

Malherbe Monthly Number 245 December 2024

Grafty Green Christmas Tree Lighting Celebration Friday 6th December 4pm on the Green



Mulled wine, Baileys, Ginger wine, hot chocolate, mince pies and sausage rolls

Children can visit Father Christmas and play in the 'snow'

Carol singing with Platts Heath Primary School and St Nicholas Church Choir

This community event is kindly sponsored by the Boughton Malherbe Parish Council

Useful contact names and telephone numbers.

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County Councillor	Shellina Prendergast Shellina.Prendergast@kent.gov.uk	07970 461160		
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Church Wardens	Kenneth Alexander Vanessa Goodwin	859549 858372		
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Village Hall bookings	Jan Carter email janlcarter@btinternet.com	850898		
Village Hall General Enquires	Jon Thompson Email: jon@graftygreenalpacas.co.uk Mobile 07932 112730	851351		
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		
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 **January** edition should be left in Grafty Green Telephone Box, or contact Carol on 07990 574214 (carolhulm@gmail.com) by **20th December**

News from St. Nicolas Church – November 2024

After 2 hours of candlelight with Storm Bert howling around, the electricity is now restored. We have been spared the problems of this storm compared with many parts of the country. One daughter is now staying tonight with her sister in Cheltenham after driving through flood water and damaging the car engine. Not sure if she will get here anytime soon! Again, nothing life-threatening as in many areas and we are grateful to have access to support and facilities to keep us safe and engines repaired. Large parts of the world are in crisis, through war and violence, their needs are so much greater. With Christmas coming we remember poverty and hostility are nothing new, for even Jesus was born in a stable, no support of family around, in a time of violence and danger with a nation invaded and subjected to harsh foreign rule. Will we ever learn from history.

Reminders

The church porch always remains open for everyone, whatever the weather. A shelter as winter approaches, a place to make a hot drink, chat with a friend and enjoy the landscape, perhaps a time to open the bible on the windowsill. There are prayer request sheets if you need. These will be collected from the porch and prayed for at Monday morning prayer time.

Make use of the mini food bank if you need. Remember there is a larger food bank at the back of St. Mary's church in Lenham, open daily from 10.00am - 4.00pm.

The main church building is open for services, meetings, cleaning etc. Please contact the church wardens for a key if you wish to visit at other times.

The church service times are on the notice boards by the porch, by the bench on the roadside and outside the village hall in Grafty Green as well as in the magazines.

Celtic Morning Prayer is said each Monday morning 9.00am - 9.30am.

This is an informal time with short bible readings and time for discussion and prayer, spoken or in silence. A time to remember the needs of our friends, neighbours, world issues and ourselves, a gentle, thoughtful way to start the week.

The Village Coffee morning takes place every Tuesday.

Please note that from **Tuesday 3rd December** the time will be from 12 noon-2.00pm so it might be better to call it, **Village Coffee and Cake Time!**

This will be a time to continue making use of the Post Office, 12.45-2.15pm.

We think this may suit everyone through the winter and, as usual, we will review at any time, so please join us and tell us any preferences. All proceeds from any donations are shared equally between St.Nicolas Church and a charity, chosen by the regulars.

Christmas Craft Fair. We would like to thank all who organised the Craft Fair, quite a task over the two days. As usual, we really enjoyed being a part of this very friendly and welcoming occasion. A special mention for the amazing cakes and savouries on the Saturday and the ham sandwiches on the Sunday. On our church stall, many thanks to Jacquie and especially to her lovely granddaughter Millie, a real treasure and expert raffle ticket seller for the Craft Club! We raised in excess of £123 for the church funds, so thank you to those who visited us.

December special Christmas events at St.Nicolas church

Carol Service will be on Sunday 15th December at 3.30pm

Followed by mulled wine and mince pies. We look forward to meeting everyone then!

Crib Service will be at 3.30pm on Christmas Eve.

A special occasion and opportunity for us all to welcome the baby Jesus as he is laid in the crib in the stable.

Christmas Day service is at 10am on Christmas Day

Wishing everyone a very Happy Christmas and New Year

Sally Alexander

Church Choirs

In common with our sister Churches, our church is liable to lose its choir unless we can find a few more voices.

