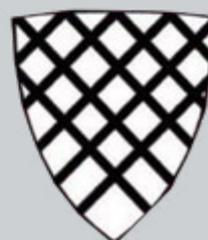


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CONTENTS

CHURCH NEWS

	PAGE
<i>Getting in Touch</i>	3
<i>Who's Who</i>	4
<i>From the Registers - Burwash</i>	4
<i>Mass At Christ The King</i>	4
<i>Rector's Corner</i>	5
<i>February Service Times</i>	9
<i>Churches Together Heathfield & District</i>	11

FEATURES AND REGULARS

<i>What's On in February</i>	10
<i>Poster Page</i>	15
<i>Floribunda</i>	16
<i>Etchingham Parish Council</i>	17
<i>Etchingham Trust for Sports & Recreation</i>	18
<i>Another Journey to "Deal or No Deal"</i>	18
<i>Wild About Burwash</i>	19
<i>Latest Etchingham Parish Council Contacts List</i>	21
<i>Rufus' Rural Rambles</i>	22
<i>Etchingham Nature Notes</i>	24
<i>Editorial</i>	24
<i>Noctavagation on a Silver Night</i>	27
<i>Sky Photographs</i>	28
<i>Burwash Parish Matters</i>	29
<i>Mary Taylor Reports</i>	30
<i>Burwash F.C.</i>	31
<i>Burwash & District Flower Club</i>	34
<i>Seagulls Over Burwash</i>	43

GETTING IN TOUCH

If you know of any activity or event in or around the Burwash Villages or Etchingham, which you feel we should be publicising, please get in touch with a member of the Editorial Group:

Caroline Huband 01580 493554

Richard Harden 01435 882556

The deadline for Burwash Villages and Etchingham March Magazine is Tuesday, 10th February

DO send articles in on time to:

burwashetchinghammag@gmail.com and Carolinehuband@outlook.com

All contributions may be edited slightly for clarity and accuracy.

N.B. : 'Articles are a reflection of the opinions of the author and not necessarily those of the Editorial Committee'.

<i>Burwash Common Pavilion News</i>	45
<i>BCW Residents' Association</i>	46
<i>Burwash Common After Eight Club</i>	48
<i>Mayfield & Five Ashes U3A</i>	51
<i>The Arts Society Wealden Heathfield</i>	51
<i>Royal British Legion</i>	55
<i>Soul Sustenance</i>	56
<i>Rainfall Figures</i>	59

VILLAGE LIFE

<i>Barn Owls Pre-School</i>	13
<i>Etchingham 'Tuesday' Club</i>	13
<i>Etchingham Music Festival - Save the Dates</i>	18
<i>Getting Info Into Local Papers</i>	23
<i>Burwash District Housing Association</i>	25
<i>1st Burwash & Etchingham Scout Group</i>	25
<i>Burwash Royal British Legion</i>	26
<i>Christmas Day Lunch</i>	29
<i>Burwash Walking Football</i>	33
<i>Wadhurst Bowls Club</i>	35
<i>Burwash Playing Fields Association</i>	36
<i>Burwash Community Farmers' Market</i>	36
<i>Walks for Strollers</i>	37
<i>Fairfield Surgery PPG Newsletter</i>	41
<i>Burwash Not So Young Group</i>	42
<i>Neighbourhood Watch</i>	47
<i>Bereavement Friendship Group</i>	48
<i>Burwash Common Toddler Group</i>	58
<i>Community Contacts</i>	60

DISTRIBUTION & SUBSCRIPTION

Please take out an annual subscription and get your copy delivered every month! We are trying to cover every village fully!

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Published jointly by Burwash, Burwash Weald and Etchingham Parochial Church Councils.

WHO'S WHO

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HOME VISITS BY THE RECTOR

If you need a home visit or just a chat,
please phone Rev Tom on 07856 256174.
Please avoid Fridays except in emergencies.

FROM THE REGISTERS – BURWASH

Interment of Ashes

23rd October 2025

Lynne Williams

MASS AT CHRIST THE KING

Roman Catholic Church, Burwash

Mass 9 a.m. Sunday

Mass 10 a.m. Tuesday

Mass 10 a.m. Friday

Baptism

23rd November 2025

Tilly Victoria Garwood

Please contact Father Brian Lowden, St Catherine's Flat,
Holy Cross Priory, Lewes Road, Cross In Hand, TN21 0ST, or
telephone 01435 862191.

Dear Friends,

I am writing in January, but you will be reading this in February. Nevertheless, this is our first issue to be published in 2026.

New Year's resolutions - have you thought of any? More importantly, how many have you already broken? Many of us have reached the point where we simply give up on making them altogether, weary of the inevitable failure that follows a week of good intentions.

Sometimes I think people view Christianity as a never-ending series of New Year's resolutions that are destined to be broken. There is a persistent myth that being a Christian means living up to the impossible expectations of the "prim and proper" people in the pews. But I have news: Christianity isn't like that at all. We are not about a set of extra rules bolted on to otherwise normal lives.

As it happens, we are still in the "greater Christmas" season as I am writing this - so I hope you didn't start your Dry January too early! Save that for Lent. We are currently in Epiphany, the season where we remember the Wise Men and how the Christ child changed them, deep down. Their actions - the famous gold, frankincense, and myrrh - were symbols of that internal change, not the means or the end of it.

This is the truth behind Christina Rossetti's great poem, *In the Bleak Midwinter*. In the final verse, she concludes that we "give Him our hearts." It sounds lovely and poetic, but giving someone something means we lose control over it. My son often struggles with this concept; he wants to give something away while simultaneously retaining the benefit of keeping it, to keep playing with the toy he's given. However, I actually think on one level that we all have this problem; we find it very hard to let go and trust God with our heart; we want to keep some back for ourselves.

But Christianity is about a changed heart. It is an understanding of who this Christ child is: real good news, the sort that changes your internal chemistry. It is the relief and joy of hearing that a relative has recovered from a serious illness.

