

A decorative banner at the top of the page features a series of colorful pennants in various patterns: green with white dots, orange with white stripes, pink with white dots, green with white zig-zags, blue with white stars, and red with white stripes.

The Lenham Focus

MARCH 2025 issue



FREE annual tickets to the Chatham
Historic Dockyard *p33*
Nominate your 'unsung hero' *p4-5*

Free antiques valuations *p67*
Lenham Cross help needed *p6*
Recycle your tools and bikes *p8-9*



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Editorial

Another month and another amazing free offer from your *Focus* magazine!



Like last year, we're offering **A FREE FAMILY PACKAGE of up to 2 adults and 2 children,**

worth £76 which allows free entry for visits, valid for a full year from the time of your first visit, to the **Historic Dockyard at Chatham**. Go to Page 33 to find out how to enter.

Our local MP, Helen Whately, is launching her 'unsung heroes' campaign. Maybe you know someone in the village who you'd like to recognise with this award? See pages 4-5 for the nomination details.

Got any antiques you'd like valued? TV's Clive Attrell is offering **FREE** valuations at the Red Lion in the afternoon of 12 March. See inside for details of this and other road-show venues.

It is with sadness that one of our local shops has had to close down. We have been told that Dewitts Flooring, a regular advertiser in *Focus*, has been placed in the hands of the official liquidator. It reinforces the point that we all need to support our local businesses. Use them or lose them!

Inside we report that the Lenham nursery is launching its very own lottery as part of their efforts to raise funds, with weekly prizes of up to £25,000. Details of how to take part are inside this issue.

David Jackson | Editor

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

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The Helen Whately MP

UNSUNG HEROES AWARDS

**Recognising people making a difference
locally – no matter how big or small**

**NOMINATIONS
NOW OPEN**

**Please nominate anyone
you think deserves to be
recognised**



**FOR MORE INFORMATION SCAN THE QR CODE
OR VISIT: WWW.HELENWHATELY.ORG.UK**

An update from your local MP, Helen Whately

As an MP I hear from people about the problems they face and I often think about the challenges for our country. On the other hand, almost every week I meet someone who is doing something to make a difference and I am reminded that there's so much good in the world.

I am sure you know some of the people I mean. Whether it's someone who gets people together who would otherwise be lonely, gives local kids the chance to play a team sport, transforms a wasteland into a nature reserve, organises the community Christmas lights, runs an outstanding community business or any number of things I haven't even heard about, there are hundreds of people making a difference without expecting anything in return. In fact, maybe you are one of these people yourself.

I know these people do what they do out of the goodness of their hearts, but as their MP I would like to make sure they are recognised and thanked on behalf of us all. That's why I have launched my first ever **Unsung Heroes Awards** – sponsored by The Kent Garden Show. So, if you know someone who makes a difference, no matter how big or small, please nominate them. I promise the nomination form on my website only takes a second to complete!

You may wish to nominate an individual, a group, an organisation or a business. They might be doing something for the community that helps people, nature or animals, improves our environment, looks after our heritage, makes things better in the here and now or looks to the future. There are no hard and fast rules about what counts.

'Helen invites you to nominate your local 'unsung hero' by 6th April. See the poster on page 4.'

You can nominate as many individuals, community groups and businesses as you like, but please ensure they have consented to be nominated. Nominees must live or be based within the constituency of Faversham and Mid Kent or what they do must benefit this area. If you're not sure, just pop their postcode into **www.writetothem.com**. Winners will receive a certificate and a monetary donation to their cause or a charity/good cause close to their heart.

The nomination form is on my website **www.helenwhately.org.uk/** and the **deadline to make your nominations is 6th April 2025.**

Please check out my website or sign up to my newsletter at **www.helenwhately.org.uk/newsletters** to keep up-to-date about the awards and my work as an MP in general.

I look forward to receiving the entries and announcing the winners in the spring. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for everything they do that makes Faversham and Mid Kent the special place it is. And thank you for nominating!

Best wishes, Helen

e: helen.whately.mp@parliament.uk

t: 0207 219 6472

Lenham Cross

ACTION for April 2025 and beyond

The Parish Council are well aware that the wet autumn and winter in 2024 have not done the Lenham Memorial Cross any favours. This matter has been brought to our attention on a number of occasions and we remain keen to address it as soon as possible.

Unfortunately, the weather has conspired against us for the application of the relevant weed suppressant in October/November and December.

We've maintained the grass and edges, but the surface is certainly more 'grubby' than we would like.

With the recent colder and drier weather, the opportunities to get back on to it have already presented themselves and we have ensured that the grounds maintenance team have been on the hill. Surface treatments have been applied and are already showing signs of action – with moss and weeds turning brown.

As a gauge, we made contact with Shoreham about how they maintain their cross. This is looking in fine condition – as would be expected after the re-chalking completed last October (following a grant from Sevenoaks DC). They were very helpful and also noted that whilst people comment on the cross, they struggle to get parishioners to help with maintenance. As such, they use parish funds to pay a contractor to undertake works.

We've also contacted people who assist in maintenance of other chalk figures – mainly through the National Trust. They typically establish 'chalking days' – which link back to the feeling behind the hill-figures when they were first established. Locals maintaining their hill-

figures as a way of remembering their past.

So for Lenham Parish Council, our plan is to inaugurate a twice-yearly 'chalking event' for the village. The intention is for the early one to be in early April (in the hope that the weather is kind to us) and the late summer one to be the end of September.

At both events (dates to be widely circulated) all are welcome and encouraged to attend and assist with the cleaning of any moss growth, crisping up the edges and raking/compacting the chalk. Where necessary, fresh chalk will be supplied in advance of the day.

As those who assisted in 2022 will know, no specialist equipment is needed – just gardening tools and some sturdy boots. If we can establish these dates and maintain them over the coming years, the cross should remain in good condition for the summer and be an icon for Remembrance Day.



HELP NEEDED!

Just YOU & your gardening tools on Saturday 5th April.

More information will come soon.

YOUR assistance in this will be recorded and appreciated.

We're provisionally booking Saturday 5th April (after the clocks change) for the first day. Please make a note and keep an eye out for extra information on social media.



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Old Bikes & Tools: Put them to good use

Time to clear out your garage and shed



With spring-time rapidly approaching, isn't it time you cleared out any old tools which are duplicated or no longer needed? And whilst you are at it, how about bikes that are not used anymore?

Help is at hand. We are collecting on behalf of two charities: 'Tools with a Mission' and 'Re-Cycle', both of which collect unwanted items, refurbish them and send them to the African sub-continent where they are fully utilised and given a new life.

Rotary will be setting up a collection point in the Car Park at **Lenham Community Centre between 10.00am and 12.00 on Saturday 22nd March** and we would love to see you there.

What sort of tools can we accept?

Garden tools, builders tools, carpenters tools (including screws, nails, and bolts), electricians tools, mechanics tools and cantilever tool boxes, plumbers tools, garage and workshop tools, power tools and generators.

Plus –

Sewing and knitting machines, haberdashery, fully working computers (running a minimum of Windows 7.)

