

# IGHTHAM MAGAZINE



**MARCH 2026**

**PUBLISHED FOR THE COMMUNITY  
BY ST PETER'S CHURCH**

**£1.00**



## Services in the Benefice in March 2026

### Ightham

### Wrotham

Sun 1st March	9am	Breakfast@Church	10:30am Holy Communion with Healing Prayers
	6pm	Evensong	
Fri 6th March	10am	World Day of Prayer service	
Sun 8th March	10am	Holy Communion	9am Breakfast@Church 10:30am Service of the Word
Sun 15th March	10am	Service of the Word	10:30am Holy Communion
	6pm	Evensong	
Sun 22nd March	10am	Holy Communion	9am Breakfast@Church 10:30am Sung Matins
Sun 29th March		No services	10:30am United Benefice Holy Communion

### Wednesday services

4th March	10am	Holy Communion
11th March	10am	Morning Prayer
18th March	10am	Holy Communion
25th March	10am	Morning Prayer

## STEPPING OUT!

Many thanks to the wonderful band of villagers who deliver magazines each month; we couldn't manage without them.

Would you like to join them? One of our deliverers has retired after 23 years so if you would like to take on a small round in the Ivy Hatch area there is an opportunity just waiting for you! Please contact Helena and Kate on [magazine@ighthamchurch.org.uk](mailto:magazine@ighthamchurch.org.uk)



**Children are the anchors that hold a mother to life.**

**Sophocles**



## Penny for your thoughts...

After the comparative grey of the winter, March is a month all about colour – yellow daffs and forsythia; pinks of early cherry blossom,

camellias and viburnum; blue of the occasional bright spring sky day; and the gentle green of emerging leaves and sprouting grass. Mothering Sunday is often celebrated with a vibrant bunch of flowers; the supermarkets are full of red and gold foil Easter eggs and shops boldly merchandise with an optimistic show of colourful

summer fashions. Hurrah – spring is on its way and our spirits lighten too. This month's Magazine echoes this sentiment both in tone and content with information on dazzling daffodil viewings, the importance and impact of colour on our brain, cheerful Ightham Mote posters and garden re-openings. This is all against the backdrop of a distinctly golden dawn moment looming on the horizon, the notice of a June installation of a new incumbent for the Benefice after a long interregnum hiatus. Wonderful thoughts, glorious sights and how much we have to give thanks for!

**Penny Cracknell**

CONTACTS

## The Benefice of Ightham and Wrotham THE PARISH OF ST PETER'S, IGHTHAM

*Registered Charity No. 1136162*

Rector: Parish in vacancy  
Church Warden: Naomi Webster T: 07421 832919  
E: [churchwardens@ighthamchurch.org.uk](mailto:churchwardens@ighthamchurch.org.uk)

Benefice Administrator: Jane T: 07940 547310  
E: [admin@ighthamchurch.org.uk](mailto:admin@ighthamchurch.org.uk)

### IGHTHAM MAGAZINE

Editorial: Penny Cracknell T: 07811 066253  
E: [cracknellpa@gmail.com](mailto:cracknellpa@gmail.com)

Advertising: E: [stpetersadverts@btinternet.com](mailto:stpetersadverts@btinternet.com)

Subscription: E: [magazine@ighthamchurch.org.uk](mailto:magazine@ighthamchurch.org.uk)

**Copy deadline for the April edition is 15th March**

# MEDITATE

## Winnie the Pooh and Lent

2026

### Mothering Sunday

Mothering Sunday - the fourth Sunday of Lent- offers families an opportunity to honour the women who have nurtured them. Lots of different streams and traditions have come together to make today's Mothering Sunday the special day that it is.

In the Middle Ages it was an occasion for everyone to visit their 'mother' church - the place where they had been baptised. Later, an opportunity for those who worked away from home to visit their mothers became added to the reasons to make it a special day.

Today we honour all women who have in one way or another been special to us, and in church this is usually signalled by small bunches of flowers for every woman present.

Treating mums and grans to Sunday lunch, chocolates and flowers is also part of the current tradition. And will there be simnel cake – an old tradition - with its rich layers of marzipan, and eleven marzipan balls on top, reminders of the 11 disciples who remained faithful to Jesus?

Not everyone has enjoyed a wonderful or enduring relationship with their mother, so lest we get carried away on a wave of love and sentimentality, there is usually space on Mothering Sunday to reflect on and pray for those whose relationships with their mother were not all they might have been.

Also, there are the families blighted by the lack of, or death of a child; families remembering a mum who died tragically young; women who never had a child but would have dearly loved the opportunity; all these and more are a recognition of the imperfections of human love, human life.

These imperfections can be brought in prayer to the God who mothers us. In the Old Testament, Isaiah speaks of God comforting His people like a mother hen. In the New Testament, both Matthew and Luke bear witness to Jesus expressing His desire to gather His people as a mother hen gathers her chicks under her wings. Yes, God has strong maternal qualities which He invites us to discover and enjoy!

Have you discovered the mothering, nurturing, maternal qualities which God offers to all people? It's lovelier than flowers, more long-lasting than simnel cake, better than a visit from family, and it's free to everyone who wants it - it could be yours!

**Parish Pump Editor: Rev Roy Shaw**

### Two donkeys

Two donkeys were walking the streets of Jerusalem. One said: "Just a few days ago I came down that hill carrying Jesus, and the people were all singing and shouting and throwing down their cloaks and palms for me to walk on. But today they don't even recognise me."

The other donkey replied: "That is how it is, my friend. Without Jesus, none of us amounts to much."