We attend three services a month, all very different. The first is Evensong on the 2nd Sunday at 3.30 in the winder and 6.30 otherwise. The next one is Eucharist, which is at 9.30 in the morning on the third Sunday of the month. The last one is on the fourth Sunday of the month and is a meeting of all four Churches and choirs for a service at one of our Churches.



There is always tea, coffee and cake afterwards and a chance to have a chat. We're a friendly lot!

If you, or someone you know would be interested, why not give me a call on 01622 850287. Maybe you could only manage one or two of the services. The Christmas Carol service would be a lovely one to start! **Doreen Hulm**

Boughton Malherbe Parish Council News



Boughton Malherbe Parish Council

boughtonmalherbe.co.uk

NOTICE OF MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

To: All Councillors,

You are hereby summoned to a Planning Committee Meeting of Boughton Malherbe Parish Council at 7.00pm on Monday 9th December 2024 to be held in the Village Hall.

Dated: 21st November 2024

M Norris Parish Clerk

Members of the public are very welcome to attend and will have an opportunity to speak. All background papers can be found at 20241209 BMPC Planning Meeting

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
- <u>Public Session</u>: 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.

<u>Consultation Document</u>

To consider our comments on the consultation on the Proposed Development Plan for the Gypsy and Traveller community. <u>https://localplan.maidstone.gov.uk/home/gypsy-traveller-development-plan-document</u>

4. Planning

(a) To consider any planning applications received for consideration up to the date of the meeting.

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

Consultation on Maidstone's policies on Gypsy & Traveller site development

Maidstone have started a consultation exercise on the future of how its planning develops in relation to provision for Gypsies and travellers. Considerable concern has been generated by the preferred approach suggested being "to direct growth in gypsy, traveller and travelling show people accommodation to suitable existing authorised permanent sites,...." If you wish to respond individually, please see the MBC website or contact MBC directly. Parishioners are also invited to comment on the Boughton Malherbe council response which we hope to have drafted by 4th December and should be available from the Parish Council website. Queries may be directed to the clerk or councillors. The meeting to decide will be on 9th December at 7pm.

BMPC Planning meeting – 9th December 2024

Dear Boughton Malherbe Residents

"What is Christmas? It is tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future. It is a wish that every cup may overflow with blessings rich and eternal, and that every path may lead to peace". As we approach the end of another difficult year – with the cost of living crisis being felt by so many and the unrest in the Ukraine and Middle East causing so much pain to so many - these words by the writer and artist Agnes M Pahro will resonate with us all as we come together, families and friends, to pause, reflect on the past year and share our collective hopes for the future.

By the time you read this, the festive season will be in full <u>swing</u> and I hope you're already getting into the spirit of things and enjoying some of the great local festive activities that have taken place such as the Christmas Craft Fair, the impending Christmas Quiz and the switching on of the lights on the Green.

While Christmas is a very special time of year for many of us, it can also be a lonely one for others. So please take a bit of time to check in on friends and neighbours who may not have family around at this time of year. I also realise different people will be facing different sorts of challenges this year and Kent Together, set up in the early days of the pandemic, is still here to help you find the support that is right for you. Please visit kent.gov.uk/kenttogether or call 03000 41 92 92 to find your way through to the advice and support available.

As ever, I want to thank you all for granting me the honour of being your voice at County Hall. I have enjoyed working on various projects for the Boughton Malherbe community over the last year – whether it be working with the parish council on improving the area where you live and work, helping families with school places or concerns with a vulnerable relative or friend. I am very much looking forward to doing the same over the coming year and ensuring that your voice is heard where it matters.

Which leaves me to wish you, your family and your friends a very Merry Christmas, a Happy New Year and all the very best for 2025.

Shellina Prendergast

Maidstone Rural East – Kent County Council

Parish Council's Update 2024

You make all the

great work of the

Hospice possible.

THANK YOU!



In this issue

Christmas Tree Recycling

Your Parish can recycle and donate to the Hospice this January.

Keeping the lights on

Imagine a community without Hospice care.

Compassionate Neighbours

Combat social isolation and loneliness in your Parish.

Family Support Team

A brief overview of some of our extraordinary services.

Another busy year!

