch and gold crests in the neighbour's leylandii; a nice bonus for such and uninteresting tree! And, the starlings are beginning to gather in their flocks which gave me entertainment last winter with their murmurations.

It was the 11<sup>th</sup> August that I heard the robin singing again; they go quiet and then start again in August but with their winter song!

Then, 12<sup>th</sup> August, the night when there was a chance of seeing a meteor shower; the day had been hot and the skies a cloudless blue, so I anticipated a clear view of the night sky. Not only are there too many streetlights to get a really good dark sky but a mist rolled in obscuring the sky completely. The next morning was one of those misty starts to the day that often happen in August.

### **Yoga with Susan = weekly classes Grafty Green Village Hall**

**Term starts 8<sup>th</sup> September :-**

**Monday morning 9.30am – 11.00am**

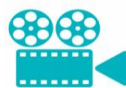
**Wednesday evening 7.00pm – 8.30pm**

**Thursday morning 9.30am – 11.00am**

Yoga can be powerful as well as gentle, getting to know what your body needs through a regular practice.

For more information or to enrol for the new term - please give me a call  
07803 962339

**Lenham Film Club**  
*at Lenham Community Centre, Groom Way*



**LENHAM**  
**FILM CLUB**

# California Suite

**Friday, September 12<sup>th</sup>**

**Performance begins 19.30, doors open 19.00**

Running time 1 hr 38 mins, director: Herbert Ross

Our September performance is **California Suite** (1978) which was the winning film from our audience vote for this season. The late Dame Maggie Smith is part of a fabulous all-star cast alongside Walter Matthau, Michael Caine, Jane Fonda, Bill Cosby, Richard Prior & Alan Alda. Maggie Smith won the Best Supporting Actress Oscar for her performance in *California Suite*, one of the two Oscar-winning performances of her career. The film is based on the Neil Simon play of the same name and features four separate stories about the dilemmas and misadventures of guests staying in a suite at the Beverly Hills Hotel. Four great comedy stories in one film, lots of stars - it's sure to be enjoyable so do join us.

As well as showing a great film on September 12<sup>th</sup>, we'll also be revealing the fabulous line up of films that we'll be showing as part of our Autumn and Winter 2025/2026 season. There'll be more about our future films in the October issue of Focus.

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.



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



[www.lenhamfilmclub.org](http://www.lenhamfilmclub.org)