# PLAXTOL LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

## Plaxtol Houses

Regular speaker Jonathan Fenner explained that Plaxtol has 13 medieval houses and the long history of the village has shaped the Plaxtol we know today. Its industries have long gone - Roughway Mill, Hyders iron works, the forge, tanners, butchers and bakers. There were once 12 pubs with only two now left, and we still have a busy village shop and post office – otherwise, the village is now one of only houses. There are examples of vernacular architecture which in the words of Gertrude Jeckyll means that local materials and local craft are used to meet local needs. Ragstone and weatherboarding were much used in Plaxtol. Several of the larger houses, such as Nut Tree Hall and Spoute House, although built as single dwellings, for long periods were divided into cottages or rented by tenant farmers with absentee landlords. The seven picturesque cottages of Church Row were run down by the beginning of the 19th century and home to working families and two families of cobblers. Bartons Farm, built in the 13th century is the oldest farmhouse in Plaxtol and this is verified by looking at the back of the house. Several medieval houses such as The Grange, Ashenden, Dux Farm and Roughway Farm have 18th century façades wrapped around a much older core. Spoute House and Jordans are both jettied. The former has two curved timber braces on the jettied end, typically Kentish. An old photo shows the house limewashed which was once used to cover the cracks in draughty old houses. In the

19th century the wealthy Golding family who discovered the famous hop owned 35 houses and farms. They had seven sons and their name often crops up in deeds. The hop growing Beadle family built the cottages on the south side of The Street, where the ‘rat trap’ bond of bricks can be seen. Further down the Street is Tebolds, an unprepossessing Victorian villa built on land with deeds dating back to the 16th century. This hides the surprising fact that one previous owner was a lion trainer! French influence can be seen in the tower built at Reed House (1890) and also at Daltons(1870) home of the Beadles.

Jonathan emphasized the variety of buildings in Plaxtol from the medieval to the alms houses and social housing at St Hilda’s; and commented on the soft mellow look of the brickwork and hanging tiles. This superb talk will be further augmented by a Plaxtol Houses walk with Jonathan on 9th July.

Next meeting: Tuesday 10th March at 8pm, Plaxtol MEMORIAL HALL with Frederick Forman of the National Trust talking on A House History of Ightham Mote.

**V.Dusseck**



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## Dear Friends and Parishioners,

As we step into March, the first hints of spring remind us that renewal often begins quietly. Snowdrops pushing through the cold soil and lighter evenings creeping in offer a gentle reassurance: even after the longest winter, hope returns.

This year, that message feels especially important. Many of us are navigating challenges—rising living costs, uncertainty in world events, or simply the everyday pressures that weigh on us all. It can sometimes feel as though the world’s problems are too big and our actions too small. Yet spring teaches us something different: change begins with little acts of persistence. A single bud can brighten a whole garden; a single kindness can transform someone’s day.

Here in Ightham and Wrotham, we see this truth lived out daily. Neighbours checking in, volunteers quietly giving their time, local groups offering support and friendship. These simple gestures weave together a community rooted in care.

And this year, we also look forward with excitement to welcoming our new Rector in June. This arrival marks a new chapter for our parishes—a time of fresh energy, shared purpose, and continued hope. As with all new beginnings, it offers us the chance to come together, extend a warm

welcome, and reflect on the kind of community we want to build for the future.

As Easter approaches, we are invited once again to reflect on themes of hope, sacrifice, and renewal. Whether or not we experience these through a faith lens, they speak to something deeply human. We all know what it is to carry burdens—and we all know the relief of finding we don’t have to carry them alone.

So, as we move toward brighter days, I encourage you to pause, breathe in the promise of the season, and look for one small way to bring light into someone else’s life. You may never know the impact it has—but it will matter.

**Yours in Christ,  
Michelle Lawson**



**“As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you; you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.”**

**Isaiah 66:13**

# IGHTHAM IGHTHAMS

On Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March we will have our monthly Men's Breakfast at the George and Dragon in Ightham, at 8.30 am. This continues our monthly visits which have taken place for over 15 years. We enjoy an excellent full English breakfast on the second Saturday of the month.

We will be very pleased if any newcomers would like to join us for some good conversation over a leisurely breakfast in lovely surroundings. If you would like to join us and / or would like to have a regular reminder, please can you let me, John Webster, know via email:

[jnhjk.webster@btinternet.com](mailto:jnhjk.webster@btinternet.com);  
or phone: 01732 884819.

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10.15am  
to 11.45am  
every  
Wednesday

Church  
Centre

*The charity for March is Babons Cancer Support based in Tonbridge which exists to come alongside the cancer community of Tonbridge (and the surrounding area) whether you are patient, carer, family member, colleague or friend.*

# MORE IGHTHAM IGHTHAMS

## Ightham Magazine

Subscribe to the Ightham Magazine and keep up to date with local news and events; read the latest Parish Council deliberations; and find contacts for local trades. The annual subscription is £10, for 10 issues delivered free to your door. Payment can be made by standing order, cheque or cash. To subscribe, please contact E: [magazine@ighthamchurch.org.uk](mailto:magazine@ighthamchurch.org.uk)



## St Peter's Church Parent, Baby & Toddler Group

New to Ightham? New mum at home? New child carer?



**Thursday  
10 - 11.30 am  
(term time only)  
in St Peter's  
Church**

From napping newborns to toddlers on trikes, this friendly and welcoming group would love to see you! Come along to meet local Mums and carers over coffee/tea, and yummy home-baked cake.

Need to know more?

The Group's leader, Kirsty Mitchem, will be delighted to hear from you. T: 01732 885072.

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### 15<sup>th</sup> April 2026

### Hampton Court Tulip Festival

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is also included.

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# PARISH COUNCIL NEWS



**IGHTHAM Parish Council** is pleased to announce that after 7 years of campaigning, KENT COUNTY COUNCIL has made an Order to implement a 20MPH speed limit on OLDBURY LANE and SPRING Lane and came into effect on 23 January 2026.

## A GOOD SAMARITAN STORY

From a recent email to our Parish Clerk “On Tuesday night in January I hit a pothole and burst a tyre which was an awful experience. I managed to get the car

through your village to the junction with the West Kingsdown turning.

I would just like to thank very much the 6 people in your lovely village who stopped to offer help. Also a very, very big thank you to the 3 gentlemen who rescued me by changing the tyre for my emergency spare. The AA could not come for 2 hours!