We wanted to start this year's update with a heartfelt 'thank you'. Your support is vital and makes a real difference to keeping our services running. You're the reason that 2089 people were able to benefit from our services in 2023-2024. So, please do take a moment to feel good about that 😊

Its been another busy year for the Hospice fundraising team. From one month to the next our diaries are crammed with fundraising events, campaigns, Lottery, Trust applications, corporate networking and community activities. One of our highlights involved a lot of sheep. You will, no doubt, have noticed a few of them dotted about Maidstone. Our *Shaun the Sheep in the Heart of Kent* trail was an enormous success which, with no exaggeration, took an army of colleagues, volunteers and corporate partners to achieve. At auction we sold every sculpture and raised a whopping £265,250 for the Hospice.

But our work never stops...

"Our Dad, Paul Bruschan went into Heart of Kent Hospice in July 2023. Although it was a hard decision, we could not have hoped for a better place for Dad to spend his final weeks. He was made so comfortable, and given the care and dignity he deserved. And for us as a family, we couldn't have asked for more. Whilst we'll always be sad that Dad was taken from us far too soon, we'll forever be grateful to Heart of Kent Hospice for making those last few weeks so beaceful and comfortable."



Start 2025 in the most tree-mendous way possible by recycling your Christmas Tree with Heart of Kent Hospice.

Last year, with the help of our amazing corporate supporters, parish councils and volunteers we collected 686 trees for chipping and raised £9.5K. This year we're expanding our reach to cover more post codes and our goal is to recycle 1000 trees. But we need your help...

You can support the Hospice, and the planet, by recycling the Christmas waste from your Parish. We can provide you with everything you need to spread the word in your newsletters, Facebook groups, website and any locations that see a large footfall. Please email Christie and the <u>Community Partnerships team</u>. If any willing parishioners would like to volunteer their time and driving skills then please contact David and the <u>Corporate Fundraising team</u>.

Event Information

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TNIST

TN12.5

METH

Our amazing volunteers will brave the pine needles and the cold to collect your real (spruce, fir or pine) trees over three days on Friday 3, Saturday 4 and Sunday 5 January 2025, from your front garden or driveway, allowing you to stay cosy and warm indoors!

We kindly ask for a suggested donation of £15 per tree to continue providing exceptional specialist care for people with a terminal illnesses.

ME17.3

We will collect Christmas trees from the following postcodes and areas: ME5 9, ME6 5, ME14, ME15, ME16, ME17 3, ME17 4, ME18, ME19, ME20, TN12 5, TN15 7, TN15 8, TN15 9, Shipbourne, Plaxtol, Hadlow, Burham, Wouldham.

Have a hassle-free, environmentally friendly festive season – and Please, please, please recycle your trees with Heart of Kent Hospice this January!



Scan here to book your christmas collection!"

THANK **





Keeping the lights on in IPU

"A 'good death' should not be a 'luxury' of so few."

Did you know that it costs £2.5 million per year to cover salaries, overheads and operational costs in our Inpatient Unit and less than 20% is supported by the Integrated Care Board. The source of 80% of our annual funding is consistently unpredictable and we rely on the generosity



of trusts/foundations, corporate sponsorship, community members and Parish Councils who choose to donate or fundraise.

Without independent hospices, more people at the end of life would be compelled to seek urgent care from already overcrowded and stretched hospital departments. Hospitals are not where people want to spend their final moments. **Closing the Hospice** would mean that your community would have to rely on the NHS for palliative care, a service already under immense pressure. While we deeply appreciate the incredible work our NHS colleagues do, we believe that **everyone** deserves access to specialised, personalised care at the end of their life. **Hospice care is not just a complimentary addition to healthcare; it is essential**.

At Heart of Kent Hospice everything we do is defined by **compassion, respect** and the understanding that each individual's needs are unique. We believe that the way a person's life ends is just as important as how it begins.

Below is just one of many stories we are privileged to be at the heart of:

"When I heard that there was a bed for Mum on the Inpatient Unit at the Hospice, I burst into tears. In that moment I felt that all the responsibility and the months of stress had been taken off my shoulders. I no longer needed to fight to get Mum the care she needed. Mum was unable to speak by that time, but a lovely nurse at the Hospice told me that she breathed a sigh of relief when she was lifted into the Hospice bed.

My relationship with Mum as her daughter had got lost amid all the admissions to hospital; the frequent, terrible trips to A&E; the medications that didn't work; her deteriorating mental and physical health. At last, in the Hospice, we were able to spend quiet, reflective time together in the most gentle and peaceful surroundings.