We are unable to accept:

Ladders and step ladders, lawn rakes, long-handled sheers, edging tools, lawn mowers and hedge trimmers. Sadly, we also have to say 'no' to printers, scanners and typewriters.

Re-Cycle

Here the rules are simple. We are looking for bikes with enough life in them to transform another person's life in Africa for years to come. Ideally with less than 25% rust, but flat tyres and rusty chains are OK and easily replaced. Children's bikes with wheels 12" – 24" are very welcome, but not toy bikes please.

This is one of many community projects handled by the Weald of Kent Rotary. Please help us to help others by bringing your unwanted items to Lenham Community Centre on 22nd March. Look out for the blue Rotary Gazebo in the Car Park. See you there between 10.00 & 12.00.

Thank you for your kindness.

**Make a diary note: 22nd
March 10am -12 noon at
the community centre**



Collecting Used Tools and Bikes

Do you have an old bicycle that you no longer use, or old tools cluttering up your shed, attic or garage?

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More information on our website
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Collection Point

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ME17 2QT**

**Saturday 22nd March
10:00am to 12:00**

Supporting our Partners



Re-Cycle's mission is to provide sustainable transportation solutions in Africa through the donation of bicycles and empowering local mechanics with essential skills.



Scan the QR for the web page with details of the bikes Re-Cycle need



Tools with a Mission collects unwanted usable tools, refurbishes them, sorts them into trade tool kits and sends them to the developing world for livelihood creation.



Scan the QR for a PDF with details of the tools TWAM either need or can't use



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Pancake Day

Shrove Tuesday – 4 March 2025

pancakes on this day is believed to have originated in medieval England as a way to use up ingredients like eggs, milk, and sugar before Lenten fasting began.

A great way to use up these ingredients is making pancakes and waffles. And that is how Shrove Tuesday became known as Pancake Day or 'Fat Tuesday' (Mardi Gras in French).

Pancake Traditions

Pancakes in the United Kingdom come in different forms and have long-established local traditions. There are a number of local customs connected to Pancake Day, such as the annual Pancake Grease where schoolboys would fight for pancakes for money in London's Westminster or the Pancake Race.

The name "Shrove Tuesday" comes from the word "shrive," which means to confess one's sins and receive absolution from a priest.

It's a day for Christians to prepare their hearts and souls for the penitential season of Lent.

Shrove Tuesday is known in the UK as Pancake Day. Shrove Tuesday is exactly 47 days before Easter Sunday, a moveable feast based on the cycles of the moon.

The date can be between 3 February and 9 March inclusive. **Shrove Tuesday this year is on 4th March.**

It is a time for people to eat pancakes or participate in pancake races. But what does Shrove Tuesday have to do with pancakes? The tradition of making



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Lenham Meadows Trust

Countryside and community

URGENT ACTION ON GLEBE POND

The asset management team of Lenham Meadows Trust, along with volunteers, regularly attend to any issues at Glebe Pond, carrying out a general clean up once a month. Volunteers are always welcome. It had been noted by the management team that the water level was lower in the pond than it should have been despite the heavy rainfall over the autumn and winter, so we decided last autumn to investigate its cause.

We found a significant loss of water at the sluice structure with water bypassing the sluice and flowing between ragstone blocks, where mortar joints had been washed out, and from the base of the embankment. This raised serious concerns which we have been monitoring.

Unfortunately, the problem has increased during this winter, so we took professional advice from a Kent-based chartered consulting engineering company experienced in marine and inland waterway projects. They recommended the need for urgent remedial works.

As tree roots were likely to be part of the problem, we have decided to remove some trees and the dam boards from the sluice to lower the water level in the pond. This will reduce the risk of its potential collapse.

A full topographical survey of the area is being commissioned before any rebuild starts. Meanwhile, we ask all members of the public to keep clear of the sluice and eastern end embankment (adjacent to Tanyard Lane) as they are both deemed to be unsafe structures with potential risk

of collapse. We are in the process of fencing off the area to restrict access for everyone's safety.

The level of the pond is now gradually being reduced and this will accelerate when we get into a period of finer weather. We have

discussed this action with Natural England to mitigate the risks to wildlife at the pond during all phases of the work.


Replacement or rebuilding will be costly. The Trust is in the process of applying for funding to expediate the planned works to a professional design.

We will keep everyone updated through the Lenham Focus and our website as the project progresses.

We will do everything we can to save the pond and its wildlife and to ensure it continues to be a peaceful, safe place for everyone in the future.

...keep clear of the sluice and eastern end of the Glebe Pond as this area is unsafe...

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

 enquiries@lenhammeadowstrust.org  www.lenhammeadowstrust.org   @LenhamMeadows



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Plot for Development?

SJD Projects provide a simple guide to recognising the ideal plot

Do you have a building or plot of land that may have potential to develop?

In many cases, owners are unaware of the potential of their property or land and make a quick sale through conventional methods. Unfortunately, when this does occur, the owner can miss out on the unique opportunities offered by developers and the prospect of an enhanced financial return.

Stephen Donnelly at SJD Projects

says: 'As experts on land, property and the redevelopment of commercial properties, we have compiled a simple guide that will help you determine the potential of your plot. The list below features a number of potential plots that will excite local developers, and could result in a return worthy of your attention.'

Commercial Buildings - Commercial buildings, especially those suitable for residential conversion, are highly sought-after opportunities. Over recent years, the demand for commercial properties has

increased, presenting a viable alternative for potential sellers.

Former Public Houses - Often well situated within the local area, former public houses present great potential for developers seeking to convert the building for residential purposes.

Redundant Buildings - Redundant buildings, which can often feel like an unwanted burden to many owners, are rarely given the attention they deserve. The location and size of the plot will play a pivotal role in the plot's potential.

Houses for Improvement - Houses are typically sold by more traditional and conventional methods - however, these methods often require extended periods of time to complete (if you manage to find a buyer at all). Although house improvement projects are smaller in comparison to many development opportunities, many developers are on the look-out for houses that simply need a little extra TLC.



Large Sites on the Edge of Town - The location of your plot plays an important role when determining its potential and worth. Large sites that are situated on the edge of towns or villages are among the most sought-after plots for many developers looking for a long-term development opportunity.



Barns - Much like redundant buildings, barns are often viewed as undevelopable. However, when viewed through the eyes of an inspired developer, barns offer endless potential for residential and commercial projects. Typically, these barns could be of brick or timber and may be converted or knocked down for replacement. Planning expertise is essential and the developers SJD source will give the optimum chance of success.

Large Gardens - Backland development fast became one of the most prevalent development projects in the South

East back in the early 2000s. Today, many developers are still seeking such opportunities within residential areas. Selling part of a large back yard will have little effect on the value of your property, offering a great financial opportunity to both owners and developers.'

To find out more, contact **Stephen Donnelly** at: steve@sjd-projects.com. Their advice is free of charge and, in most cases; the developer will cover all the relevant fees.

See also their '**FOCUS**' advertisement below.