Your villagers proved there are still some lovely people in this traumatised world we are in. Many thanks, a very grateful motorist.”

And thank you to the motorist who took the time to say thank you!



We're planning a  
Community Picnic Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2026  
Ightham Recreation Ground

Would you like to contribute?  
Can you run a stall? Provide  
entertainment? Help on the day?  
We'd love to hear your ideas . . .

Please contact Paula 07753 408755 or  
Kirsty 07818 342816 for further information

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## OUT AND ABOUT IN MARCH!

- Why not buy Mum an annual ticket to **Great Comp Garden**? The perfect location for the occasional escape from household chores!
- Book Mum in for a couple of hours 'me time' and nature connection with Wilder Wellbeing at **Bore Place**. Wednesday 25 March, 10 am – noon. Free.
- Treat Mum to a delicious Mother's Day afternoon tea at **Chiddingstone Castle**! Or indulge in a delightful afternoon filled with love and appreciation at **Penshurst Place** and Gardens' Mothering Sunday Afternoon Tea. Sunday March 15, two sittings. Bookings required.
- Be dazzled by almost 120,000 golden trumpet daffs at **Hever Castle**, 16 – 22 March. Standard admission applies; RHS members go free.
- Award winning author, comedian and broadcaster Robert Newman, talks about his 7th book, 'Intelligence'. **Sevenoaks Bookshop**, Tues 10 March, 7 pm. £12.
- Getting ready for Easter . . . **Lullingstone Castle** opens for 2026 with its egg-citing Easter Egg Quiz, 2 – 6 April, 11 am – 5 pm. Aspiring plant hunters scour The World Garden & Grounds for Easter clues to claim an eggstastic surprise!
- Easter starts early at **Emmetts Garden** with family Easter adventures, 21 March – 19 April. £3.50 + admission. No booking required.

**Check websites for full booking and ticket details.**

**All book worms** should head to Borough Green and Sevenoaks Libraries where they'll find a cornucopia of literary delights, including children's activities! Check the Kent Library service website <https://www.kent.gov.uk/leisure-and-community/libraries> or call



T: 03000 41 31 31 for opening hours and up to date information.

## Ramblers -

### March 2026

### Stroll or stride . . .

. . .with our friendly group of Kent Ramblers, part of the national Ramblers walking organisation.

You don't have to be a Ramblers' member to sample a few walks to help you decide if you'd like to join. If you're new, we suggest contacting the walk leader beforehand to check their walk's suitability.



Warm up for Spring with March's leisurely and moderate grade walks. Full details can be found on [Upcoming Walks](#) link or [Facebook page](#) or E: [info@tonbridgeandmallingeramblers.org.uk](mailto:info@tonbridgeandmallingeramblers.org.uk)

**We look forward to welcoming you!**



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# IGHTHAM WI

Despite very dark, foggy, wet and miserable weather and various apologies, the Village Hall was full of enthusiastic members plus those joining on Zoom. Four new guests also attended.

After the usual reports and numerous social activities, the President introduced our speaker Naresh Katnoria. Naresh has been President of Soroptimist International, Gravesend and District since 2010, a body working in similar ways and projects to the WI.

Naresh (together with her friend/assistant Bimla) spoke about spices and saris. Every member was given a sheet with listed ingredients on how to make a basic curry paste which could be refrigerated for a month. Sample spices were handed round for members to see and smell. There were quite a few we hadn't seen or heard of before, such as jeera/cumin seeds and dried fenugreek. Naresh explained that homemade curries are totally different to those bought in the supermarket and each spice and seed has specific health benefits. We were also given the specific ingredients to make Indian tea/chai.

Naresh then demonstrated how to put on a sari. Saris have been around for centuries and come in three separate pieces, lower garment, veil and chest band. They are traditionally made from silk or cotton consisting of six yards of fabric. Worn underneath the sari is a blouse or t-shirt and petticoat. The

theWI  
INSPIRING WOMEN

material is tucked in at the hip and then pleated at the front and wrapped around. The sari is extremely versatile, changing from everyday wear to formal and incorporating head covering. It suits every body shape, is very comfortable and available in many embroidered and beautiful colours. All the members were impressed by Naresh and her presentation and departed with new confidence to enhance our Indian cookery skills.

**New members and visitors are always welcome. Any enquiries, please contact Helen Johnson, President, Ightham WI.**

**E:** [happyflowersgs@live.co.uk](mailto:happyflowersgs@live.co.uk)

***March meeting: Michelle Emoult – 'The benefits of beeswax and honey'***

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## FROM YOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

In 2021, I was sanctioned by the Chinese Communist Party for speaking in Parliament about the persecution of Uyghurs in north-western China. For more than a decade, many have faced severe repression, and I have continued to press the UK government to stand firmly against human rights abuses.

Since then, we have also seen serious allegations of spying in Westminster, debated the proposed new Chinese embassy site in London, and raised more serious questions about our national security and values. We are facing a hostile state that is trying to undermine us here in the UK.

That is why, when the Prime Minister travelled to China earlier this year, I hoped that the case of the British Citizen, Jimmy Lai, who remains imprisoned in Hong Kong, the hostile actions of the Chinese state online, and the treatment of the Uyghur people, would be central to those discussions.

Instead, I learned at the end of the visit that I and several other MPs had been removed from China's sanctions list. While that may sound like a positive step, it isn't. It's a distraction from far more important issue: the freedom and rights of those

still suffering persecution.

These may seem like distant international matters, but they reflect the kind of country we are and the principles we stand for, the goods and services we trade and the relationships that we rely on in times of global conflict. It is important that we remain clear about the challenges posed by authoritarian governments, and that we do not compromise our values for short-term convenience.



If you would like to read more about my work on these issues, you can find further updates online, or you are always welcome to contact my office.