When we let go of our hearts, we receive His life. Our own hearts inevitably fail; we cannot keep those rules, those resolutions, or those regulations. But His beats forever, in love and grace. In this season of Epiphany, we are invited to let go of our darkness and receive His light - the light that shines forever.

With every blessing for the year ahead,

REVD. TOM

Rector of Burwash, Burwash Weald and Etchingham

**Notice of the Annual General Meeting of the
Burwash Villages & Etchingham Magazine
to be held in the Rectory
at 16.30 on 24th February 2026**

Items for the agenda must reach the Secretary
by 10th February 2026 by phoning 01435 882556

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FEBRUARY SERVICES IN THE UNITED BENEFICE

Taken by the Rector unless otherwise marked.

Feb 2026	Burwash	Etchingham	Burwash Weald
Sun 1	10.30 Parish Communion for Candlemas 4.30 Evensong for Candlemas	9.30 Family Communion	8.00 Said Matins - Penny Button 10.30 Christingle Family Service - Jane Woodgate & Anne Everall
Thurs 5	10.00 Holy Communion	-	-
Sun 8	9.30 Said Morning Prayer	10.30 UB service Holy Communion	8.00 Said Matins - Penny Button 10.30 UB service Holy Communion at Etchingham 4.30 Praise at the Pavilion
Thurs 12	10.00 Holy Communion	-	-
Sun 15	9.30 Said Holy Communion BCP 10.30 Choral Matins - Christo Corfield 4.30 Evening Prayer BCP	10.30 Parish Communion - Canon Lucy Murdoch	10.30 Parish Communion
Wed 18	6.00pm Ash Wednesday UB Service at Burwash	6.00pm Ash Wednesday UB Service at Burwash	6.00pm Ash Wednesday UB Service at Burwash
Thurs 19	10.00 Holy Communion	-	-
Sun 22	10.30 UB Service of Family Communion	9.30 Said Matins 10.30 UB service of Family Communion at Burwash	10.30 UB service of Family Communion at Burwash 4.30 Evening Prayer BCP
Thurs 26	10.00 Holy Communion	-	-
Sun 1 Mar	10.30 Parish Communion 4.30 Evensong BCP	9.30 Family Communion	8.00 Said Matins - Penny Button

Please note that throughout Lent on Wednesdays there will be a 7.00pm service of Compline at St. Bartholomew's.

WHAT'S ON: FEBRUARY

- Monday, 2nd 3Cs at St. Bartholomew's, 10 a.m. - Noon. (Most Mondays, except Bank Holidays.)
- Monday, 2nd Etchingam Church Baby & Toddler Group, Parker Hall, Etchingam, 11 a.m. - 12 Noon.
(Every Monday.)
- Tuesday, 3rd Burwash Village Playgroup. Tuesday Mornings from 10 a.m. - Noon at Eddie Workman Pavilion.
(Every Tuesday.)
- Tuesday, 3rd Community Dementia Cafe at Dudwell St Mary Care Home, Burwash, 2 - 4 p.m.
- Tuesday, 3rd Music For The Memory at Etchingam Village Hall at 2.30 p.m. (Every Tuesday.)
- Wednesday, 4th Walks for Strollers meeting at The Bear Car Park, Burwash at 9 a.m.
- Thursday, 5th Burwash Common Babies & Toddlers Group 10 a.m. - Noon, at Burwash Common Pavilion.
(Every Thursday.)
- Saturday, 7th Churches Together HD Breakfast at Tottingworth Farm Cafe with a Speaker at 8 a.m.
- Saturday, 7th Tipi Yoga at 8 a.m. in Parker Hall, Etchingam. (Every Saturday.)
- Saturday, 7th Burwash Community Farmers' Market at Swan Meadow, Burwash 9 a.m. - 11.30 a.m.
- Sunday, 8th Wellbeing Workshop, 2.30 - 5 p.m. Etchingam Village Hall, with booking required.
- Sunday, 8th Praise @ The Pavilion at 4.30 p.m. in Burwash Common with St. Philip's Church.
- Monday, 9th Burwash & District Flower Club AGM, 2.15 p.m. in Burwash Village Hall.
- Tuesday, 10th Arts Society Wealden Heathfield monthly meeting at the Community Centre Sheepsetting Lane,
Heathfield at 2.15 p.m. Subject: 'The Many Faces of William Morris'. Speaker: Joanna Banham.
- Tuesday, 10th Etchingam Tuesday Club TBC.
- Saturday, 14th Farmers' & Makers' Market at King John's Nursery, 9.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.
- Saturday, 14th Valentine's Day Quiz at Etchingam Village Hall at 7 p.m.
- Tuesday, 17th Bereavement Friendship Group on third Tuesday of each month at 10.30 a.m. at Petals Nursery,
Burwash Road, Broad Oak, TN21 8XG. **NOTE CHANGE OF VENUE.**
- Wednesday, 18th Etchingam Residents' Coffee & Cake Morning at The Bistro from 11 a.m.
- Thursday, 19th Not So Young Club Meeting in Burwash Village Hall, at 2.15 p.m. Speaker: Steve Mintram & Co.
Subject: 'Jolly Boys'.
- Thursday, 19th Mayfield & District U3A Meeting at Five Ashes Village Hall at 2.30 p.m. Speaker: Jane Scotchmer.
Subject: 'The Curious Tale of the Surrealist Gentleman'.
- Saturday, 21st Robertsbridge Repair Cafe.
- Tuesday, 24th AGM Burwash Villages & Etchingam Magazine at The Rectory, Burwash at 4.30 p.m.
- Wednesday, 25th St. Barts Wednesday Club, Children & Carers in the Church, 3.30 - 4.30 p.m.
- Wednesday, 25th WAB Winter Social Evening , AGM Beforehand, at Burwash Common Pavilion from 7 p.m.
- Thursday, 26th Burwash Soup Lunch at Burwash Village Hall at 12.30 p.m.
- Saturday, 28th 'Dorothy's Adventures in Oz': A Burwash Amateur Pantomime Society Production, 2.30 or 7 p.m.
in Burwash Village Hall. (Other dates in March.)