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Contact Stephen Donnelly on
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website: sjd-projects.com
email: steve@sjd-projects.com

For regular updates, visit us at
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We wish to thank all who climbed with us up the beanstalk this year and came back again. You are an amazing audience and we are privileged to perform for you. Your laughs, shouts and boos fill us with determination to work hard to continue improving our ability to bring joy to the community.

We are also deeply touched by your generosity. This year, all proceeds from the raffle and door collection will go to two charities: **Heart of Kent Hospice** and **Demelza**.

Over three performances the total donations raised **£1,448! THANK YOU!**

HAMS Productions will continue to serve this community. Our plan now is to organise monthly acting workshops for anyone who wishes to try acting. We are looking for new actors as well as anyone who has skills that could be used on stage. Come and join us, it will be fun!

For more information email chair@hamsproductions.org, call/text **07909846885**, or follow us on Facebook www.facebook.com/groups/99611081073760 or TikTok HAMS Productions [@hamsproductions](https://www.tiktok.com/@hamsproductions).



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The Friends of
St Mary's Church, Lenham

SUPPER QUIZ

SATURDAY 5TH APRIL

Please join us for a Supper Quiz, on Saturday 5th April. We last held a quiz way back in 2019 – some of you may remember that it was a really enjoyable evening; we're very much looking forward to hosting one again.

There'll be a great local quizmaster, plenty of questions on a variety of topics and also some fun picture and puzzle rounds for you to tackle at your table. And of course, there will be prizes for the winning team! We'd love to have you join us as a team of up to 8 people; you are of course just as welcome to join us if you don't have a full table – we will seat you on a table with some other quizzers and you never know, your new team might end up being the victorious one!

We'll be serving a delicious ploughman's supper during a break in the quizzing. Please do bring your own drinks and also your own glasses. You are very welcome to bring your own nibbles should you wish.

We'll also be holding a raffle with some fabulous prizes.

The quiz takes place at Lenham Community Centre, Groom Way; doors will open at 18.30 and the quiz itself will start at 19.00.

Tickets are £10 per person and are on sale now from Kent Loves..., 11 High Street Lenham. Tickets are advance purchase only and numbers are limited, so do get yours before they sell out.

All the profit from the event will go towards our work to maintain the beautiful Grade I listed church of St Mary's, Lenham. None of our funds are used for the daily running costs of the church: all of our funds are used for preservation projects such as the repair of the tower roof and the clock face, both of which we are planning for this year.

Please support our work to preserve our church building by coming along for some quiz fun on Saturday 5th April!



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Saturday 5th April 2025

The Community Centre, Groom Way, Lenham
Doors open 18.30, quiz begins 19.00

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Kent Fire & Rescue Service

In the past year, firefighters and other specialist Kent Fire and Rescue Service teams have visited more than 33,000 homes, as part of their Home Fire Safety Visit service.

These free, pre-booked visits are available to people across Kent or Medway who may have particular needs or priorities, and also for anyone who:

- is aged 70 or over
- is living with dementia
- has a long term health condition
- has young children or is pregnant
- is a smoker

The visits last about ten minutes and firefighters will offer to test, relocate, and install smoke alarms where needed. They will also provide home safety advice tailored to each home and answer any questions. Visits can be arranged at a time convenient to you. As well as providing you with lots of useful support and advice, we can fit new free battery-operated smoke alarms if you need them.

To check if you are eligible for a visit, or to discuss any concerns, please call **0800 923 7000** (Monday to Friday 9am-5pm) or visit: **www.kent.fire-uk.org/hfsv**

In an emergency, please call 999.

Case Study: Ian from Hoo, Medway:

Ian Fairclough was visited by KFRS after he had concerns about his hallway smoke alarm not

working properly. During the visit, Safe and Well Officer, Luke, found that the smoke alarm had expired eight years ago, in 2016. Luke removed the old alarm and fitted a new one in a better position closer to the kitchen.

Ian said: "I never thought to check the date of the smoke alarm, I just put a new battery in it and away we went, although the one in the hallway had been hanging down for quite a while but we couldn't afford to replace it. The visit was explained perfectly by Luke and was very informative; there was a lot of stuff I didn't know."

Ian also says he has become more forgetful since having a stroke several years ago, and had accidentally left the oven on a few times, so he wanted to make sure he was being as safe as possible. Luke installed a heat detector

in the kitchen to make sure Ian and his family would be alerted if any appliances were left on accidentally.

Ian continued: "I had a stroke in 2018 and

my memory is getting gradually worse, I keep leaving the oven on and forgetting all about it so it's causing me a lot of issues. I'd left the oven on the night before this visit and didn't know until my wife told me.

"I'd never heard of a heat detector before and at least I'll know if I do leave something on it will be making a noise. That will help me immensely. I feel a lot more comfortable now after this visit especially because these new smoke alarms have a built-in battery, so I won't have to keep changing them.



Data shows that more than 20% of households in Kent and Medway don't have working smoke alarms, which increases the risk of death, injury or property damage if there was a fire. Fires can happen when you least expect them, often during the night, which is why it's so important to have smoke alarms in your home. If you're asleep when a fire starts, a smoke alarm will wake you and give you a chance to escape before you are overcome by smoke.

In a bid to make more homes fire safe, people are urged to check their smoke alarms once a week to ensure that they

are working and that they're in date, and to make simple changes such as closing internal doors, making sure hobs are kept clear of items and turning off electrical appliances that aren't in use.



The Arts Society Egerton

**The Arts Society brings people together
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**We meet at Egerton Millennium Hall on the second Wednesday of each month
at 2.30pm. (doors open from 2.00pm).**

Our next lecture will be:

Wednesday 12th March at 2.30pm:

The kingdom of Hawaii and the Iolani Palace

The only one of the United States to have its own royal residence, the former Kingdom of Hawaii had brave kings and queens who travelled the world.

Pauline Chakmakjian: author and lecturer, Pauline is a Freeman of the City of London. She was on the Board of the Japan Society of Hawaii from 2015–17.

Visitors are always very welcome at £6 (just turn up and pay on the door), refunded if you join. Membership is £40.



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

Book Review from the Lenham Library:

'Absent in the Spring' by Mary Westmacott

I chose a book by Mary Westmacott after hearing one of her novels reviewed on the Radio 4 programme, *A Good Read*, which is well worth a listen.

Mary Westmacott is a pseudonym used by Agatha Christie, which enabled her to write books exploring human psychology without the limitations imposed on her by readers of her crime fiction.

Mary was her second name and Westmacott came from a distant relative. She kept her identity as Mary a secret for almost 20 years and the modest success of the novels pleased her.

I picked '*Absent in Spring*' because the author described it as the book that satisfied her completely, being the one book she had always wanted to write. She wrote it in three days flat and said that she had never been so



tired, but that she didn't want to change a word and that it was written as she meant to write it which she states "is the proudest joy an author can have."


It is the story of a woman who is returning from a visit to her daughter in Iraq, but due to flooding on the railway finds herself stranded and alone in an isolated guest house. The sudden and unaccustomed solitude forces her to think long and hard about her life,

relationships and attitudes.