---

### Contact details:

E: [tom.tugendhat.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:tom.tugendhat.mp@parliament.uk)

T: 01732 441563

Post: 130 Vale Road, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1SP

Web: [www.tomtugendhat.org](http://www.tomtugendhat.org)

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Best wishes

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Tom Tugendhat MBE MP - Member of Parliament for Tonbridge and Malling

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**Highway problems** including potholes, drainage and overgrown roadside foliage: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem>

### **Community Police Contact:**

Our local contacts are: Inspector Terry Newman;  
Sgt Nick Atkinson; PC Dylan McElligott and Irina  
Mgebrisvili, Community Liaison Officer - PSE.



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# Stephen P. Gay

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Comforted by so many memories"*

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<https://www.freepik.com/vector/god>

## **CHURCHYARD IMPROVEMENTS** - *your chance to get involved*

Having opened up the vista in the churchyard, we are planning to plant new native trees and hedgerows in several locations within the churchyard to support our local biodiversity and would welcome volunteers to help with planting in early March. We are hoping to get some of the children from Ightham Primary School to help shape the plans for the new trees and where they should go. Anyone who would like to be involved, please get in touch with the Church Warden, Naomi Webster, [churchwardens@ighthamchurch.org.uk](mailto:churchwardens@ighthamchurch.org.uk)

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## NEWS FROM IGHTHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

It's been a hectic but fun term at Ightham Primary School. Everyone has been busy with activities including decorating pencil pots, making and designing Egyptian collars, designing posters on the features of birds, learning about space, and developing their cricket skills. Year 3 also visited Chatham Historic Dockyard, with the highlight of exploring a Royal Navy submarine. The whole school enjoyed Safer Internet Day with a focus on AI technology. After celebrating Number Day, the NSPCC fundraising ended with a fantastic total of £217.20.

The term ended 'in the red', with the PSA organising a Valentine's Day celebration including a Valentine's cake competition.

What a yummy (but challenging) time the judges had in choosing a winner!

Congratulations to all the home bakers with Maddie (year 2) taking the first prize for her delicious chocolate brownies.



With such a busy term, both staff and pupils deserved a well-earned and much needed half term break!

## FRIENDS OF IGHTHAM SCHOOL

Friends of Ightham School (FOIS) are an active support and fundraising group for Ightham Primary School. FOIS AGM is on March 26th, 5pm at the George & Dragon which everyone is warmly invited to attend.

We are always keen to hear from new 'friends' and grateful to everyone who is already involved. Get in touch by contacting Mark Keenor, Chair of Trustees, 07770 440343

## Thank God for the Easter Promise

“And on the third day,”  
the sun arose again with the son.  
Birds awoke with joy,  
in the stillness of early Morn’  
Jesus Christ was alive!  
He welcomed the joy of the dawn,  
with the marks of his experience -  
proving his innocence.

He walked from his death bed’s  
enclosure,  
with the spirit of a fulfilled Saviour.  
The pain of his body and mind  
are now a thought behind.  
Messiah; fulfilled, Crucified-healed.  
Now was the time to show that he  
was alive,  
so that Christians could believe in  
‘The Word’  
and thrive.

In Mary’s case he was a ‘Gardener,’  
not the risen Pardoner.  
Thomas needed to touch, and feel  
his nail marks and open side.  
With shock and surprise his Master  
had died,  
and was standing here again - so  
alive!  
Now Christians can believe in ‘The  
Word’  
and thrive.

Mary and Thomas now full of  
elation,  
as Man’s sins were set aside, so  
entry  
to God’s Kingdom may not be  
denied.

Thank God for his promise, Now  
love all  
with care.

‘Amen!’ to the action and thought of  
Prayer.

Twelve Disciples were then set to  
prepare for their Ministry,  
to talk to everyone about God’s  
son,  
The King of the Kingdom to come.  
Jesus then returned to Heaven  
above.  
Leaving his promise - the sign of his  
Love.

**Di Coleman 2025**

## SHIPBOURNE FARMERS' MARKET



We have recently welcomed two new popular stallholders to the Market. David sells his handmade wooden planters – perfect for Mothers' Day gifts later this month and can be made to size. North Charcuterie is based in East Farleigh and produces cured hams and salamis with British, Spanish and Italian influences.

Cooks call March the 'famine' month for its lack of seasonal choice. But don't despair for Spring is just around the corner and at the end of the month the clocks go forward, with the promise of longer, warmer days as the season changes. So why not make the most of the last of the winter at the Farmers' Market this month, and savour all those wonderful comfort foods before Spring really gets going? After all that's one of the real joys of seasonal local shopping – life moves on, ingredients come and go with the changing year, and we can all enjoy knowing we are eating food at its finest whilst giving vital support to local producers who are working flat out to cope with the challenges the British weather keeps throwing at them.

A wonderful warming fish stew is a delicious way of enjoying superb fish and seafood this month. For meat eaters, pork is an excellent choice this

month and it's still ideal weather to enjoy a hearty roast on Sunday with all the family. Try a shoulder joint for

the best combination of flavour and texture. The cheaper cuts are worth trying in slow cooked stews – pork belly, breast of lamb, shin of beef – all great value and superb eating.

Winter cabbages, cauliflower, spring greens and kale are all picking well now. They need little cooking and are really at their best simply shredded and steamed. Or try quickly stir fried with garlic, ginger and chilli. Cauliflower goes really well with curry spices so try it in vegetable curries, soups and fritters.

Beautiful pink forced rhubarb is really the only local fruit around now but the season is short so make the most of it. Use in crumbles, fools, ice creams and sauces – it goes particularly well with a large pinch of ginger.