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Sue Mumford on 01580 819415
email: susanmumford43@gmail.com

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BARN OWLS - ETCHINGHAM PRE-SCHOOL

We are now back after Christmas and the children have been delighted with the small amount of snow that we have had - for many it is their first sighting. They are spending a happy time trying to dig out objects from the ice which we put in the water the night before. The school children often ask us over the fence if we have any ice to spare!

Back to the end of term... the older children put on a spectacular nativity for their parents/relatives in the Parker Hall. Many delivered words and there was wonderful singing. There was even a duet which left many with a tear in their eye. The confidence that they all showed was incredible.

On the last day we had a party for all the children with singing, dancing and party food. The 'Big Man' popped in to deliver presents for all the children - we must thank him for taking the time out of his busy schedule!

The bulbs we planted at the end of last term are already heading up (they didn't see the forecast) and we have a robin who is looking at nest sites in our garden. Hopefully spring will come to us soon - well from the staff perspective anyway.

Finally, we welcome Sophia and Wren to the setting.

**To contact Barn Owls, please email:
helen@etchinghambarnowls.co.uk**

NICKY MENZIES

Contact Helen: 01580 819218 Ext. 5

ETCHINGHAM TUESDAY CLUB, NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2025

The November meeting was sadly cancelled because we could not find a suitable venue and it was getting too close to our December meeting.

We made it to our Christmas Meal at the Rose & Crown in Burwash on the 9th December. Only five of us could make it and one of those was a friend of Corrina. It was a very blustery night.

Our meals had been pre-ordered but we all had either turkey or beef. During the meal the electric kept nearly failing - so it was rather like a haunted house. Fortunately, the electrics held out and we did not end up in darkness.

Our table was decorated beautifully. Everyone had a raffle ticket and we all placed a present into the Secret Santa sack. After our dessert course we did the raffle for the Secret Santa. It was then time to pay our bills and journey homewards. It was still windy.

We do hope that more members can attend this event in 2026!

TUESDAY CLUB JANUARY 2026

On a Tuesday in January we kicked off the New Year when we joined the Quiz Night at The Bear in Burwash. Much fun was had by all.

LINDA NEVE, GROUP LEADER

'Winter' Clouds Over Etchingham



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Performances @ Burwash Village Hall

Saturday 28th February 2026 @ 2.30pm & 7.30pm
Sunday 1st March 2026 @ 2.30pm
Saturday 7th March 2026 @ 2.30pm & 7.30pm

Tickets available from: www.ticketsource.co.uk/baps or
The Parish Room, The Bear car park, Burwash
(No booking fee. Open Monday and Wednesday: 10.00 - 12.00)

BAPS raising funds to support local childrens groups

FLORIBUNDA - TOO MUCH WAR, NOT ENOUGH JAW AND A LOT OF JIGSAW

Much of the news is about war and aggression, which is all very sad so I am taking solace in more gentle, civilized pursuits.

I sat inside in the first week of January and looked at the sun as it came blazing through. I wondered whether it had been wise to start a circular jigsaw, of 1,000 pieces, diameter 68 cm entitled "Inspirational Women": a Christmas present to myself! Most of it is on a mahogany table, bought when my grandfather worked for the Bombay Educational Society, shipped over as a flat-pack. A lot of sorting is needed, as shown below.



Now there are many jigsaw pieces on many tables. I turn the tables, and pieces scatter. It is cold outside, too bleak to garden - but I have a wood burner and I am not afraid to use it.

January may be a tad uninspiring but the winter snow has thawed at last. Be gone dull care. Who was it who said, "Il faut cultiver notre jardin"? It was the great Voltaire in "Candide". In this story someone says that all is best in the best of all possible worlds, at which point this person's nose falls off. This may be a false memory but I think not.

Voltaire would agree that you get a pig's pudding if you don't keep weeding, cutting back, renewing bulbs and flowering plants, composting and falling over in the pursuit of loveliness. It is essential your garden is perfect when viewed from all angles, even at the cost of a broken leg.

I may not have the roses of Isphahan but I can dream of roses from Iran. Gardening is so good for the soul, mind and the body.

I know I need to do gentle exercise to strengthen my bones. A few minutes in my garden often turns to hours as I stretch my body, crouch down, spot the weeds just out of reach and trim back shrubs to get closer. I try to dig them out roots and all. I have a sense of purpose but I do not feel I am exercising.

Gardening may be more productive as a way of sending me to sleep weary and satisfied than doing my jigsaw. At some point I will listen to the silence around me. Then I will return to my jigsaw pieces with renewed vigour (I hope).

FLORIBUNDA

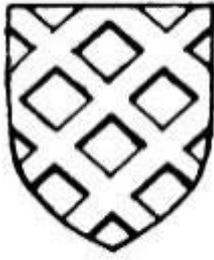


Looking South across the Dudwell Valley on a dreary Winter's day in Etchingam

The May 2025 issue of Gardeners' World featured an article on how "gardening is good for one's well-being" but when I read it today the weather down by Bateman's was positively nasty, wet, cold, windy and 'grey', so Floribunda is probably right to opt for a giant jigsaw at the moment, especially now that the grown is waterlogged, if not flooded.

THE EDITOR

ETCHINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL



As we move through January, I am very pleased to begin by welcoming our newest Parish Councillor, Adrian Hanstock. Adrian brings a wealth of experience from a career dedicated to public service, community safety and leadership. His background spans senior policing roles, national infrastructure and governance, and we are delighted to have him joining the Council and contributing his experience to village life. Residents can find details of all Parish Councillors on the Parish Council website at <https://etchinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk/council-members>.

I would also like to highlight two important annual notices for the village.