She fears she might have been a very different wife and mother to the exemplary one she has always perceived herself to be and becomes increasingly anxious about the effect she has had on her husband and daughter. You get a clear picture of the whole family from the thoughts of this one woman in the desert. I will not spoil the ending for you.

I have since read '*The Rose and The Yew Tree*' which is another bittersweet love story as Christie's daughter described these six novels. They are concise, slight novels in length but they pack an emotional punch and the writing shows a deep understanding of her characters. I want to read them all. They are available from the library.

"Mary Westmacott is a pseudonym used by Agatha Christie..."



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The tickets are for up to 2 adults and 2 children – worth £76. All you have to do is decide the date of your first visit.

The tickets are valid for a full year from then!

To enter simply email the *FOCUS* editor on editorialslf@outlook.com or send a text to **07714 311008** giving your name and contact details by **28th March 2025** and you will be entered into the free draw. The winner will be notified at the end of March. **Good luck!**

See also the Dockyard website www.thedockyard.co.uk for events this year and also their poster on Page 46 which covers their Lego display of sunken ships!



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**Pick up points: 09.30 Carrs Yard, 09.45 Dog & Bear Lenham,
10.00 The Rose Bearsted**

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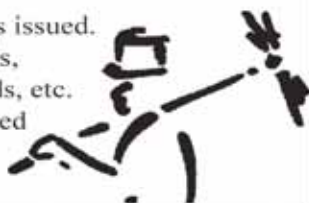
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The Council meet on the first Wednesday of each month.

Our committees also meet once a month.

These are:-

*Finance & General Purposes
Planning & Implementation*

Please see the notice boards and website for the dates of these.

All meetings are held at the Lenham Community Centre at 7:30pm.

Parishioners may attend all meetings.

Contact details: Lisa Westcott

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As the home is situated in the centre of Headcorn our residents have close access to local churches, dentist, hairdressers, surgery, shops and public transport.

**This month's meeting is on
Thursday 20th March at 7.30pm
in the Community Centre.**

Rachel Castle is coming to give her talk
'*Shining a Light on Bulbs*'.

The competition will be for 5 dwarf Daffodils
and/or 3 Chocolate Chip Cookies.

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

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



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Contact Details For Local Groups

Badminton	Alan Williamson	01622-858763
Badminton Club Feathers	Geoff Lord	07794-488331
Borough Councillors	Tom & Janetta Sams	01622-859412 / 0789-1901831
Bowling Club	Lyn Fuller	01622-851538
Bridge Club	Keith Rylands	01622-891964
Brownies (2 nd Lenham)	Andrea French	01622-851646
Cat Protection	Mid-Kent Branch	0345-3712758
Church Office	Sarah Hills	01622-850604
Dog Warden (Louise Duke)	Community Protec'n	01622-602117
Drama	Gail Kelly	01622-850671
Friends of St Mary's Church	Andrew Barr	enquiries@friendsofstmaryslenham.org
Gardening Society	Margaret Baines	01622-431649
Guides (1 st Lenham)	Jo Homes	07887-877814
Ham Lane Allotment Association	Doug Matthews	01622-297692
HAMS productions	David Penny	07731-455677
Harrietsham & Lenham Beavers	Duncan Keenan	07768-926654
Harrietsham & Lenham Cubs	Mrs A Seales	01622-859829
Hub Club	Nina Kent	01622-851970
KCC for Maidstone Rural East	Shellina Prendergast	Shellina.Prendergast@kent.gov.uk
Kent Highway Services	Roads, paths etc.	03000-418181
Kent Wildlife Trust		01622-662012
Lenham Country Market	Sandra Woodfall	07775-736116
Lenham Community Centre	Carol Higgins	01622-853800 (am)
Lenham Cricket Club	Alex Gray	07760-132803
Lenham Film Club	Danny Coorsh	lenhamfilmclub@gmail.com
Lenham Heath Memorial Hall	Rosemarie Pomeroy	07572-911396
Lenham Heritage Society	Henny Shotter	01622-851355
Lenham Lifts scheme	Phil Hollier	01622-859154 / 07542 625277
Lenham Meadows Trust	Danny Matthews	enquiries@lenhammeadowstrust.org
Lenham Nursery	Sarah Siddens	07967 128056
Lenham Parish Council	Lisa Westcott	01622-829034 (M-F 9am-1pm) clerk@lenhamparishcouncil.org.uk
Lenham Quilters & Stitchers	Pamela Gillard	01233-879507
Lenham Social Club	Sue Neaves	01622-532409
Lenham Toddlers Group	Irene Hine	01622-858919
Lenham Wanderers FC	Anna Russell	07747-844785
Len Valley FC	Paul Hewish	07795-324062
Len Valley Health Walks	Jan Enever	01622-851623
Len Valley Practice	GP surgery	01622-858341 / 859204
Member of Parliament	Helen Whately	helen.whately.mp@parliament.uk
Mothers' Union	Mrs J Thomsett	01622-947938
Patient Participation Group	Teresa New	01622-858341
Pilates Classes	Vivien Elcomb	01622-853887
Redback Explorer Scouts	Mark Horlock	redbackesu@hotmail.com
St Edmunds; Platts Heath	Kate Stansfield	07500-895831
Save Our Heathlands (SOHL)	Kate Hammond	07925-606236
Sing & Shake / Make & Shake	Steph Richardson	07894-160906
Vicar	Rev Dr. John Huggins	01622-850280
Wellbeing Community Group	Ellie Stevens	07952-594655 / (Vladimir 07877-143088)
Women's Institute	Chris Godden	01622-858658

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

ACTIVITY	WHEN HELD	TIME	CONTACT NO
Abundant Energy Tai Chi	Weekly Monday	0930-1030	07985 001782
Abundant Energy Qigong	Weekly Monday	1045-1145	07985 001782
Baby Ballet	Friday	0930-1045	07866 316056
Country Ways Knitting	2nd Monday	1330-1630	01622 858658
Country Ways Quilting	1 st & 3 rd Tuesday	1330-1630	01233 879507
Country Ways Rugmaking	2nd & last Wednesday	0900-1300	07784 892160
Feathers Badminton	Weekly Monday	2000-2200	07866 151370
Gardening Society	3rd Thursday	1845-2200	01622 430649
Hatha Yoga	Weekly Monday	1815-1945	07850 355918
Kent School of Bridge	Weekly Thursday	1330-1730	01622 891964
LenARA Bowling	Weekly Tuesday	1330-1700	01622 858439
LenARA Line Dancing	Weekly Wednesday	1900-2115	01622 859725
LenARA Members	4 th Wednesday	1230-1700	01622 851763
LenARA Petanque	Thursday if weather permits	0900-1300	01622 858439
LenARA Zumba Gold	Weekly Wednesday	0900-1030	01622 850228
Lenham Art Group	Weekly Thursday	1000-1300	01622 858238
Lenham Badminton	Weekly Tuesday	2000-2200	07866 316056
Lenham Ballet School	Monday/Tuesday	1700-2030	07866 316056
Lenham Ballet School	Thursday	1630-2100	07866 316056
Lenham Ballet School	Weekly Saturday	0900-1530	07866 316056
Lenham Heritage	4 th Thursday	1900-2130	01622 850228
Lenham Toddlers Preschool	Weekly Tuesday	0930-1130	01622 858919
Lenham WI	2 nd Thursday	1845-2200	01622 858658
Make & Shake (Pre-school)	Weekly Wednesday	1030-1300	07894 160906
Parish Council	1 st Wednesday	1930-2230	01622 829034
Parish Council F & G P	3rd Wednesday	1930-2200	01622 829034
Pilates	Weekly Tuesday	0900-1100	07495 481726
Parish Council Planning	1st Monday	1930-2200	01622 829034
Pathways Church	1 st & 3 rd Sunday	0830-1330	07914 156685
Sing & Shake (Pre-school)	Weekly Monday	0930-1300	07894 160906
Telisa Tai Chi	Weekly Wednesday	1730-1830	07734 108683
Zumba with Rosie	2x Month Tuesday/Friday	1830-1930	07809 490982