***To stay up to date with “what's on” at the Market, request our weekly e-newsletter by visiting [www.shipbournefm.co.uk](http://www.shipbournefm.co.uk) or email [lindsay\\_miles@btinternet.com](mailto:lindsay_miles@btinternet.com)***

## COOKERY CORNER

### MOTHERS' DAY RHUBARB AND ELDERFLOWER CAKE

Making the most of new season forced rhubarb

Serves 8-10 / Prep: 40 mins / Cook: 55 mins

*For the rhubarb:*

- 400g trimmed forced rhubarb cut into 4-5cm slices
- 110g caster sugar
- ½ lemon zested and juiced
- 2 tbsp elderflower cordial

*For the elderflower cream:*

- 300ml double cream
- 2 tbsp elderflower cordial
- 100g full fat natural yoghurt

*For the cake:*

- 115g unsalted butter
  - 95g ground almonds
  - 200g golden caster sugar
  - 1 lemon zested
  - 3 eggs – 2 whole and 1 white only
  - 1 tsp vanilla extract
  - 1 tbsp elderflower cordial
  - 100g plain flour
  - 1 tsp baking powder
  - ½ tsp bicarb of soda
  - 130g full-fat natural yoghurt
1. Heat oven: 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Butter two 20cm round cake tins & base line.
  2. Roast the rhubarb: baking parchment line a high-sided baking tray, add rhubarb, top with sugar, lemon juice, zest & cordial. Cover with foil; roast in the oven for 25 mins until soft. Remove from the oven & reduce the temperature: 190C/170C fan/gas 5. Strain the rhubarb from the poaching liquor, reserving the syrup.

3. Whisk butter & cream on medium mixer speed for 2 mins; then tip in the sugar/lemon zest. Turn up the mixer speed slightly & continue whisking for 5 mins until light & fluffy. Turn the mixer speed down slightly, add the eggs/egg white/vanilla extract/cordial & mix together.
4. Combine flour/almonds/baking powder/bicarb of soda & a pinch of salt in a bowl. Turn the mixer to low speed – so it's just stirring – then spoon in the flour & almond mixture in 4 batches, alternating with spoonfuls of yogurt, finishing with a batch of the flour & almond mixture. Mix until just combined, with no streaks remaining, then add half the roasted rhubarb & 1 tbsp of its syrup to the batter & fold in.
5. Divide the batter evenly between the cake tins; bake in the oven for 25-30 mins until an inserted skewer comes out clean. Leave to cool in the tins then carefully remove.
6. For the filling, whip the cream to soft peaks & fold in ¾ of the remaining roasted rhubarb, along with the elderflower cordial & yogurt.
7. Put one of the cakes flat-side down, prick all over with a skewer, & brush the cake with a little elderflower cordial. Spoon on half the cream mixture, top with the other cake, then brush that cake with cordial. Spoon over remaining cream mixture, top with the remaining rhubarb & spoon over some poaching syrup.

Stallholder Shopping List

Eggs – Edward Nut Farms

Forced Rhubarb – Roughway Farm/Watts Farms

*Recipe taken from [bbcgoodfood.com](http://bbcgoodfood.com)*

## **BRAIN MATTERS... colours matter...**



It's been one very wet, grey start to the year and a dispiriting crawl into spring! With a wish and a prayer let spring colours and sunshine soon burst forth. For spring we imagine new beginnings, lighter evenings and glorious coloured bulbs: how does colour influence other areas of our life?

Looking to the littlest ones in our community, colour plays an important role in shaping their learning. Colours shape our brain; an overstimulating environment can reduce early childhood learning persistence by up to 25%. Let's dive into how colour quietly reshapes attention, focus and regulation.

When children process colour they use not only their visual cortex but also their limbic system and autonomic nervous system. This means that colour can affect attention, emotional regulation, stress response and learning efficiency. Children's brains are still developing, their sensory filters are immature so are more prone to stimulation overload. Adult brains filter, children's just absorb. Too much colour can create neural overload.

So which colours are best to maximise learning and regulation? Blues and soft greens are linked to lower heart rate, reduced cortisol (the stress hormone) and better sustained attention making them best for calm play, bedrooms and study spaces. Specifically blue is a good classroom colour associated with safety and predictability; it can help improve task

performance, support emotional regulation and reduce impulsive behaviour. Green tones sit mid colour spectrum - it's easy for eyes to process, mentally restorative (remember forest bathing!) and supportive for working memory. So green is a great colour for those feeling anxious or overstimulated.

Pops of soft yellows and muted oranges can help activate curiosity, encourage exploration and help engage in verbal communication. Bright colours (bright reds, oranges and yellows) can be overstimulating. Typically bright red associates with danger; no surprise then that these colours are associated with increased heart rate, raised arousal levels and trigger impulsivity. Red can activate the brain's alert system; prolonged exposure is linked to reduced attention span, increased frustration and more aggressive reactions.

In bright multicoloured environments there's competition for attention, task performance and persistence are reduced and there's an increase in cognitive fatigue. More colour doesn't mean better learning. Dark colours though, are unhelpful as they can make us feel emotionally flat, depressed and unmotivated. Light matters, with neutral colours of cream, beige and white being calming.

Children are influenced by colour all day. So for this year's spring clean think a little more about which colours to add, remove or revamp in our homes and learning spaces, and how much we get out in the green outdoors.

***Chantal Montebello-Ealey***

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# IGHTHAM PARISH COUNCIL



**Chairman:** Cllr Rodney Willingham

**Vice Chairman:** Cllr Michael Holden

**Parish Clerk:** Mrs Sarah Huseyin  
T: 01732 886402  
[ighthamclerk@gmail.com](mailto:ighthamclerk@gmail.com)

**Councillors:** Cllr Steve Burgham  
Cllr Carol Clark  
Cllr David Emmett  
Cllr Stephanie Gunson  
Cllr David Hall  
Cllr Tamsin Hogarth  
Cllr Kirsty Mitchem

## AN EXTRACT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES January 2026

(Full Minutes can be found at [www.ightham.org](http://www.ightham.org) or by emailing the Clerk)

### REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR & BOROUGH COUNCILLOR & POLICE:

(Report submitted and circulated).  
County Cllr Rayner reported that the mega flectas on the junction of A25 and Common Road were being reviewed and the 20mph speed limit signs at Oldbury were being installed this week. He noted that a request to remove the triangle at Back Lane was now on our HIP.