Firstly, nominations are now open for the Emma Beeney Award for Outstanding Service to the village of Etchingam. This annual award recognises an individual, group, club or committee that has made an exceptional contribution to village life, whether through voluntary service or by going above and beyond what might normally be expected. The award will be presented at the Annual Parish Meeting in May. If you would like to nominate someone, please contact the Parish Office on 01580 819048 or email Paulette, paulette.etchinghampc@gmail.com directly for a copy of the nomination form. The deadline for nominations is 14th February 2026.

Secondly, the Parish Council is inviting applications for its annual grants programme. Each year a budget is set aside, within legal limits, to support local groups, societies and clubs whose work benefits the whole village or a substantial number of residents. Application forms are available from the Parish Office or by email. Successful grants from the first round will be paid on 1st April 2026, with the application deadline again being 14th February 2026. If funds remain after this first round, further applications will be considered later in the year.

A practical reminder as well. Please do report any significant potholes to the Parish Council or via the East Sussex Highways website, <https://live.eastsussexhighways.com/report-problem>. Once East Sussex Highways are informed these are added to a work schedule for repair. If they are not reported, they do not get fixed. Sending a photo (if it is safe to do so) and a clear location is very helpful and makes it much easier for the issue to be logged accurately and dealt with more quickly. It is also worth noting that if a significant pothole has been reported and damage later occurs to a tyre or vehicle, you may be eligible to claim compensation.

On a lighter note, a new fish and chips food truck, Julian's, has started up in the Bistro car park at Etchingam Train Station (*see the advert on page 7, Ed.*). This is a collaboration with the de Etchingam CIC and we hope it will be a welcome addition for residents and visitors alike.

Finally, a revised application to address the wall repairs required at the Village Stores has now been submitted to the Environment Agency. Fingers crossed, this will be approved in time for works to begin this spring.

Thank you, as always, for your continued involvement in village life and for helping to keep Etchingam such a positive and active community.

BENJAMIN SUTCH
Chairman, Etchingam Parish Council

07575 885585
cllr.sutch@etchinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk

See Page 21 for our updated Etchingam Parish Council Contact List

ETCHINGHAM TRUST FOR SPORTS AND RECREATION

Etchingham Trust for Sports and Recreation held its AGM on 5th December and John Barnes was confirmed as Chairman for the coming year.

The accounts, showing a deficit of £6,388.34, were approved. Income had stayed steady from the previous year but running costs, particularly for the utilities, had risen disproportionately last year.

Warm tributes were paid to the work of Olga Bilai and, more especially, for the services given the Trust since 2023 by the Parish Clerk, Paulette Barton. She had announced her retirement and would be greatly missed. Her decision had led the Trustees to review the scope of the job and to lay much greater emphasis on the marketing of the halls to a wider public. It was reported that active recruitment for the post of Charity Co-ordinator was in progress and that the Trust would be looking to make an appointment early in February.

JOHN BARNES
Chairman, ETSR

ANOTHER JOURNEY TO “DEAL OR NO DEAL” AT THE MAIDSTONE STUDIO

On the 10th November Matthew and I went to see the 12 o'clock game, played in the Maidstone Studio with Stephen Mulhern as the host. Once again it was a very good game and we could have seen another one that morning, but Matthew and I just stayed for the first game.

Matthew had been working over the week so we got a taxi back to Maidstone Station and then caught a train to Paddock Wood, where we intended to change trains to go on to Tunbridge Wells.

On arrival there were no Tunbridge Wells trains available as a car had hit one of the bridges and the line had been affected by what had happened. Time flew past so we went and ate a meal, but when we got back to the station there were still no trains, so we decided to get a bus. However, we found that the buses were full and many other people were also waiting. In the end we decided to get a taxi to Tunbridge Wells. Thankfully, there was a train there to get to Etchingham. It was nearly 5 o'clock when we got home. When we arrived at Etchingham it was pouring with rain and very dark. When, eventually, we made it through the front door our coats, trousers and shoes were soaking wet! It took about three days to dry everything out!

This was the fourth time we have had things happen to us on this trip. The first time I lost my wedding ring which, thankfully, was found some time later; the next time there was a delay caused by a puppy getting under our train, although it lived thankfully. On the following trip a deer was hit near Stonegate and we were held up for about two hours.

I don't think we will venture to the Maidstone Studio again, even though we enjoyed the experiences! It seems to be a “No Deal” for us every time we try this trip.

LINDA NEVE

ETCHINGHAM
MUSIC
FESTIVAL 2026

SAVE THE DATES

ETCHINGHAM MUSIC FESTIVAL

27TH JUNE TO 5TH JULY

This year we are delighted to open the Festival with Hastings Philharmonic Orchestra playing Beethoven's Eroica Symphony and a flute concerto. This will be followed by a Piano Recital by young and outstanding pianist Thomas Kelly, a performance by the amazing Sacconi String Quartet and more, ending with a Jazz Supper by our favourite band Dime Notes.

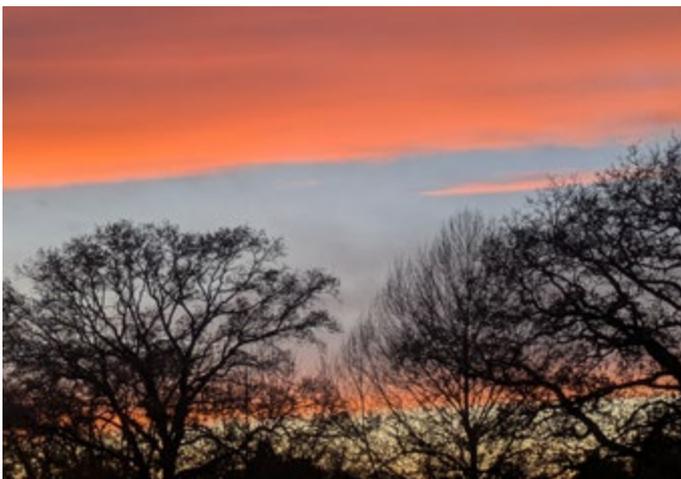
ALL ARE WELCOME



Wild about Burwash

The mild weather, which reached long into December and gave us unseasonal sightings of daffodils and the occasional bumblebee, is now a distant memory. Overtaken by icy blasts and coverings of snow in early New Year, followed by storms and heavy rains, we have no idea quite what February will bring. All we do know is that members of the “Wild About” WhatsApp groups (of Burwash and Etchingham & Hurst Green) continue to post fascinating pictures and notes on nature and the landscape. With a generous pooling of knowledge, helpful links, humour, occasional consternation, but above all a positive sense of our local community caring for the environment, these messages help break up the bleaker winter days.