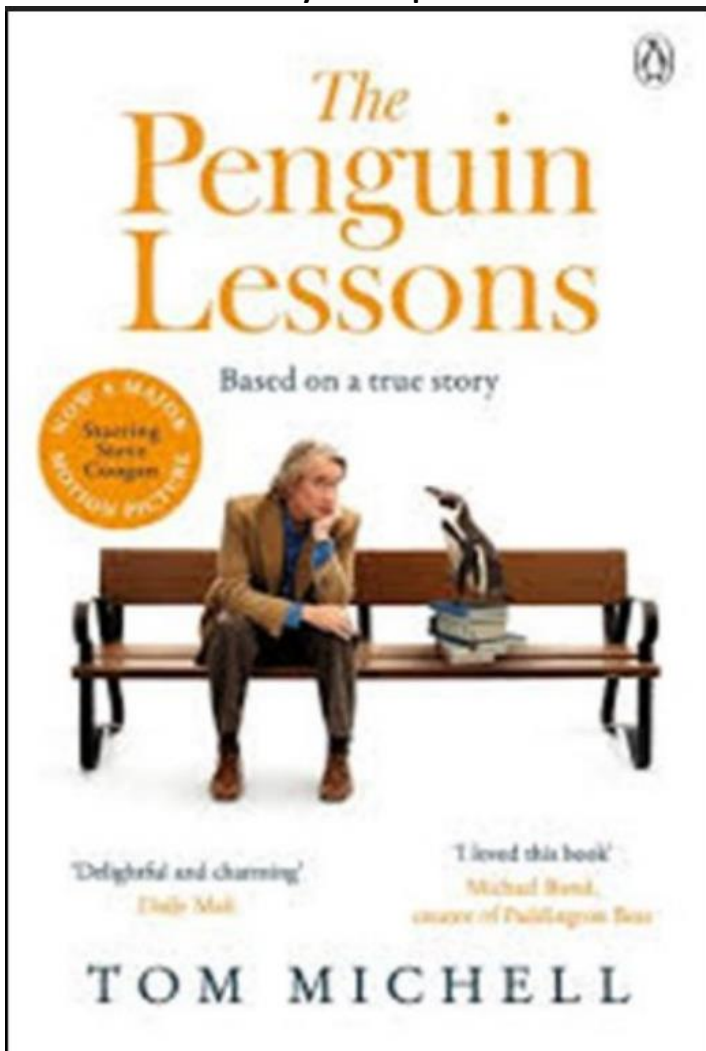


[@lenhamfilmclub](https://www.facebook.com/lenhamfilmclub)

## Egerton Film Society

Egerton Millennium Hall, Elm Close, Egerton TN27 9DS

Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> September



Everyone is welcome to attend. Price is £6 per film (payable on the door - cash or card payment). Doors open at 7pm.

There is a fully licensed bar serving refreshments before the film showing which begins at 7.30pm.



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# PIZZA NIGHT @ THE KINGS HEAD

## GRAFTY GREEN

### FUTURE DATES 2025

- ☐ JUNE 2ND AND 18TH
- ☐ JULY 2ND 30TH
- ☐ AUGUST 13TH AND 27TH
- ☐ SEPTEMBER 10TH AND 24TH

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# BOUGHTON MALBERBE PARISH COUNCIL



[boughtonmalherbe.co.uk](http://boughtonmalherbe.co.uk)

## NOTICE OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

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To: All Councillors,

You are hereby summoned to a Meeting of Boughton Malherbe Parish Council at 7.30pm  
Monday 1 September 2025 to be held at Grafty Green Village Hall.

Dated: 22nd August 2025

*Marie Norris*, Parish Clerk

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Members of the public are very welcome to attend and will have an opportunity to speak. All  
background papers can be found at : [BMPC Full Meeting September](#)

### BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED

1. (a) Apologies for absence received and confirmed by the Council.  
(b) Declarations of changes to the Register of Interests.  
(c ) Declarations of Pecuniary Interest or other interest as defined by the Kent Code of Conduct and Localism Act 2011 on any items on the agenda.  
(d) Requests for Dispensations.  
(e) Declarations of Lobbying
2. **Public Session:** Chairman to invite members of the public to speak on any items on the agenda only. The duration of speaking time will be at the Chairman's discretion.
3. **To resolve that the minutes of the Boughton Malherbe Full Parish Council Meeting held on 7th July 2025** to be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
4. **County Councillor/Borough Councillor Reports**
5. **Receive progress and update of resolutions from the last meeting** (Information only)
6. **Planning**
  - (a) To consider any planning applications received for consideration up to the date of the meeting.

APPLICATION REF: 25/503371/FULL

ADDRESS: Little Southernden Southernden Road Headcorn Kent

COMMENTS DUE BY: 5 September 2025,

- (b) To note planning decisions received from the Borough Council on recent applications.

**7. Finance**

- (a) To note receipts of Income
- (b) To authorise payments listed on the schedule
- (c) To receive the bank reconciliation

**8 .Bank Account Review**

- a) Update on progress of Nationwide Account Closure
- b) To consider Cllr Thompson's findings on accounts to hold reserves.

**9. Planning Policy Advice**

- a) Review response from T Gilbert

**10. Neighbourhood Plan**

- a) To determine the way forward

**11. Traffic Calming Measures**

- a) To consider if there is a requirement for further action by the PC on this matter at this point.

**12. Local Government Service Pay Award**

- a) To note the 25/26 pay award for clerk (spine point 11)

**13. Purchase of Wreath for Remembrance Service**

- a) Consideration for the above

**14. Christmas Preparations**

- (For discussion)

*Marie Norris*

Clerk to Boughton Malherbe Parish Council

## News from St. Nicolas Church – September 2025

Just a hint of Autumn this evening as we returned home after an evening with friends, a bit chilly and already almost dark by 9.30pm. Summer is nearly over, Cream Teas have ended for this year, the Village Hall refurbishments completed and we return to Coffee Time and the Farmers' Market in the Hall again, and so we look forward to our Harvest events next month. With the turbulent and worrying events around the world and closer to home, it is comforting to know that our social life and community spirit in this place is keeping its sense of stability and purpose.