The KCC draft budget is out and proposes to increase council tax by 3.99%. This means there will be savings in the order of £10m and Councillor Rayner thought that the Government may also reduce their grant by a similar amount if they

follow their usual modelling. Adult Services will see a reduction of £80m.

Cllr Rayner suggested that Reform were acting on the basis that Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) would go ahead and are therefore using reserves to plug funding gaps. Cllr Rayner reported indications of a softening in the schedule from central Government towards LGR. There is a question as to whether the local elections would take place in May 2027 for the new Unitaries; if they don't, the TMBC elections will also have to be cancelled. This was reported at the KALC local area committee last week.

**Highways & PROW Matters: HIP update** – Oldbury Lane 20mph – the signage is being installed this week. We have received notification from Kent Highways that they propose a reduction of speed limits around Ightham Common and Ivy Hatch to 30mph. A section of Coach Road and Mote Road will remain at the national speed limit and a section of High Cross Road will be reduced to 50mph. All other roads will be 30mph including Ismays Road, Redwell Lane, Nutfields, Common Road and Back Lane. It was agreed that we would like to proceed but will request that the whole of High Cross Road is 30mph.

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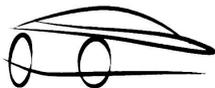
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We will have to survey residents to get support before a Traffic Regulation Order can be made. The Clerk will prepare a questionnaire that can be circulated to all affected residents and local businesses. Details will also go onto the website and in the Parish Magazine. We have recently received complaints about speeds and parking at Ivy Hatch. The Clerk will pass these onto Kent Highways and will also request a line refresh. Cllr Emmett will respond to the resident and also canvas opinion about installing some double yellow lines. Unfortunately parking has increased around Ivy Hatch due to The Plough's popularity. If the lines are refreshed it may deter parking on the junctions. Double yellow lines may not be popular with residents and there is an issue around enforcement, particularly at weekends.

**Velocity scheme for The Street:** a scheme for a build out by the Forge was circulated. Councillors thought that it would do little to address the issues further up The Street. It was decided that we wouldn't pursue their suggestion at this time. Velocity confirmed that Kent Highways had applied the correct guidelines when rejecting our request for a 20mph limit and we have been advised that there are no further options to appeal their decision. It was noted there is already priority signage on The Street.

**Removal of triangle at Back Lane:** This has now been added to our HIP on the basis that visibility is poor turning onto A227 in both directions

and confusion about which splay to use. We are in the process of installing mirrors by the bus stop to improve visibility.



**Road sweeping:** Cllr Mitchem has been in contact with TMBC about litter clearing on Fen Pond Road and A25. We have been informed that it can't be done without road closures. The A25 is due to be done at the weekend and Cllr Mitchem is pursuing Fen Pond Road whilst also getting regular street cleaning in the village.

**Highways Reports:** Salt bins to be refilled on Redwell Lane. Large pothole outside Skorsden and outside Ferndale. Road edge collapsing on Coach Road near to Pine Tree Lane. Leak on Bates Hill - report to Tom Tugendhat if it continues.

### **MATTERS ARISING**

**Recreation Ground:** Tyrrells: woodwork repairs were completed on 14.1.26. **Visual Tree Assessment:** a £2,304 quote to do tree work outlined in the report was agreed. **Gritting of car park during icy weather:** we have previously provided salt for users and agreed to close the car park during bad weather in accordance with our insurance policy. Due to the nature of the car park surface, it rarely ices over. However, during recent cold weather and rain, the surface became really icy and we have been asked by users to apply grit/salt. The Clerk has checked with our insurance company

who have said that it's our decision whether or not to grit. Given the reliance on the car park by the school parents, it was agreed that we should endeavour to grit during bad weather; however the car park should be closed if this can't be done or it becomes too icy to use. The Clerk will speak to the school about the circumstances under which they decide to close the school. Cllr Willingham will speak to James Hayward to see whether he would be able to get a salt spinner and is willing to salt the area. It was also suggested that we erect a sign requesting that people don't use the car park when it is icy. Request from Tennis Club to remove Sycamores: Cllr Mitchem has received a request to remove 2 trees that are dropping debris onto the

courts and is due to have a site meeting with the Tennis Club to establish which trees are being referred to. They have offered to replant replacement trees. Southern Water drain: The Clerk wrote to Tom Tugendhat about the ongoing issue with the drain on the footpath leaking sewage during heavy rainfall. Southern Water have been out to do an inspection of the sewer and were due to report back on 16th January; we are awaiting their update. Recreation Ground Sign: Cllr Mitchem said that she would organise this now that we have planning permission and will circulate costs. We will need to install the sign ourselves.



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Village Hall: Feedback from survey in January 2026 – We are waiting for the survey report. This will include what reports we are required to have ie an asbestos report. Initial comments from the surveyor: the shell is Edwardian, most issues with the building can be fixed with maintenance and updating ie of guttering, and damp issues can be solved by tanking. Overall opinion was that the current building can serve our needs. We can bring extra light in through the roof if needed. We should get a structural engineer to look at the building's integrity. Cllr Holden will circulate the report once received.

Oldbury Annexe: Warners are waiting for original documents; they have only received electronic versions. Both the Clerk and Warners are chasing this up. The Clerk was instructed to send the rent invoice.

Village Fete /Community Picnic 11th July 2026: Update - Cllr Mitchem reported that a “save the date” notice had gone into the Parish Magazine. The school PSA, Scouts, Ightham Club,

WI, Church and Friends of Ightham School are interested in taking part and Cllr Mitchem is also contacting the Cricket and Football Clubs and Ightham Mote. Ideas include a dog show, choir, gym display and maypole dance. The Parish Council agreed to contribute £1,600 towards generators, toilets and marquees and Cllr Mitchem asked whether the Parish Council would also consider funding the East Packham Silver Band. It is estimated that it will cost £500; agreed. Cllr Emmett said that the Rotary Club had marquees that they would donate free of charge and would erect them.