Inspired Road Names: Part 3'

From Henny Shotter

'A British heart beating for Europe'



'The Russells' is the name of a small development off Maidstone Road in the former grounds of Parapet House where Cosmo Russell lived with his wife Agnes and their family, who are fondly remembered in the village.

Cosmo Russell was born in Vienna in 1911. In WWI he served with the 60th Rifle Corps. He was fluent in English, French, Dutch and German which was of great benefit to the forces. He rose to the rank of Major and was awarded the Bronze Star and the Order of Nassau.

After the war he put his energy in to trying to help secure peace in Europe. In 1949 he went to Strasbourg and

joined the Council of Europe as Director of the Communication Department. In this role he was involved in drafting the European Convention of Human Rights. Later he worked closely with Ted Heath in preparation for Britain joining the Common Market. He was possibly the first resident who commuted from Lenham to the continent for work! One Lenham resident described him as a 'proper English gentleman'.

He and his wife took great interest in village life and were involved with charities and the church.

Reference:

1. The article is based on information provided by Nick Russell.

Correction: Last month's article should read: 'the Congregational Chapel which stood where there is today Tolhurst Way'.



Guests are always welcome to our talks.
Our next talk will be:

Exploring Kentish Castles

a talk by David Carder

Thursday 27.03.2025 at 7:30 pm

Lenham Community Centre

Guests £4, Members Free



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Lenham Cricket Club

Officials are: President - Andrew Barr; Chairman - Alex Gray; Treasurer - Sally Lane; Fixture Secretary - Dan Russell.

Lenham Cricket Club, a cornerstone of the local sporting community, is on the lookout for new players to join its ranks as preparations for the upcoming season get underway. With a rich history, a welcoming atmosphere and opportunities for players of all ages and abilities, now is the perfect time to get involved.

Our Open Age Teams

The club's Saturday open-age team recently secured promotion, making this season an exciting challenge at a higher level. Playing every weekend, this side represents the club's most competitive cricket, perfect for those looking to test their skills in a challenging league environment. Meanwhile, the Sunday team provides a more relaxed but still competitive format, offering weekly fixtures with a strong sense of camaraderie and enjoyment.

Pre-season training is already in full swing with net sessions taking place most Fridays from 7:30pm to 9:00pm at Cornwallis Academy. Whether you're a seasoned cricketer or someone returning to the game after a break, there's a place for you at Lenham.

Our Junior Teams

For younger players, we offer a fantastic development pathway. The All-Stars programme (ages 5-8) is a fun, engaging introduction to cricket, proving incredibly popular last year. They train weekly on a Thursday. From there, players can progress through our U/11, U/13, and U/15 teams, gaining experience and building



'Join Us! Lenham Cricket Club is more than just a team – it's a community.'

their skills in a supportive and friendly environment. Our older youth teams train weekly at the club on a Monday.

Our Women's Team

The club's women's team has gone from strength to strength in recent years, competing in various tournaments and fixtures throughout the season. Beyond the competitive side, this is a team that prides itself on enjoyment, teamwork and the sheer love of the game.

Club Secretary Role Available

For those looking to contribute off the pitch, the club is also seeking a Club Secretary. This vital role involves supporting the administration of the club and working closely with the leadership team to ensure everything runs smoothly. It's a rewarding opportunity to play a key part in the success of a much-loved local team.

Whether you're eager to play, develop your skills, or get involved behind the scenes, we'd love to hear from you. If you're interested, come along to a training session or get in touch to find out more, contact:

Andy (Open Age) – **07584 052846**, **Alex** (Youth + Women) – **07760 132803**, or **Sally** (General Enquiries) – **07887 844875**.



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Recipe of the Month

Mrs Butler's Rich Chocolate Cake

Ingredients:

4oz (114gms) butter
 4oz (114gms) caster sugar
 6oz (170gms) chocolate powder
 2oz (57gms) self raising flour
 4 eggs.

Method:

Cream the butter and sugar, add the eggs one at a time, beating well between them, then add the chocolate powder. Bake in greased/lined sandwich tins for 1 hour in a moderate oven (175C/350F). Cool in the tins. Slice and fill with chocolate butter cream and chocolate icing, if wished.



This cake should be sticky in the middle and will keep for ages. It's also good cooked in a flat tin and cut into squares when cold – perfect for picnics.

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Borough Councillor Corner

Local development – Heathlands

We have attended a couple of stakeholder meetings regarding the proposed Heathlands development. Whilst the power of the group is limited, we want to ensure that every detail is scrutinised and the developer is held to account for the full contribution of infrastructure delivery – road, rail, school, health, etc. We are reminded that Heathlands was the least viable proposal originally put forward at MBC and that the financial viability was, and presumably still is, marginal.

Devolution and Local Government

The devolution programme has been announced by Angela Rayner, deputy Prime Minister. KCC with Medway Council has not been successful in its application and not been selected to be part of the devolution priority programme.

Thus, at the time of writing KCC elections will take place in May 2025 as originally scheduled.



Maidstone Crematorium £11,600 charity donation funds caravan holidays for critically ill children.

We were really pleased to receive this press release at the end of January and thought readers may be interested in this great scheme which involves the recycling of artificial hips and knees.

Local charity *Family Forever JP*, which aims to help families of seriously ill children to create special memories, has achieved its goal of purchasing a holiday

caravan thanks to an £11,600 donation raised through MBC's Crematorium Metal Recycling Scheme.

At Vinters Park Crematorium, the process begins with obtaining written consent from bereaved families. After cremation, metals such as those from knee and hip implants are carefully collected. These metals are then sent to OrthoMetals, a specialist company in Sheffield, where they are separated, sorted, and smelted.

Family Forever JP was founded by Hayley and Steve Powell in memory of their son Jayden who sadly died from an aggressive brain tumour aged 17 on 16 August 2018. They re-launched their charity in 2022 after Covid halted its initial launch in 2019. The charity supports critically sick children and young adults. They focus on the whole family to make precious, everlasting memories, just as they did with Jayden.