I'm grateful that I was there with Mum when she died a few days later in the Hospice. My teenaged son was also there, and it was a deeply moving experience for both of us – one that will stay with us for the rest of our lives.

We all deserve to die with dignity and respect. I truly believe that Mum would not have received that dignity and respect anywhere else, except at the Hospice."

Daughter of patient X

We need your continued support to ensure we can keep the lights on for those who need us.

Help combat social isolation & loneliness in your Parish

Make a DIFFERENCE

COMPASSIONATE NEIGHBOURS

Compassionate Neighbours is a free, community-led, social programme offering friendship and support to those with a terminal illness, frailty, or are of advanced years. The Team also support carers who are experiencing loneliness or social isolation. The support is offered to people right across Maidstone, Tonbridge, Malling and nearby areas.

The Compassionate Neighbour project was launched in Heart of Kent Hospice in January 2020 to tackle social isolation and loneliness for those living with a life-limiting illness or frailty.

The project helps unlock people's compassion and purpose, building stronger connected communities by introducing local people based on their shared likes, interests and experiences to help forge real, reciprocal friendships.

Compassionate Neighbours offer vital social and



emotional support to those with life-limiting illnesses, frailty, advanced age, or to carers experiencing loneliness or social isolation.

Together, you and your Compassionate Neighbour will benefit from a growing friendship and a listening ear. In addition to a friendly visit to you at home, they will help you become more connected with your local community, with opportunities to attend regular social events.

Could you help support someone in your local community by becoming a Compassionate Neighbour volunteer?

To find out more about being connected with a Compassionate Neighbour, or becoming a volunteer, please email our <u>Compassionate Neighbours Team</u> or call 01622 792200.

"I enjoy meeting new people at the social hub – I'm naturally a shy person and my wife brought me out of my shell and showed me how to enjoy life. When she died, I wasn't speaking to many people, but I know it does me good. Ann and I never run out of conversation." John, Community Member.

Our amazing Family Support Team



When thinking of hospice care many will automatically think of the Inpatient Unit and end of life. But hospices are so much more. Our holistic wrap around support extends to carers and family members, pre and post bereavement.

- Welfare advisors who can advise and signpost on financial matters, including helping with any claims patients may be entitled to.
- Spiritual care colleagues who provide spiritual care to sensitively explore a family's changing experiences.
- Palliative care nurse specialists who provide advice and support with symptom management and future care planning.
- Dementia nurse specialists who offer practical advice and support to patients with dementia and their carers.
- Social workers and counsellors who provide social, emotional and pre and post-bereavement support.
- Clinical therapists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists who can help improve patient's confidence with balance and mobility and share strategies for managing fatigue and breathlessness.
- Complementary therapists who offer short treatments to soothe the body and offer guided relaxation for the mind.

"Our spirituality is the essence of our selves – it is what makes us who we are. The Spiritual Care Team are here to support patients and their families throughout their journey of living with a life-limiting illness and on into bereavement. Whatever it is that sustains you, whatever gives you hope, meaning and comfort, we will be there for you."

Sylvia Rothschild Spiritual Care Team Lead.



Village Hall – December Newsletter

Dear All,

Firstly thank you to you all for supporting the craft fair at the hall. Visitors and stallholders alike seemed to be having a good time and it was obviously thirsty and hungry work as serious quantities of tea, cake and bacon sandwiches were consumed over the weekend. Your generosity has raised just over £700 and all the money raised will go towards maintaining the hall and hosting events for your future enjoyment.

We will be changing the start time of the Tuesday coffee morning to 12 noon with effect from the 3rd of this month so that it better aligns with the Tuesday Post Office Service and don't forget we now have the Thursday Pop Up Post Office between 11.15am and 1.15pm as well so with Christmas coming you don't need to travel to Headcorn or Lenham to post those cards and parcels.

Coming up shortly we have the following events at the hall:

Christmas Event on the Green Friday 6th December 4 pm for 4.30pm

As mentioned previously the Parish Council are generously sponsoring a Christmas Event on the village green on Friday 6th December 4 for 4.30pm when we will be switching on the Christmas tree lights, the children from Platts Heath School and the church choir will be singing carols, (audience participation will be expected!), the children can visit Santa and his elves in his grotto, there will be a snow machine along with sausage rolls, mince pies, sherry, mulled wine and hot chocolate. What a lovely way to usher in the Festive Season.