Casual Vacancy: TMBC have advised we can co-opt. An advertisement with deadline 28 February 2026 has gone into the Parish magazine. We will interview once the deadline has passed. It was noted that it would be good to have representation from Ivy Hatch or Oldbury.

**BUDGET & PARISH COUNCIL PRECEPT FOR 2026 – 2027:** The Finance Committee met in early



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January and proposed a balanced budget and precept of £133,000. This represents a 2% increase for Band D properties. Running costs are approx. £125k and capital items in the budget include £350k for the Village Hall, £50k for Recreation Ground improvements, £25k Highways and £10k professional fees. The budget and precept were agreed.

**PLANNING** 6 planning applications were received and 1 objection raised. TMBC approved 3 planning applications.

The meeting closed at 9.40 pm.

### **Borough Green and Wrotham u3a**



This is to remind readers that Borough Green and Wrotham u3a monthly meetings are held on the second Monday of each month at 2 pm in Borough Green Village Hall, with tea, coffee, and biscuits. Parking/ disabled access available.

victories , and engineering and artistic triumphs. We will also hear of major scandals, disasters, and the many changes of social and cultural life.

At our meeting on Monday 9th March we are delighted to welcome back the ever-popular Bob Ogley. Those who have heard Bob speak before will know what an entertaining and interesting speaker he is. The title of his talk in March is “Invicta”, the motto of Kent, meaning Unconquered. Bob will guide us through the highlights of the 20th century in Kent, including flying machines, two world wars, sporting

We look forward to welcoming existing and new members, and guests (£5). Parking is free for Village Hall users, so please remember to register your car in the Village Hall lobby when you arrive. For further information, or to join your local u3a, please contact: [info@bgwu3a.org.uk](mailto:info@bgwu3a.org.uk) or visit our website <https://bgw.u3a.site.uk>



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## Holy Week Services

### St Peter's Ightham

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April - Maundy Thursday  
8pm Holy Communion Service  
followed by stripping of the altar

Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April - Good Friday  
12noon 'Hour at the Cross'

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April - EASTER DAY  
9am Breakfast@Church  
followed by Easter Egg Hunt

### St George's Wrotham

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> April - Maundy Thursday  
7 for 7:30pm Tenebrae Supper  
with Holy Communion

Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April - Good Friday  
10am Good Friday service  
7:30pm 'The Crucifixion' by Stainer

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> April - EASTER DAY  
10:30am Family Holy Communion

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For any questions about Ightham Scouts generally, volunteering your time to support us or for a young person wishing to join one of our sections please email [enquiries@ighthamscouts.org](mailto:enquiries@ighthamscouts.org)



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Lend a hand, tidying up the churchyard and supporting our local biodiversity.

## \* Baking or tea-making skills?

We offer a warm welcome at our Community Coffee Shop, after our Sunday morning services and at Breakfast@Church

## \* Good with words or design?

We're looking for help with the Parish Magazine - writing articles, editing or graphic design, there are a variety of ways to be involved.

## \* Digital skills?

You could help run powerpoint slides, press play for music during the services, help with the website and social media.

**If you could be a hero and help, email Naomi on churchwardens@ighthamchurch.org.uk**



Website:  
TheEcoPantry.co.uk

the eco  
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Social media:  
@ecopantryuk

## Local Plastic-Free Refill Shop

food - toiletries - household

We are an independent plastic-free refill store on a mission to help you cut down single-use plastic waste. Bring your containers & fill them with eco-friendly, organic & sustainable products. Good for you, good for the environment.



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As much or as little as you like

### Refill your:

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Find out more at: [www.TheEcoPantry.co.uk](http://www.TheEcoPantry.co.uk)

### Find us:

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Seal Chart, Sevenoaks,  
TN15 0ES

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## WEST KENT AUTISM PARENTS' SUPPORT SOCIETY



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Special Needs Teacher, ex SENCO and parent of son with ASD

Meet on the first Tuesday of the month

9.30 - 11.45am

St Peter's Church Centre, Ightham, Sevenoaks TN15 9JD

£2 donation, including refreshments

- Contact with other parents who understand
- Feel less alone in a safe, welcoming and non-judgemental setting
- Share useful strategies and information re contacts and local resources
- Learn and gain knowledge about best strategies and management
- Problem-solve and find ways forward
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For further details/ to register interest: [info@wkapps.org.uk](mailto:info@wkapps.org.uk)

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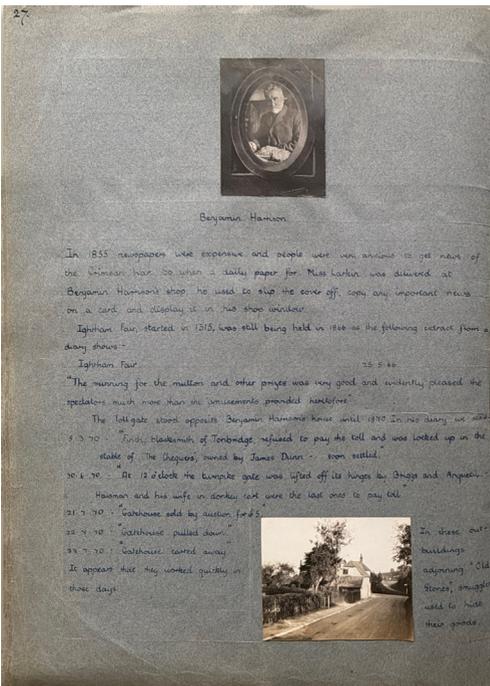
## FROM THE ARCHIVE – a 'WI scrap book' history of Ightham

Ightham has a fascinating Parish Archive co-created by David Williams and Jean Stirk. Amongst the archive is a 200 page 'scrap book' of the history of the village created by the WI and from which David and Jean drew much for their book about the village.