Some of the most stunning photos from members are of the skies and cloud formations. Red skies, both in the mornings and at night, have provided a spectacular backdrop for the winter tracery of trees (below & p. 28).



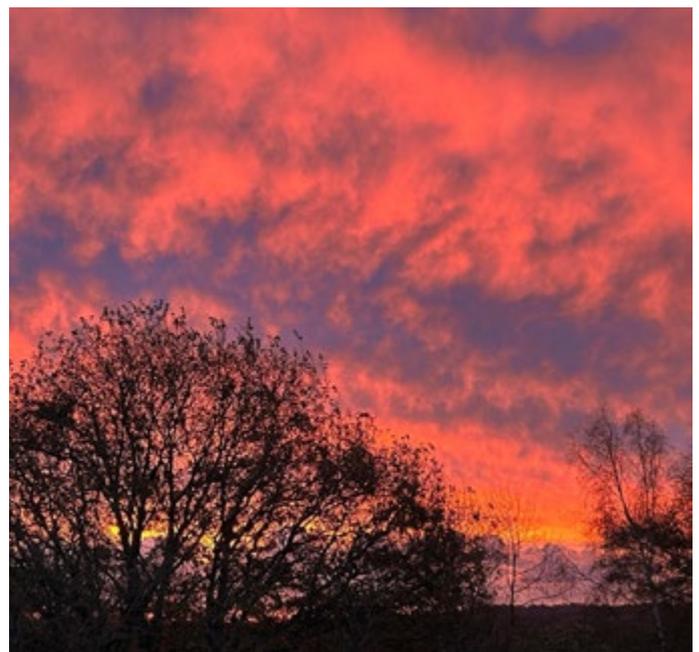
Our first meeting of the year is a **Winter Social Evening, at Burwash Common Pavilion on Wednesday, 25th February**, which is open to both members and non-members. We start with our AGM at 7 p.m., for those who would like to hear about the running of the group and a report of the past 12 months of activities. Otherwise, just come along for the social get together which follows from 7.30 p.m. The Bar will be open and during the evening there will be several bite-size informal talks on projects at Bateman’s, St Bartholomew’s, Dudwell and Rother River Monitoring. We did this last year and it worked really well as an inspiration for the year ahead.

As we start another year of monitoring the River Dudwell, we look forward to extending the project to the River Rother, with welcome additional support from Wild About Etchingham and Hurst Green volunteers. Our MP, Kieran Mullen, is also liaising with Southern Water for us as we are aware that the Wastewater Treatment plant on Willingford Lane polluted the river for 2,206 hours during 2024, with dumping happening on average 2.6 times a week. The plant is currently being upgraded, so we are hoping that this dumping will be dramatically reduced. We have also asked for the night time lighting to be restricted to reduce unnecessary light pollution.

Finally, the application process from Burwash and Etchingham Parishes (amongst others) for International Dark Skies accreditation is moving forwards and has the endorsement of the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee and the CPRE. County Councillors Anne Cross (Green), Eleanor Kirby-Green (Conservative) and Kathryn Field (Lib Dem) are also proposing a cross-party motion calling on ESCC, as our lighting authority, to endorse parishes’ applications for Dark Sky Community Certification. We hope to have some positive updates for the March issue.

As always, we will be delighted to hear from anyone who would like to join our group.

ANNE NEWSON / JULIAN KENNY
wildaboutburwash@gmail.com



If you'd like any more information about anything WAB, please email us on wildaboutburwash@gmail.com



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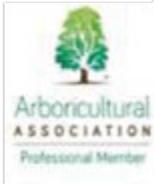
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Etchingham Parish Council 2025

<https://etchinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk/>

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Benjamin Sutch 07575 885585 cllr.sutch@etchinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk

Vice-Chairman:

John Barnes 01580 819142 cllr.jbarnes@etchinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk

Councillors:

Colin Boylett 01580 819532 cllr.boylett@etchinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk

Mary Barnes 01580 819142 cllr.mbarnes@etchinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk

Simon (Sid) Barrow 07989 065702 cllr.barrow@etchinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk

Robert Beeney cllr.beeney@etchinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk

Adrian Hanstock cllr.hanstock@etchinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk

Parish Clerk:

Paulette Barton 01580 819048 paulette.etchinghampc@gmail.com

{Office hours; 10.30 – 12.30 Monday, Wednesday and Friday.}

Parish Council updates – to receive email information updates from the Council enter your name and email address at the bottom of any page on the Council website. Emails are all sent Bcc and are in addition to information sent on the village e-bulletin.

Parish Council Website Admin – admin@etchinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk



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RUFUS' RURAL RAMBLES

Autumn arrived suddenly this year and lots of leaves made a carpet on the footpaths. There were lots of acorns everywhere, which seemed to suggest that we might get an unpleasant winter and unpleasant it has certainly been of late.

The footpath by the church pond was covered with acorns in the Autumn and you had to tread carefully. Unfortunately you can't see the pond very easily as it still has not been maintained by Gray Nicolls and also the ditch on the Willow Site has not been dug out to help alleviate any flooding which may occur. Now the Rother valley seems, to my little eyes, to have become one giant pond!