Christmas Quiz – Friday 13th December at 7 for 7.30 pm

I am pleased to say that our quizmasters ably assisted by their naughty elves will be hosting our very popular annual Christmas Quiz which will be held on Friday 13th December 7.00 for 7.30 start. Tickets are £15 per person don't forget to dust off those Christmas jumpers as we will be having a best Christmas Jumper competition this year.

Panto Cinderella – Saturday 14th December 3pm

Did you know that Grafty Green Village Hall has a professional pantomime produced and performed by Shooting Star Entertainments on Saturday the 14th December at 3pm this year it is Cinderella.

Tickets are £15 for an adult which entitles you to bring a child under the age of 12 for free, (children's ticket to be ordered at the time of booking), additional children will be charged at £5. Contact myself on either 07932 112730 or jon@graftygreenalpacas.co.uk to book tickets.

Shooting Star Entertainments specialise in creating unforgettable performances that inspire and engage audiences of all ages. With a passion for storytelling they offerr diverse range of shows including timeless pantomimes

Kind Regards Jon Thompson Village Hall Committee Chairman jon@graftygreenalpacas.co.uk www.graftygreenvillagehall.co.uk facebook – graftygreenvillage It's that time again!

Time for the famous Grafty Green

Christmas Quiz!

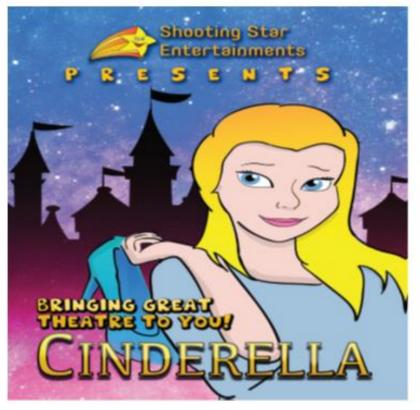
Friday 13th December at the Village Hall Doors open 7pm ~ Quiz starts 7.30pm

Tickets £15 (includes Ploughman's Supper)

from Jon on 07932112730 or jon@graftygreenalpacas.co.uk

Teams of up to 8

There will be a Pay bar or you can bring your own drinks



Grafty Green Village Hall, ME17 2BA. Saturday 14th December @ 3pm

Tickets are £15 for an adult which entitles you to bring a child under 12 free, (children's ticket to be ordered at the time of booking), additional children charged at £5.

Contact Jon Thompson on 07932 112730 or jon@graftygreenalpacas.co.uk to book tickets.



Pop-Up Post Office

Grafty Green Village Hall ME17 2BA

Tuesdays 12.45 - 2.15pm

Thursdays 11.15 – 1.15pm



Grafty Green Village Hall

Bookings 01622 850898

Regular Weekly Events

Yoga – mixed ability Susan Burch 01622 850381	Mondays and Thursdays 9.30 – 11am Wednesdays 7 – 8.30pm		
Pilates Cheryl Stubbs 07852 602639	Tuesdays 9.30 – 10.30 am		
Post Office	Tuesdays 12.45 – 2.15pm Thursdays 11.15 – 1.15pm		
Coffee morning	Tuesdays 11.30 – 2.00pm		
Short Mat Bowls Joan Marriott 01622 858100	Tuesdays 2.30 – 5.30pm		
Dance Fit Sharon Harris 01622 890170	Wednesdays 11am – 12.30pm		
Tai Chi Rhonda Bailey 07985 001782	Thursdays 2.00 – 3.00pm		

Craft Group Janis Carter 01622 850898

Fridays 10am -12.00pm

Art Class Cathy Hill 07927054708 Alternate Wednesdays 1 – 3.30pm Alternate Thursdays 7-9pm

Regular Monthly Events

Gardening Club Doreen 01622 850287 Sue 01622 850381 First Tuesday 7.30 - 9pm

Sue 01622 8503

Fourth Tuesday 11.30-1.30

Digital Kent





Less 15% discount with advert* and 20% over 55's cannot be used with other offers * ad must be mentioned at time of estimate

LANDSCAPING- Drives, Patios, Pathways, Brick/Stone Walls, Block/Stone Paving, Tarmac, Decking, Fencing, Turfing, Ponds, Water Features, Garden Clearance, Sheds/Summer & Play House Bases, Tree Surgery etc.