### Usual reminders

The church porch remains open at all times. Take a moment in your walk to rest, make a hot drink, perhaps dip into the bible (on the windowsill) and relax in the amazing location. Do make use of the mini food bank box if you need. There is a larger food bank at the back of St. Mary's church in Lenham, open daily from 10.00am-4.00pm.

Personal prayer requests can be left in the porch and will be prayed for in church as soon as possible.

There is a cold tap at the back of the church building, around the corner beyond the West Door if you need to refill the jug or kettle or the dog bowl.

The main building is open for services, cleaning, meetings etc. If you wish to visit at other times, please contact the churchwardens for a key.

**Village Cake and Coffee Time** returns to the Village Hall next month, each Tuesday 12.00noon-2.00pm, timed to coincide with the Post Office 12.45-2.15pm. It has been great to be able to host the event at the church through August, with lovely weather and our usual friends and visitors. This month we have been able to donate £100 to Cash for Kids, through Magic Radio, 'a charity providing a helping hand to disabled and disadvantaged children around the UK'.

In August we were able to celebrate the 'same day' birthdays of three of our regulars, Rob, Doreen and Jenny. Many congratulations to Jenny on her 90th birthday and thank you for sharing it with us! (see photo front cover)

### News

**The Farmers' Market.** We are back with a stall at the Farmers' Market and will be there twice a month. The first time back our special scones were Rhubarb and Ginger and were a big hit! We have enjoyed doing two of the events on the Green. In September we will be back in the Hall.



**Cream Teas.** It has been a very successful season, and we have met so many friends, made new friends and welcomed visitors from far and wide. Thanks to all who have worked hard each Sunday, setting up, tidying up, organising, washing up, taking orders and welcoming guests, cooking, laundry and many other unnoticed tasks. Thanks, too to those who visited and told us their stories, especially how they found us, from a descendant of the Countess of Chesterfield's 3rd husband Daniel O'Neil with a

book containing a photo of our lions (from her tomb), to a couple from The Netherlands who met Kathy in a shop the day before!

We know the Cream Teas are in safe hands with our latest young helper, who now joins the Crew.



### **The Retirement of Revd. John Huggins on Sunday 14th September**

There is a warm invitation to attend the service and/or the lunch celebration marking his time as vicar in the Len Valley Benefice. The service is at 11am in St.Mary's, Lenham and afterwards at about 12.30pm in the Community Centre in Lenham.

### **Future Dates**

Harvest Supper in the Village Hall on Saturday 11th October 7pm

Harvest Festival with refreshments and auction of produce 3.30pm on Sunday 12th October.

### **Finally**

Please hold Revd. John and Lorraine in your prayers as they leave here and move to a new home and as Revd. John continues with his recovery. We send our love and all good wishes for their future.

Sally Alexander



# ***Len Valley Benefice***

## ***September 2025***

**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*



### **Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September**

**9.30am** Lenham: Holy Communion  
**11.00am** Harrietsham: Chippendayle

### **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> September**

**9.30am** Boughton Malherbe: Holy Communion (BCP)  
**9.30am** Lenham: Breakfast Church  
**9.30am** Harrietsham: Morning Worship  
**11.00am** Lenham: Holy Communion

### **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> September**

**11.00am Benefice Retirement Service for Revd. Dr. John Huggins at St Mary's, Lenham**

#### ***The Retirement of Revd. Dr. John Huggins***

Please join us for a Benefice Service at 11.00am at St Mary's Church, Lenham on **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2025**.  
Revd. John will officiate. This will be John's last service with us in LVB prior to his retirement.

Following the service, a buffet lunch will be provided for everyone at Lenham Community Centre, finishing at 4.00pm.

All are welcome to both the service and/or buffet.  
Please join us as we thank John and Lorraine and wish them well for their next chapter.