I have had some lovely walks over the fields with David and Matthew and I am allowed to go off my lead, but they keep me safe. I have also had some walks with David round the block from Old School Hill, then down Church Hill and home. Naturally, I am given some treats to eat on the journey. I have had some walks with Mum and Dad over the Rother to the bottom of School Hill. On one Sunday afternoon we went down Borders Lane and met a mother and daughter who live in Parsonage Croft: Mum was telling them about the area over the years and how it has changed in her lifetime.

I still love sitting on the settee in the Sitting Room, looking across the road towards the field, to see what is happening there. Apparently before my lifetime there were three other doggies called Floyd, Jake and Bertie over the years and they loved looking in that direction too. Recently the field has been grazed by a big flock of sheep. Mum calls them the 'woolly jumpers' - there was only one black sheep in the flock. Recently in the field we saw three deer running across it, then jumping the ditch and finally disappearing towards Church Farm Close.

I was surprised the other day to see some snow falling as I don't think I have seen it before. Several times we have had very heavy rain in the night as well.

Mum, Dad and the family don't like heavy rain as in 2000 the house was flooded and it took 9 months to get back to normality. Now we are seeing heavy frost in the mornings and people going to work in their cars have to de-ice the windscreen, if their car is not in a garage.

The road up to Ticehurst has been like a skating rink with black ice!

I have been very good and haven't stolen any meals from the table anymore: I was so afraid that Santa wouldn't come if I was naughty, but he did and I did get turkey!

After my walk with Matthew on the 25th November I had got rather dirty, so I had to have a shower and I thoroughly enjoyed it! After a towelling down, I had the hair dryer blown over me and I thoroughly enjoyed that pampering too! I now look very fluffy and my coat is so soft.

I would like to wish all the doggies in the village, and their owners too, a very Happy New Year.

RUFUS



Monthly Wellbeing Workshops

Are you at a crossroads and seeking some direction, or feeling that a new chapter is waiting to begin? Do you wish that life could start to flow in ways that are more comfortable and fulfilling?

I offer monthly small group sessions that combine a calming guided meditation with a simple creative exercise to get your guidance flowing, plus a short restorative healing. Beginners are welcome.

There's no requirement to share anything, just a willingness to be open and follow your own personal journey of discovery.

Held on the second Sunday of each month
2.30-5pm at Etchingham Village Hall, £30pp.

Please email Gabrielle Anya Raffello
info@gabrielleanyaraffello.co.uk

www.gabrielleanyaraffello.co.uk

GETTING INFORMATION INTO YOUR LOCAL NEWSPAPER

Get publicity for your special event in the village columns of the local newspaper,

The Bexhill and Battle Observer.

I want to hear about all your special events, fund-raisers, fêtes, coffee mornings, jumble sales, boot fairs and any other special and important celebrations which would be of interest to our readers.

Please do not wait until the event is about to happen, send your information as soon as you have it available. The sooner it arrives, the more publicity I can give your event. Please also remember to send a report of your event for inclusion the following week.

Your information needs to arrive by 10 p.m. on the Monday prior to the Friday publication date. The preferred method is by email to minimise any risk of errors during copying, but you can use any of the methods below to get the details to me by hand, or post them to:

2 Park Farm Close, Etchingam
Telephone: 01580 819532 or 07483 211838
E-mail: colin.boylett@googlemail.com

The Burwash & Burwash Common correspondent is Mr Tom Travers.
Tom can be contacted at:
Thomastravers@btinternet.com
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ETCHINGHAM NATURE NOTES

Towards the end of November we noticed that two holly bushes, side by side in our woods, had different characteristics: one still had berries on it (which hadn't been eaten despite a recent cold spell) and the other bore small white flowers. We searched for information about this, and found that the one with berries is a female, and the other a male. We also read that the flowers can normally be seen between May and July, not November! The female has small, black, seed-like raised spots along the stems, which if fertilised, by bees carrying the nectar from the flowers of the male tree, will turn into berries. I wonder what will happen this year - will the male trees blossom again, or will we have no berries this year?

I have had several reports of interesting sightings in the past couple of months:

On the 11th December John Barnes told me about a goldcrest perched right outside his window, and how wonderful it was to see it so close. At the same time he mentioned that he had not seen any long-tailed tits for some time. We see them often, particularly feeding on meal worms that I put out for the birds each morning. They obviously love this food, as indeed do the starlings, which come to the feeder in numbers!

Naomi Mansfield reported seeing three little egrets, in the field behind the old village shop, early in December, and - by coincidence - Mary Barnes told me that she had seen them too, at just about the same date. These are birds that, unfortunately, we rarely - if ever - see.

Nicky Menzies e-mailed me, on the 7th January, to say she had just seen 5 lapwings in the field on Burgh Hill. She mentioned that she only sees them when it's really cold. We don't see them at all, sadly.

We do, however, see a number of jackdaws, that come to our feeders, and obviously nest in a tree in our woods that has a large hole, rotted in it. Several of them disappear into that hole, so it must be a most satisfactory place for them to nest!

We have not seen the three deer, that I reported in the last edition of the magazine, for some two or three weeks, but - this morning, on the very day I write this - we saw two roe deer in the wood, while walking our dog and, although she barked at them, they didn't run very far away, and then when I put her on the lead, they stood looking at us, quite closely, and stayed around while we completed our walk.

As ever, please do not hesitate to report anything you feel worthy of mention in my notes, either by telephone (01580) 819326 or e-mail: langsmith_@hotmail.com

FRANK H. SMITH

EDITORIAL

Where to start our 2026 Magazines? With flooded Rother and Dudwell Valleys it is tempting to begin with the rainfall readings supplied by Beryl Swift on page 59.

Our cover photograph was taken by Darren of Burwash Community Page fame: his pictures are amazing as is his knowledge of all things heavenly. He has supplied me with a basic understanding of the Science behind the marvellous sunsets photographed throughout our parishes: making this the Aspera ad Astrum edition to kick off 2026.

Please note the change of time for Etchingham Playgroup and do send in events which will interest families with young children. We have featured the playgroups throughout our villages this month.