Jayden's mum, Hayley Powell said: "We are simply speechless. As a small charity we do all our own fundraising and we solely rely on the help of volunteers and the kind people who make donations. We have now purchased our static caravan with decking on a premium pitch at Camber Sands in Rye. Our next project is to purchase a chalet so we can adapt it for wheelchair and disabled access."

Cllr Clive English, Cabinet Member with responsibility, said: "We are delighted to have been able to help *Family Forever JP* to achieve their goal of purchasing a caravan and hope it helps many families to create treasured memories."

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Lenham WI

The latest news from Chris Godden

Isn't it good to think we will soon be changing the clocks and the days will be longer again? We have been working hard booking speakers for the rest of this year. We have 'Scams' with Neil Butcher, and 'Behind the Scenes at the BBC' with Peter Woodley – we will open up this talk to other WIs in the area. Also a demonstration of Tai Chi, Sloe Gin and Chocolate and Makeup for the Mature Woman; so quite a varied programme.



In February we had a very interesting talk from **Kim White OBE** on the Gypsy and Traveller Culture. Kim was presented with her OBE for her work over 30 years as a Kent police officer. She spent a lot of time working

with the Gypsy Traveller Liaison Team learning a great deal about the Gypsy culture.

This month we have Beauty, Duty and Trench Coats, a talk from **Amanda-Jane Doran** who has worked at the Tunbridge Wells Museum and Art Gallery as part of the Visitors Service Team, developing resources for children based on the museum's Natural History Collection.



We are also looking forward to our Federation Annual General Meeting, which is to be held at Gravesend. This is always a good meeting as we get to meet representatives from all the other WIs in

West Kent and manage to catch up with friends. We also vote for the resolution that we have decided we want carried forward in June to the National AGM where the chosen resolution will be the next campaign to present to the Government. The speakers are Adam Frost from Gardener's World, DIY SOS and the Alan Titchmarsh Show and Janie Ramsay who has visited nearly 100 WIs in West Kent and will tell us why she became a member.

In April we look forward to welcoming **Pamela Gillard** who will tell us all about her work with Quilting and Patchwork. These skills have become increasingly popular over the past few years and she will bring with her some items to show us that she has produced.

At the end of the month it is 'Keep Britain Tidy: the Great British Spring Clean.' We will all be out there with our black sacks picking up litter and tidying our villages. It is such a shame that we need to do this. It is much better to put your litter either into a bin or to take it home with you. The photograph below shows: 1954 - the very beginning' where the National Federation of Women's Institutes passed a resolution to "Keep Britain Tidy". And the rest, as they say, is history...



If you want to join us, we meet at Lenham Community Centre on the second Thursday of the month at 7.30pm. Please come along and see what we get up to.

To find out more please contact rrgodden@btinternet.com



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The Miracle Club



LENHAM
FILM CLUB

at Lenham Community Centre, Groom Way

Friday March 14th

**Performance begins 19.30,
doors open 19.00**

Running time 1hr 30 mins

This is Maggie Smith in a comedy drama with a difference. **The Miracle Club** (12, 2023) set in 1960s Ireland has an all-star cast which includes Kathy Bates and Laura Linney. A group of friends win tickets for a pilgrimage to Lourdes at the raffle in their local club and all three are eagerly looking forward to the visit. They have different reasons for their enthusiasm but all are battling difficult situations in their lives. Just as they leave for France, however, they're surprised when a fourth person joins their group. The stage is set for the trip although it's

very far from how they had each imagined it. After all, why aren't there as many miracles as they'd expected? But there are consolations... Spend a wonderful evening with us and share The Miracle Club's twists and turns, heart-breaking struggles and sheer exuberance. Director: Thaddeus O'Sullivan

As well as showing a great film on March 14th, we'll also be revealing the fabulous line up of films that we'll be showing as part of our **Spring and Summer 2025** programme. There'll be more about our future films in the April 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.



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From Pamela Gillard

In February we got all of you making simple bags of your own design and it was fun to see how you all design in your own style, even those who thought they couldn't do it.

In March you will all make a quilt. Very small, simple and easy, just to say you have made a quilt. One of the rare times you can make a bagged quilt. It's a baby's floor quilt. I said it was small!

I hope you'll come and join us, try your hand at something new or just enjoy



the company and have a chat and a cup of tea. It's an enjoyable way to spend an afternoon.

We have our meetings on the first and third Tuesdays of every month except December and would love to see you. We meet in the Osborne room in the Lenham Community Centre from 1:30 to 4:30. If you would like more information on our group or would like a copy of our 2025 programme, please contact me, Pamela Gillard at 07914 809946 or email moonbeamspinner@gmail.com



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The Lenham Festival

News from Tom & Janetta Sams on behalf of The Family Festival Group

The Lenham festival committee has met and, sadly, due to other commitments and being a small group, we have decided that we will not be able to run the Lenham festival this year, nor in the future unless more people come forward to organise it.

We are pleased that the events over the years since 2012 have been enjoyable for the community and it has been a pleasure to bring people together and to encourage all sections of the community to take part. We would like to thank all those over the years that have supported

it, including the farmers market committee, Lenham Parish Council, Hatch Charity, local businesses, and Lenham Community Centre. Additionally Val and John Arthur for support for the ABBA tribute nights. We thank all of you for your support.

If anyone would like to get involved and organise something for future years, or to be part of an organising committee, please do get in touch, we'd love to hear from you. Call: **01622-859412** or **07891-901831**.



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It's been a few weeks since I last spoke to you all about various health issues and this month I have a new one for you.

Recently I have found a number of patients coming to see me with recurring issues with shoulder mobility, the most common being “**frozen shoulder**” or as it is known medically “**adhesive capsulitis**”.

Frozen Shoulder (Adhesive Capsulitis)

Frozen shoulder can be described as an incredible pain and stiffness in the shoulder which limits movement in some or all of its usual vectors. The most restricted movement, generally, is when one tries to tuck his/her shirt into their belt, or attempts to wash their hair and reach the back of their neck. These combined movements are the hardest to perform, as it can only be achieved if the scapula and sub scapula muscles are non-restricted.

What causes frozen shoulder?

To be frank, there's not a huge amount of research on the topic. What we do know is that it's generally brought on after an injury

or surgery. If you have diabetes you have a higher risk due to unmanaged blood sugar levels affecting collagen, the major protein that makes up our connective tissue. Thus resulting in inflammation & an adhesive glue-like fluid that congeals in the shoulder capsule, limiting movement.

How long can it last?

So generally there are 3 phases: freezing/ frozen/ thawing - each of these phases may last up to 6 months, equating to 18 months in total. Manual therapy has been shown to speed up the process and reduce to a 6-month timescale for all 3 phases.

How can it be treated?

There are various techniques in practice that we use to resolve and speed up the symptoms/process of frozen shoulder. The main would be manual therapy, followed by and complemented with exercises, Non-steroidal anti inflammatory drugs and painkillers if needed.

Medical acupuncture can also really excel in this condition - we've had some incredible results in practice using this method. All of the above aim to reduce inflammation and improve mobility.

What about long term effects?

Most patients will make a full recovery within the timescales discussed. However, there may be a few patients who may not reach 100%, but these are very rare cases.