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This simple all-in-one chocolate orange cake is a great alternative to traditional Christmas cake. Covered with an indulgent chocolate ganache, and so easy to make.

CHRISTMAS CHOCOLATE ORANGE CAKE

Ingredients 75g of <u>cocoa powder</u> 6 tablespoons of just-boiled water 2 medium <u>oranges</u>, well-scrubbed, (finely grated zest of both oranges and 2 tablespoons of juice only) 225g of unsalted <u>butter</u>, cubed and softened, plus extra for greasing 225g of <u>caster sugar</u> 4 large free-range <u>eggs</u> 225g of <u>self-raising flour</u> 1 teaspoon of baking powder

For the candied orange zest ½ <u>orange</u>, well-scrubbed 25g of <u>caster sugar</u>

For the chocolate icing 300ml of <u>double cream</u> 300g of <u>dark chocolate</u> (about 70% cocoa solids), broken into roughly 1cm pieces 2–3 tablespoons of semi-skimmed <u>milk</u>

1. Preheat the oven to 170C Fan. Grease and line two 20cm/8in loose-based sandwich tins with baking paper. Mix 50g of the cocoa powder with the just-boiled water to make a smooth, thick paste. Stir in 2 tablespoons orange juice.

2. In a food processor or freestanding mixer, add the butter, sugar, eggs, flour, baking powder, remaining cocoa powder, orange zest (of 2 oranges) and the cocoa paste and pulse or beat until well combined, thick and creamy. Do not over-blend or the cake will be tough rather than light. Spoon the mixture evenly into the prepared tins and smooth the surface. Bake on the same shelf in the centre of the oven for about 25 minutes, or until well risen and just beginning to shrink back from the sides of the tin.

3. Remove the tins from the oven and leave to cool for 5 minutes before turning out on to a wire rack. Peel off the baking paper and leave to cool completely. To make the candied orange zest, use a vegetable peeler to peel long, wide strips off the half orange, avoiding the white pith. Cut the zest into long thin matchsticks and place in a small saucepan with the sugar and 50ml of water. Bring to a simmer and cook for about 5 minutes, or until the zest is softened and the sugar syrup is well reduced and lightly coating the zest.

CHRISTMAS CHOCOLATE ORANGE CAKE continued.....

4. Line a small tray or plate with baking paper and use a fork to lift the orange zest from the syrup and drop onto the paper, keeping the strands separated. Leave to set for at least 1 hour before using to top the cake.

5. To make the chocolate icing, gently heat the cream in a medium non-stick saucepan until hot but not quite simmering, stirring occasionally, then pour over the chocolate pieces. Stir once and leave to stand for 5 minutes. Stir the melted chocolate into the cream just enough to combine – don't over-stir or the mixture could become oily. Leave to cool for 5 minutes.

6. Place one of the sponges on a wire rack over a large plate or tray (to catch any excess icing so it can be reused). Spread a quarter of the chocolate icing thickly over the surface and then place the second sponge on top. Mix a tablespoon of the milk with another quarter of the chocolate icing (about 135g) in a small bowl until smooth. Using a palette knife, spread the whole cake thinly with the thinned chocolate icing, filling in the areas where the two cakes meet. Place in the fridge for about 40 minutes to set. (This layer will help the rest of the icing cover the cake more smoothly and doesn't need to be perfectly neat.)

7. Once the first layer of icing has set, stir the remaining 2 tablespoons of milk into the remaining chocolate icing, until smooth and shiny. Spread the icing all over the top of the cake and down the sides as smoothly as possible using a palette knife. Leave for 2–3 hours to set and then carefully transfer to a cake stand or plate and top with the candied orange zest.