What's On: too much to mention! The famous Burwash Pantomime season begins at the end of February: book your tickets early, please.

For those who want romance and intelligence, don't miss the Etchingham Valentine's Quiz on the day!

Richard Harden has supplied a 'mucky' feature which is well worth reading. Linda Neve can never get to and from Maidstone without a transport dilemma and Simon Forster explains the politics of football, to literally kick off the New Year.

Steve Mintram has supplied lovely articles about the work of the Royal British Legion.

THE EDITOR

BURWASH DISTRICT HOUSING ASSOCIATION

A VALUED RESOURCE FOR THE COMMUNITY

Are you looking for a comfortable and affordable home in the Burwash area for yourself or an older relative?

Burwash District Housing Association provides good-quality homes at affordable rents for the benefit of the Burwash community. Founded in 1962 by district nurse Jean Holland, the Association has been supporting local residents for more than 60 years.

The Association has 10 semi-detached, one-bedroom bungalows at Cobblers Field in Burwash Common along with one semi-detached, one-bedroom bungalow and three one-bedroom apartments in Burwash village.

All our homes are fully carpeted and have gas central heating. Kitchens are fully fitted and include an electric hob and oven, washer/dryer and fridge/freezer. Each property has a TV aerial and smoke alarm. Tenants provide their own furniture, curtains and any additional electrical appliances.

The Association is a not-for-profit organisation. For over six decades, it has been run entirely by local volunteers with a shared commitment to preserving this valued housing resource for current and future generations. Several of our recent tenants have been older parents of Burwash residents who have moved here to be near their families.

Homes are available to self-sufficient single people or couples aged over 60 who have a strong connection to the Burwash district. Please note that we are not able to provide health or care services for tenants with medical needs.

Vacancies arise from time to time. If you would like to know more about our homes or would like to join our waiting list, please contact:

CLAUDETTE NEVILLE
Secretary,
on 01435 883 043 or
nevilleclaudette@gmail.com



1ST BURWASH & ETCHINGHAM SCOUT GROUP

With 2025 a dim and distant memory, how is it that within a blink of an eye January has gone and we are now into February?

All the sections in the Scout Group have been back for 3 or 4 weeks doing various things: Beavers have had team problem-solving games, looked at the Big Garden Birdwatch and done the Cook badge.

Cubs have been busy with a night hike, looking at fire safety and their Skills Challenge badge.

Scouts have also been focusing on their Skills Challenge badge along with trying new creative activities for the Creative Challenge badge – always good for those long winter evenings.

The Jolly Rogers (Explorers) will report next month on what they have been doing in January and February.

Lastly, all Cubs and Beaver sections across the UK will be celebrating birthdays in 2026; Cubs 110 years and Beavers 40 years. I'm sure our sections will do some great activities throughout the year to celebrate these landmark birthdays, giving them memories that will last well into their adult life.

Perhaps you have a particular memory from your time as a Cub or Beaver? If you have, then it would be great to hear from you so that we can share them with our current young members.

BERNADETTE SPENCER

BURWASH ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

The Annual General Meeting was held at the Rose & Crown on Monday, 17th November 2025 and a short précis of the meeting follows:

In his review of the year the Chairman, Charles Merchant, spoke about how important and moving the community acts of Remembrance had been for the 80th Anniversaries of VE Day and VJ Day in the village and the 85th Anniversary Commemoration of the Battle of Britain at St Philip's in Burwash Weald.

He thanked all who played their parts.

He spoke at some length about the War Memorial and how it was so well looked after and tended, and thanked the volunteers responsible.

He made particular reference to Remembrance Sunday and Armistice Day and thanked so many of all ages involved for marking these important events.

Linda Mintram, Hon. Treasurer, reported that our Annual Return for the year ending 30th June 2025 had been completed and submitted on time, and most importantly, had been accepted by Head Office.

The balance held at the 30th June 2025 was £1,543.12, but there was an outstanding cheque to be cashed for the War Memorial flowers to bring the balance down to £1,508.

Poppy Appeal Organiser David Axford reported that two dozen collecting boxes went out in Burwash, Etchingam, and Burwash Common and Weald and the Scouts were out for two Saturday mornings collecting. He said that many of the collected boxes were lighter than usual, but that may be in part due to QR donations. However, the local count, currently at £2,802, was considerably down on recent years but this is may be to be expected given the current financial situation.

He thanked all of the businesses that hosted collection boxes, the Scouts who had been out on two cold, damp mornings and the people of Burwash for their continued support of the Poppy Appeal.

The officers and committee members appointed for the next twelve months were:

Chairman – Charles Merchant
Vice Chairman – Leslie Drake
Hon. Secretary – Steve Mintram
Hon. Treasurer – Linda Mintram **
Committee Member – Rob Weston
Parade Marshal – Simon Kennedy **
Standard Bearer – Tim Wooff **
Deputy Standard Bearer – Tom Travers **

** Also appointed as Committee members.

If you would like to see a full copy of the Minutes or want further information about the Branch and our activities or joining us, please contact Steve Mintram on 01435 882444 or

Burwash.Secretary@rbl.community

**STEVE MINTRAM
HON. SEC. RBL BURWASH BRANCH**



*The Royal British Legion's Tree At
Burwash Christmas Tree Festival*

*This sadly was held too late to make
it into the December and January
edition of this Magazine (Ed.)*

NOCTAVIGATION ON A SILVER NIGHT

As a frequent Noctavigant (night wanderer) I was surprised to learn that this was frowned upon in Medieval times and could result in a fine being imposed. By now, I'd be locked up or pilloried as a repeat offender! In rural areas it was seen as suspicious to be walking about after dark: one was either eavesdropping or planning something illicit.

In stark contrast, I just simply like looking at the night sky in both the Dudwell and Rother Valleys as I walk and listen to the nocturnal wildlife.