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Frozen shoulder



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

Lenham Parish Budget and Precept for 2025/26

The parish council's financial year runs from 01 April – 31 March. The budget is prepared in the autumn and set in January, in advance of the new financial year. The parish then applies to the borough council for agreement to the budget and the parish precept. At the time of writing (end of January 2025) we are still waiting for this confirmation.

The budget estimates the resources required to fund the services the parish council provides, deliver its strategic aims and objectives and meet community and local taxpayer needs and priorities. It is split into two sections; revenue (to pay salaries, bills and services) and capital (to pay for things as set out below).

Items in the capital part of the budget forecast do not impact the parish precept and there is no current need for LPC to borrow funds to deliver any of these improvements. The project programme will be funded by earmarked reserves, income from s106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), budgetary provisions and other grants. For the financial year 2025/26 it includes provisions for the following:

- CCTV development and upgrades;
- road repairs in the cemetery;
- extension to the Maidstone Road car park
- a new Lenham nursery school;
- upgrade to defibrillators around the village;
- improvements to play equipment.

Full details of the projected budget for 25/26 will be published on the Parish website

The revenue element of the budget has been developed on the principle of maintaining existing service levels whilst keeping the required increase in Council Tax as low as possible. It has considered likely changes in costs and income associated with the running of LPC services between the two years (2024/25 and 2025/26).

We have had to make provision for several unavoidable budget increases, such as officer pay awards and inflation on running costs. However, where possible, these increases have been offset, for the most part, by efficiency savings, budget reductions and income increases which will be assisted by the favourable budget position at the end of 2024-2025 where there is a projected under-spend.

However, one negative factor in setting the revenue element of the budget has been the unexpected reduction in "qualifying band D properties". This is the figure, provided by the borough council, which determines the individual cost per household. This figure has reduced because the number of single occupancy properties in the area which get a discount on their council tax has increased. In 2024/25 this increased over the previous

year which provided us some financial "headroom" to absorb increased costs, but for 2025/26 it has reduced. This has removed a significant amount of flexibility the parish council has available to maintain the current precept figure.

While savings have been achieved without cutting services for the parish council, to maintain services at 2024-2025 levels this

	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
Annual Cost (£) per household 2025/26	94.30	110.02	125.73	141.45	172.88	204.32	235.75	282.90
Annual Cost (£) per household 2024/25	89.81	104.78	119.75	134.72	164.66	194.56	224.53	269.44
Difference (£)	0.49	5.24	5.98	6.73	8.22	9.76	11.22	13.46

means the precept will have to increase in the region of 5%. However, this increase does not fully cover the expected revenue spending for 2025/26 so the parish has taken the decision to supplement with funds from its financial resources to the tune of £20,000 to balance the budget. This is covered by an anticipated under-spend in the current financial year.

Full details of the projected budget for 2025/26 will be published on the parish website: www.lenhamparish.org.uk. However the table (above) outlines the increases for the relevant council tax bands for the financial year 2025/26 and compares this with the previous year, 2024/25, to show the increase per household in each council tax band.



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A beginner's guide to buying your own home – Selina Rai

An information article by Hallett and Co, solicitors
info@hallettandco.co.uk t: 01233 625711

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Step 2: Documentation

Your solicitor will obtain documents related to the property from the seller's solicitor e.g. property information form, draft contract, title register, and fittings and contents form. They will then review these documents thoroughly to ensure the information is accurate.

Step 3: Local Searches and Enquiries

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Step 4: Mortgage

If you are obtaining a mortgage, your solicitor will review the offer and if you are happy with the terms you will be required to sign the mortgage deed allowing the lender to place a charge on the property.

Once this step has been completed, your solicitor will finalise the contract for signing and request your deposit in preparation for exchange of contracts.

Step 5: Exchange and Completion

When the contracts are exchanged, the completion date is set and you will be obligated to proceed with the transaction. On the completion date, your solicitor will transfer the purchase funds to the seller's solicitor and you will receive the keys to your new home.

Step 6: Post-completion

Your solicitor will inform the Land Registry of the change in ownership and deal with the stamp duty formalities (if applicable). Once Land Registry has updated their records and the registration is complete, you will receive a copy of the title register.

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The Hambly family of Lenham – Part 3

Continuing the generations of the Hamblys serialised for *Focus* by Chris Allen



Florence Hambly-Pettit, Vic's sister, (shown above) shared the same spirit of adventure and zest for life as her father and moved to London where she married Herbert Pettit and lived just south of the river in Bermondsey.

Herbert was a pub manager and in 1921 they moved across the river to the Isle of Dogs where they became landlord and landlady of the Manchester Arms. This part of the river had been the heart of the ship building industry but pressure from the ever-expanding docks resulted in them moving to less expensive locations.

Florence threw herself into making the pub a success, played the piano and sang in the bar to bring in the customers. These were the days when there was a pub on every street corner and housing conditions were poor.



There was always an annual outing, to Southend or somewhere similar for the day.

She had three children Kenneth, Marguerite and Walter. They all went to the Licensed Victualler School and the family stayed on the island in Galbraith Street.

In 1936 Marguerite (2nd on the left above) was a keen tennis and hockey player. She married William Allen whose father had a tobacconist shop and taxi business a little further up the Manchester Road. The taxi service grew from a horse drawn bus that they ran from Poplar to Fenchurch Street.



**A direct hit from a
German bomb killed
Florence and Mary
instantly.**

By 1940 the bombing in the docks was getting very serious. William was called up and posted to Palestine and the girls decided to move to Chiswick, which was considered a little safer. But fate was not kind to them and on 8th October 1940 their house suffered a direct hit from a German bomb. Florence and Walter's wife of three months, Mary, were both killed instantly but Marguerite, who had been sheltering under the stairs, survived.

Marguerite was now completely alone and she had nowhere to turn. Luckily the Hambly family came to the rescue. Vic, at the White Horse in Sandway, found her a house to rent in Lenham High Street where she lived for the rest of her life. It might have brought her some comfort knowing that she was living in the same village and in a house less than 100m from the house that her mother had left some 35 years previously. She continued to work for Bowring Shipping in the City until 1943 having four children; Jacqueline, Christopher, Bernard and Josephine.

Her husband, William (Bill), was in the REME Regiment during the war and on de-mob got a job as a civilian vehicle mechanic at their workshops in Ashford where he worked until retirement. He was responsible for making the iron gates at Lenham cemetery where many of the REME war casualties are buried.

All four children attended Lenham primary school. The two girls then went



Jacqui and Chris at 68 High Street

to the grammar school in Ashford and the two boys to Lenham secondary modern. Both boys left school at the age of 15 - the norm at that time.

Jacqui went to live with her cousin in London and, following a second marriage, lived in Spain for five years before returning to live at Herne Bay. She worked for Franklin Mint where she was responsible for moving their offices into Canary Wharf, just a stone's throw from where her parents were both born in Manchester Road. She still lives in Herne Bay.