The Grafty Gourmet

Grafty Green Gardening Club Programme for 2025

Date	Speaker/Event	Торіс		
14 th January	AGM & Philip Oosterbrink	The Jungle Garden		
	(head gardener at Walmer			
	Castle)			
4 th February	Robin Smith &David Walker	Birds of the Medway estuary		
	RSPB			
4 th March	Jaqueline Aviolet	A the nursery –		
		demonstrations + plant sales		
1 st April	Spring Show & Steve Edney	The Kitchen Garden + plant		
тдрії		sales		
26 th April	10 – 12 am Plant Sale Village Ha	10 – 12 am Plant Sale Village Hall		
6 th May	6pm outing to Frittenden, Brickwall Cottages, TN17 2DH			
$9^{th} - 11^{th}$	Weekend away to Suffolk, The Mill Hotel Sudbury, Middleton			
May	House, Melford Hall, Flatford Mill and Markshall Arboretum			
3 rd June	6pm outing to Woodchurch, Boldshaves TN26 3RA			
1 st July	ТВА			
5 th August	Outing to East Malling Communigrow educational wellbeing			
	garden charity.			
2 nd	Autumn Show & Rachel Castle	Shine a light on bulbs!		
September	(Swallowfields Nursery)			
7 th October	Kevin Tooher	The Edwardian gardens of		
		Sussex		
4 th	Ed Flint (head gardener at	Roses and friends		
November	Tidewll Manor Robertsbridge)			
December	Leeds Castle light show			

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

December Hints

- 1) Put outdoor pots, especially terracotta ones, up on little feet or blocks to enable drainage, so that plants don't freeze, and pots don't shatter.
- 2) If outdoor plans are delicate and you don't have a shed or greenhouse to put them in, clump pots together, if possible, to help reduce frost damage, cover with fleece or old net curtains
- 3) First frosts will mean that sugars will be high in parsnips and sprouts will be tight time to enjoy the first of the season!
- If you have bought a poinsettia to brighten your home, remember it prefers good light, but doesn't like being near direct heat e.g. above a radiator.
- 5) Real Christmas trees really dislike us bringing them into our warm homes! Even ones that are cut off, rather than rooted, need water to prevent needle drop and keep them lasting through the festive season, so check reservoirs regularly.

Sue's Nature Notes

Peacock butterfly

A favourite butterfly for many people with its distinctive markings which resemble 'eyes', whilst the undersides are almost black giving good camouflage when the wings are folded. The caterpillars, which are black, can be seen in May on nettles, hops and Pellitory-of-the-Wall.

Preferred butterfly nectar plants are betony, buddleia, bramble, fleabane, marjoram and ragwort. You may also see them feeding on rotting plums, pears and apples.

The Peacock hibernates during the winter in sheds/outbuildings and also in woodpiles, emerging in March; although, on warm winter days there is a chance to spot them.

Yoga classes in Grafty Green Village Hall

Monday and Thursday mornings 9.30 till 11

Wednesday evenings 7 till 8.30

No classes the week beginning 21st October

New term starts October 28th until last practice on 12th December.

To book call Sue Burch (British Wheel of Yoga teacher) on 07803 962339

Expand your boundaries yet be able to relax and feel harmonious, integrated and complete.





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Friday December 13th Performance begins 19.30, doors open 19.00 Running time 1hr 53 mins

Not many films make you start humming right away when you see the title. **Meet Me in St Louis** (U, 1944) does just that. Judy Garland is at her magnificent best in our Christmas film singing the unforgettable 'Trolley Song' and 'The Boy Next Door' in the story of the Smith family, living in 1903 St Louis. Judy, playing 17-year-old Esther, is one of its four daughters and is heartbroken when their father reveals that they must leave their friends and romances to live in New York, as he has a new job there. How can they leave? Judy's 'Boy Next Door' has only just moved in and she *loves* him. And anyway, they'd miss the St Louis World Fair. With its music, romance and charm, this is the ideal way to greet Christmas with a song in your heart. Director: Vincente Minnelli We open the new year on Friday, 10th January with a memorable and moving film in a far

different setting. **The Old Oak** (15, 2023) takes place in a former mining community in County Durham, when the future of the community pub and more is threatened. The film is directed by the legendary director Ken Loach. It's his final film, so you can't miss that.