Ian Gordon has recently scanned and PDF'd all the pages in the book and is in the process of digitising its

photographs and documents. The Magazine is running a series of 'scrap book' extracts which will provide an intriguing, and often amusing, insight into our village's history. The actual page is difficult to decipher, so we're using Ian's creative reproduction.

So here's our first extract, page 27 – with grateful thanks to Ian Gordon, David Williams and Jean Stirk and of course Ightham WI.



Extracts from the Ightham WI scrapbook - page 27



Benjamin Harrison

In 1855 newspapers were expensive and people were always anxious to get news of the Crimean War. So when a daily paper for Miss Larkin was delivered at Benjamin Harrison's shop, he used to slip the cover off, copy any important news on a card, and display it in his shop window.

Ightham Fair, started in 1315, was still being held in 1866 as the following extract from a diary shows:

Ightham Fair. 23.5.66.

"The running for the mutton and other prizes was very good and evidently pleased the spectators much more than the amusements provided heretofore."

The Toll gate stood opposite Benjamin Harrison's house until 1870. In his diary we read

5.3.70. "Finch, blacksmith of Tonbridge, refused to pay the toll and was locked up in the stable of The Chequer, owned by James Dunn - soon settled."

30.6.70. "At 12 o'clock the turnpike gate was lifted off his hinges by Briggs and Anquetil. "Haisman and his wife in donkey cart were the last ones to pay toll"

21.7.70. "Gatehouse sold by auction for 15."

22.7.70. "Gatehouse pulled down."

23.7.70. "Gatehouse carried away."

It appears that they worked quickly in those days.



In these out-buildings adjoining "Old Stones", smugglers used to hide their goods

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For further information contact  
Jenny Elliot  
E: [ighthamvillagehall@gmail.com](mailto:ighthamvillagehall@gmail.com)

# IGHTHAM & DISTRICT GARDENERS' CLUB

## 'SPRING SHOW'

Held At Ightham Village Hall TN15 9HA  
on  
SATURDAY 21st MARCH 2026

Staging for Exhibitors from 11.00am – 12.45pm  
Judging at 1.00pm

Doors open for viewing at 3pm  
**ALL CLASSES OPEN to NON-MEMBERS – VISITORS  
WELCOME**  
(contact us for show schedule)

\*\*\*\*\*

For info contact  
Secretary Dee Samways – 0779 900 2129  
Email: [IghthamDGC@hotmail.com](mailto:IghthamDGC@hotmail.com)



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# DIRECTORY

## St Peter's Church

Rector	Parish in Vacancy	
Church Warden	Naomi Webster	T: 07421 832919. E: <a href="mailto:churchwardens@ighthamchurch.org.uk">churchwardens@ighthamchurch.org.uk</a>
Parish Office (Mon/Tue/Thur/Fri 9am-1pm)	Administrator	T: 07940 547310 E: <a href="mailto:admin@ighthamchurch.org.uk">admin@ighthamchurch.org.uk</a>
Licensed Lay Minister	John Webster	T: 884819
Lay Readers	Michelle Lawson	T: 01634 240598
	Bryan Harris (honorary)	T: 07733 228048
Hon. Treas/Gift Aid Sec.	Max Robinson	T: 885966
Safeguarding Officer	Finley Lawson	T: 01634 240598
PCC Secretary	Sarah Reid	E: <a href="mailto:pccsecretary@ighthamchurch.org.uk">pccsecretary@ighthamchurch.org.uk</a>
Church Flowers	Judy Debenham	T: 882640
St Peter's Choir & Music	Carol Kennedy	T: 884764
Bell Ringing	Judith Robinson	T: 0788 0507066
Coffee Shop	Jenny Webster	T: 884819
Men's Breakfast	John Webster	T: 884819
Oasis	Bridget Kelsey	M: 07789 692967 E: <a href="mailto:oasis@ighthamchurch.org.uk">oasis@ighthamchurch.org.uk</a>
Parent & Toddlers	Kirsty Mitcham	T: 885072
Prayer Group	John Webster	T: 884819

## Ightham Magazine

Editorial	Penny Cracknell	T:07811 066253
Advertising	E: <a href="mailto:stpetersadverts@btinternet.com">stpetersadverts@btinternet.com</a>	
Subscriptions/Distribution	E: <a href="mailto:magazine@ighthamchurch.org.uk">magazine@ighthamchurch.org.uk</a>	

## Community Groups & Events

Autism Parents Support Soc.	Claudia Goodman	T: 07773 599543
Ightham Club	Mark Brenta	T: 882104
Ightham Gardeners' Club	Pippa Coulthard	T:883041.
	Dee Samways	T: 07799 002 129
Ightham School	Sue Earl, Headteacher	T: 882405
Ightham Village Hall	E: <a href="mailto:ighthamvillagehall@gmail.com">ighthamvillagehall@gmail.com</a>	
Ightham Scouts Group	E: <a href="mailto:enquiries@ighthamscouts.org">enquiries@ighthamscouts.org</a>	
Beavers, Cubs, Explorers & Scouts		
Ightham WI	Helen Johnson	
	E: <a href="mailto:happyflowersgs@live.co.uk">happyflowersgs@live.co.uk</a>	
PCSO	PC Dylan McElligott	T: 101 (non emergencies)

## Sports

Badminton Club	Nick Dennis	T: 882078
Cricket Club	Geoff Preston	T: 01474 812594
	Tom Bentall	T: 07712 566772
Football Club	Martyn Reardon	T: 07725 896 886
Tennis Club	Max Robinson	T: 885966



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**Mother's Day craft**

**at Ightham Mote**

**Sunday 15 March | 11am-3pm**

Treat someone special with a handmade surprise and enjoy a fun-filled craft session. Create a unique flower-decorated card, or plant a sunflower to take home and watch grow tall.

There is a suggested donation of £2 per gift. No booking needed. Normal admission to Ightham Mote applies.

[nationaltrust.org.uk/ighthammote](https://nationaltrust.org.uk/ighthammote)