Bernard started work in the office at Marley Tiles but after a variety of jobs eventually settled in the offshore oil industry at a supply depot in Great Yarmouth where he met his wife Elizabeth. They have two children; Melissa who is a GP and Bernard junior, a teacher.

Jo first worked in the laboratories at Wye College before embarking on a career in sales. She was the Lenham Carnival Queen in the mid-sixties and married Julian Booty, the owner of the Lenham Motor Company. She sadly died from Motor Neurone disease in March 2024.



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Obituary – Enid La Plain

1929 – 2024

Enid was born on 25th December 1929. She grew up on Mount Farm near Harrietsham with her parents and two younger sisters.

Enid attended Harrietsham School and Maidstone High School for Girls where she learnt shorthand and typewriting. She went on to work for Eagle Star Insurance (now Zurich) for forty years.

Enid married Dennis in 1963 and they lived in Platts Heath. They enjoyed travel, cricket, gardening, playing whist and family get togethers.

Enid was Life President of Lenham Gardening Society, a member of the Women's Institute and a member of the Guild of Flower Arrangers. She was on the rota for church flowers at St Mary's where she taught Sunday school. She was also a volunteer at the hospice shop for 25 years.

Enid moved to Douglas Court in 2004, where she enjoyed her garden and helping everyone in the community, taking people to appointments or wherever they needed to go.

She became very frail and, when unable to look after herself, moved into Chippendayle Lodge in April 2023 where she was very happy and took part in all the activities.

Enid's sister Betty writes:

'I cannot find words enough to thank you for all the kind words, expressions of sympathy, cards, phone calls and



hugs. Everyone has been so kind; it is a great comfort to me knowing how everyone cares.

Thank you to all those who attended Enid's funeral and for the generous donations to the Heart of Kent Hospice, it is very much appreciated.

Thank you, Millie, for conducting a lovely service, Alastair and staff at A.W. Court and the staff at the Red Lion – all of you made a difficult day easier. Although I have not lived in Lenham very long, it is a good place to live and everyone is so friendly and supportive.

Thank you all.'

Christian Message

Strengthen the rubbery knees!

Did you ever have one of those toys which comprised a wooden animal on top of a base with a push plunger in it? When you pushed the plunger, the strings would go slack and the animal would wiggle around and collapse! They're so simple but so fun! It's less fun on the occasions when our own lives feel like that! We all face times when our own knees are suddenly feeling a lot less rigid!

There is a passage in the Bible, in Isaiah 35:3-4, which gives an amazing encouragement to those who may feel in that situation. In a paraphrase of the Bible called 'The Message', we read the following:

Energize the limp hands,

strengthen the rubbery knees.

Tell fearful souls,

"Courage! Take heart!"

GOD is here, right here,

on his way to put things right

And redress all wrongs.

He's on his way! He'll save you!"

Verses like this are so impactful because they are outworked with two different emphases. In this passage is both an uplifting promise for the way God desires to care for us and also a picture of who He wants us to be for others.

The verses speak so intimately of a God who is not distant or aloof. He is not a hard taskmaster wagging his finger at our failings. Instead, He is "here, right here, on his way to put things right and redress all wrongs". How awesome it is to know that the divine creator of the universe desires to be involved in the challenges of our day to day lives! We can put our hope in Him. He is a God of justice and restoration!

As well as being on the receiving end, we get to be the one who brings this good news and aids in the strengthening of others! Jesus demonstrated the 'strengthening of rubbery knees' in extraordinary ways and we follow his example. When we consider those with whom we share our life - our family, our close friends, our colleagues - I'm sure that we can all think of those whose hands are feeling weak at this time. We get to bring the message of "Courage! Take heart!" God is here and He wants to put things right.

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11.00am Lenham: Holy Communion

Wednesday 5 March

9.30am Lenham: Holy Communion

Ashing Service

Sunday 9 March

9.30am Lenham: Breakfast Church

11.00am Lenham: Holy Communion

Sunday 16 March

8.00am Lenham: Holy Communion (BCP)

9.30am Lenham: Breakfast Church

11.00am Lenham: Morning Worship

Sunday 23 March

11.00am Benefice Holy Communion

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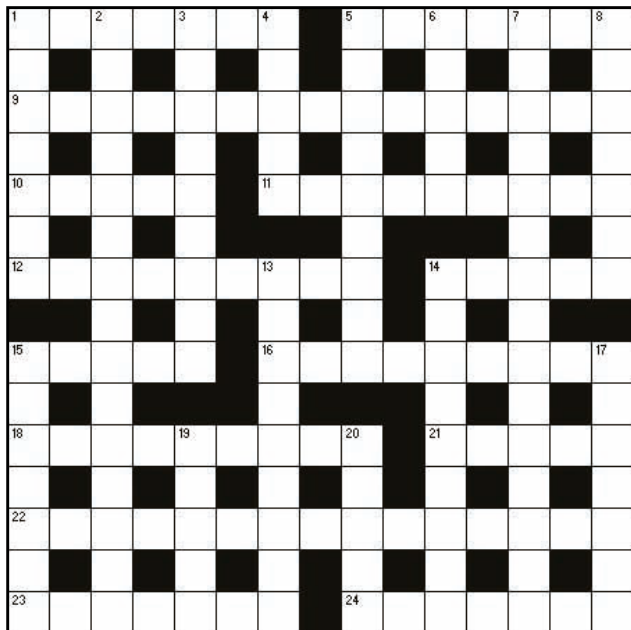
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Focus PRIZE Crossword March 2025

The January 2025 winner is Jacky Offen of Liverton Hill – well done!



Across clues

1. Weapon carried by Neptune. (7)
5. Italian dumplings. (7)
9. Huge Asian trunked animals. (6,9)
10. An interweaving kind of music. (5)
11. Payments made to people for services that have nominally been given without charge. (9)
12. Does not permit! (9)
14. What to do with a troublesome nail! (3,2)
15. You won't get a house if you don't 'do this. (5)
16. Stared at closely. (9)
18. Most happy, like a very songful blackbird. (9)
21. Catholic vestment. (5)
22. Throw it down from the clouds. (4,4,3,4)
23. Stops or interrupts. (7)
24. Loss of memory. (7)

Down clues

1. Fictional mobile carnivorous plant. (7)
2. Inability to process food. (15)
3. What 4 down are for strength. (9)
4. Things in 4 down give you a bite. (5)
5. Ireland to some. (5,4)
6. Alternative. (5)
7. Well done! (15)
8. Moment. (7)
13. They contain both singing and speaking. (9)
14. Ancient maritime town opposite Istanbul. (9)
15. Loose forwards in rugby. (4,3)
17. Watery expanse with no life? (4,3)
19. Excellent according to Jamie Oliver! (7)
20. Small 'crown' worn by children sometimes. (5)

Answers for February
2025 *Focus* Crossword



A £10 voucher, donated by your crossword compiler, will go to the first correctly completed crossword picked from your entries. Please complete the box below and hand your entries into the Lenham Parish Council offices at 1a High Street Lenham or into the Lenham library by **no later than 19 March** where they'll be placed in an envelope. The winner will be notified direct and announced in a future issue of *Focus*.

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