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

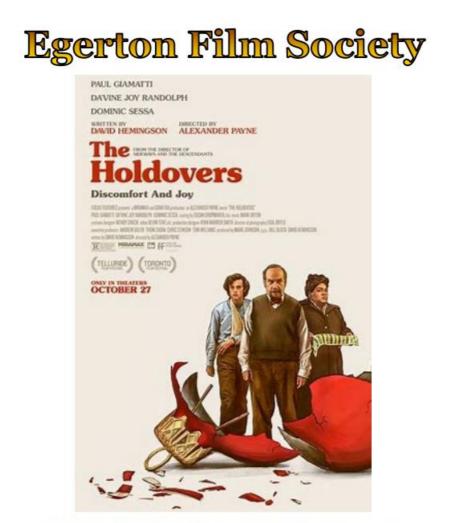
Admission: Adults £5, under 16s £2; cash only, card payments not accepted.

lenhamfilmclub@gmail.com

www.lenhamfilmclub.org



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EGERTON MILLENNIUM HALL THURSDAY 12th December 2024 Doors 7.00pm - PERFORMANCE 7.30pm

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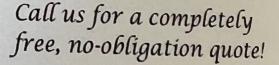
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Len Valley Benefice December 2024



Everybody is welcome

'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.' *Matthew* 13:31-32

Sunday 1st December

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

Wednesday 4th December

9.30am Lenham: Holy Communion (BCP) 11.00am Prayers @ Chippendayle Lodge

Sunday 8th December

9.30am Harrietsham: Holy Communion
9.30am Lenham: Breakfast Church
11.00am Lenham: Holy Communion
11.00am Ulcombe: Holy Communion
3.30pm Boughton Malherbe: Choral Evensong

Saturday 14th December

5.30pm Harrietsham: Carols by Candlelight

Sunday 15th December

- 8.00am Lenham: Holy Communion (BCP)
- 9.30am Lenham: Christmas Breakfast Church
- 11.00am Ulcombe: Holy Communion
- 3.30pm Boughton Malherbe: Carols by Candlelight
- 5.30pm Lenham: Carols by Candlelight

Len Valley Benefice December 2024



Thursday 19th December 7.00pm Ulcombe: Carols by Candlelight

Saturday 21st December 3.00pm Harrietsham: Nativity Fun with Messy Church

Sunday 22nd December 11.00am Harrietsham: All Age Christmas Celebration

Christmas Eve 3.30pm Boughton Malherbe: Crib Service 11.15pm Lenham: Midnight Holy Communion

11.15pm Harrietsham: Midnight Holy Communion

Christmas Day

10.00am Boughton Malherbe: Christmas Holy Communion
10.00am Ulcombe: Christmas Holy Communion
11.00am Harrietsham: Christmas Holy Communion
11.00am Lenham: Christmas Holy Communion

Sunday 29th December

11.00am Harrietsham: Benefice Carol Celebration

Christian Message

At the time of writing John and I had just visited one of the National Trust venues. It was the plaque outside the gift shop which first took my eye.

Everyone's invited it said and *promising a warm welcome to all who accepted their welcome.*

It made me think that at this time of year, in particular, we might be invited to all sorts of parties and events. Very often the invite will be followed with a request to **RSVP.** The invitation needs a response

RSVP - four letters when we ask people to indicate their acceptance of an invitation - or otherwise.

It's a way of politely asking the recipient not to put the invitation away and forget about it, or to delay their reply, but asking them to respond as soon as possible.

And the coming of Christ was also an invitation to respond. He promises us a warm welcome as we respond to his invitation.

And it is an invitation that God continues to extend to us all today.

I suggest that it's no good just receiving it and then putting it away. God has asked so many today and all through the years to **RSVP.**

As we remember the events of the Birth of Christ and also throughout his life and ministry, we can think about that invitation to us all.

First to Mary whose **RSVP** was to Gabriel as the angel delivered God's invitation. Her response was

'I am the Lord's servant, may it be to me according to your word,'

Next it was Joseph, whose response was equally swift after considering if he should break off his engagement to Mary. When he woke from his sleep he did as the angel had instructed and took Mary as his wife. The invitation was then extended to the shepherds who came 'in haste' to Bethlehem. And then the Wise Men, and of course, to all of us. God is asking me, he is asking you, just as he asked so many all those years ago to **RSVP**.

My prayer this month is that we may not just know about the invitation to meet with Christ this Christmas but that we will know how to respond

To all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

John 1: 12

Rev Millie Hart PTO

Emergency and Help Contact Details

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Police, Non-Emergency - (Including PCSO)	101

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