### **Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> September**

**8.00am** Lenham: Holy Communion (BCP)  
**9.30am** Boughton Malherbe: Holy Communion  
**9.30am** Harrietsham: Holy Communion  
**9.30am** Lenham: Breakfast Church  
**11.00am** Ulcombe: Holy Communion  
**11.00am** Lenham: Morning Worship

### **Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> September**

**11.00am Benefice Holy Communion at St Nicholas, Boughton Malherbe**

# Christian Message September 2025

Dear people of Grafty Green

By the time you read this it will be nearly time for my last service in the Len Valley Benefice before I retire. I have been vicar in the area for eight years, and time has flashed by, bringing many unexpected things. Of course, there was the whole Covid epidemic when church services went on-line, and then- at a more personal level- this year I have needed to deal with my own mother's death (her ashes are in the graveyard in Lenham) and a great big operation to restore my heart function. (The good news is that it was a great success, thanks be to God.)

The biggest thing I want to say in this Christian message is a humungous, 'Thank you'. One of the reasons that I felt drawn to this area is that it was so friendly and the churches were so welcoming. Not all villages are like that. Some are snobby, or closed to all 'outsiders', and in some all sense of community has evaporated. But you are not like that. This whole area is one where newcomers are welcomed and encouraged to join those who have been born and bred here. Thank you for welcoming my wife and I here.

Our local schools in this area are an enormous asset, and so are our churches. They are not just there for occasional services but are places of real warmth that inject kindness and compassion into our villages, as well as being places for marking the significant events in life. They contain many people who really care, whether that means listening, or running food banks, or village breakfasts, or cream teas, or running coffee and cake.

Sadly, the running finances of our churches are not very healthy. What will happen as I leave will be in the hands of the church wardens as well as the local Archdeacon from Maidstone, but some solution to continue ministry in this area will be sought and found. If you care about the ongoing life of the churches here, then please do speak to the church wardens (Kenneth Alexander and Vanessa Goodwin) to encourage them.

Let me end by praying for you. *May the God whose love for us was so great that he sent his son to die for us, bless all the peoples in this wonderful Len Valley Benefice, and may the churches in this area thrive and flourish to reflect ever more fully the eternal good news: that God in his love is for us and not against us.*

Vicars have to move on when they retire (so that they're not a pain in the proverbial to future vicars!), but Lorraine and I will miss you so much. God be with you!

John, Priest-in-Charge of Len Valley Benefice from 2017 to 2025.

# Emergency and Help Contact Details

Police, Fire and Ambulance Emergencies	<b>999</b>
Police, Non-Emergency - (Including PCSO .....	<b>101</b>

Ambulance 999 note: an **aed** 'public access **defibrillator**' is sited and available 24/7 at the premises (in porch) of A.W. Court in Headcorn road. Ambulance 999 control centre will give 999 callers the lock code, if appropriate, to access the **defibrillator**.

NHS Medical Helpline	<b>111</b>
Maidstone & Pembury Hospitals	<b>0845 155 1000</b>
William Harvey Hospital	<b>01233 633331</b>
Headcorn Surgery      ( <i>out of hours listen to</i>	<b>01622 890294</b>
Lenham Surgery <i>recorded messages</i> )	<b>01622 858341</b>

Electricity (UK Power Networks)	
<i>Emergencies and Power Cuts</i>	<b>0800 783 8866</b>
	<b>Or 01243 508866</b>

Water	<i>Emergencies</i>	<b>0333 000 0002</b>
Southern Water Foul and Waste Water drainage/Flooding		<b>0330 303 0368</b>
Calor Gas	<i>Emergencies</i>	<b>08457 444999</b>
KCC	<i>Emergencies</i>	<b>03000 41 41 41</b>
	<i>Highways</i>	<b>03000 41 81 81</b>

KCC Community Wardens:

<i>Local warden – Stuart Ellesmere</i>		<b>07969 583923</b>
<i>District Support – Dawn Riach-Brown</i>		<b>07773 397125</b>
Fire	<i>General Enquiries</i>	<b>01622 692121</b>
	<i>Home Safety Visits</i>	<b>0800 923 7000</b>

R.S.P.C.A	<i>Emergencies</i>	<b>0300 1234 999</b>
Vet	<i>24 Hour Pet Emergency Treatment Service</i>	<b>01622 734555</b>

Maidstone Borough Community Protection - **01622 602202** – Bonfires, crime, dogs, domestic abuse, loan sharks, noise, pests and protection orders

Environmental Services – **01622 602162** – Fly tipping, Street cleaning, Litter, Bins, dead animals

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