Noctavigation is amazingly relaxing as one really feels like part of the natural world. Throughout much of December the atmospheric conditions have resulted in silver glows from the south, even on relatively cloudy nights. At full moon it was so bright you could walk along the lanes without even a phone torch. The owls were out hunting, calling across the valley floor, as they swept across the pastures by the river. The trees on the frosty nights looked silver as if it had snowed - a pure beauty.

A large country fox tracked me from the hedge and I could feel his eyes on my back as he headed towards Etchingham alongside me. As I gently turned my head, I could see his eyes glowing in the moonlight. By the woods I disturbed a roosting pheasant and he flew off towards the river making me jump out of my skin. Walking on, a tiny shrew sped across the lane very close to my feet.

A solitary stag was slowly walking across the empty cow fields, stopping now and again for a nibble. He looked black, surrounded by bare black trees, which stood out in the moonlight. There is a very special nocturnal beauty, which makes even the mundane look exotic. Moreover, once your ears have been trained to listen, really listen, you can hear the wildlife even if you can't see it, as without cars or tractors, you can hear twigs snapping and leaves on the ground being disturbed as a nocturnal animal looks for breakfast or lunch.

When it was frosty, the glittering brambles and holly in the hedgerows looked stunning and the clear sky above the mist over the rivers appeared silver: it was like walking in a magical fairytale. I'm not good at Astronomy but star gazing in these valleys is so uplifting (spoilt only by the flashing lights of aircraft coming in to land at Gatwick) so do embrace Dark Sky initiatives. My own contribution - not replacing the bulb in the outside light by the front door - paid off: as I finally decided to call it a night, a tawny owl greeted me from the tree right next to the garden fence and, as I strained my neck to look straight up, I could see a plump, fluffed up Tawny Owl in black outline popping out of the ivy. What a joyous silver night!

As if by magic, Richard Harden sent me this photo below of the Rother Valley the following morning. He captured the delight of dawn while I had seen the silver dusk and the mist over the Dudwell by night. How lucky we are to live in rural East Sussex.



The Rother Valley hidden by silver mist at dawn, courtesy of Richard Harden

I've worked out that I'm actually a Solivagant as well as a Noctavigant = a solitary wanderer as well as a nocturnal wanderer (from the Latin) but, as yet I am not a Vagrant. What a difference an 'r' makes, as it has a negative connotation these days, which it did not always have.

CONTINUED OVERLEAF

NOCTAVIGATION ON A SILVER NIGHT Continued

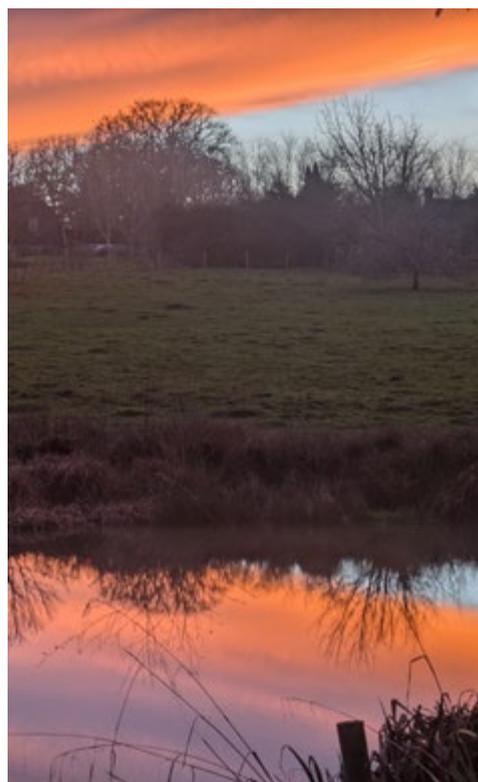
Indeed, Clerici vagantes or vagabundi (singula clericus vagans or vagabundus) is a medieval Latin term meaning “wandering clergy” applied in early canon law to those clergy who led a wandering life either because they had no benefice or because they had deserted the church to which they had been attached. It is surprising where an interest in early medieval history can lead you! No room to explain all that here, so have a look on-line.

Do also look on the Burwash Community Page, where Darren regularly posts his observations in the night sky. Just look at the beauty he has captured on our magazine front cover.

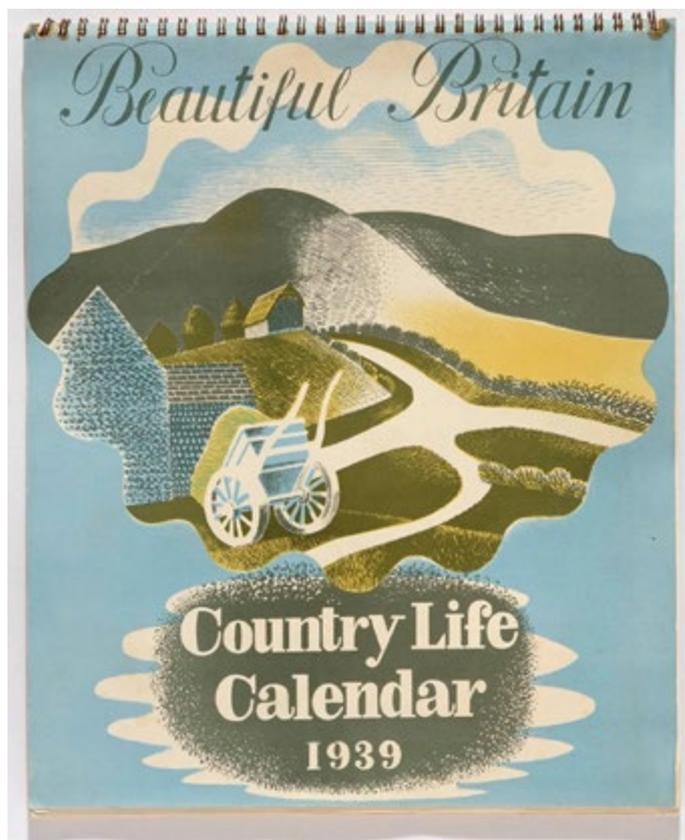
All this wandering about really took off when I decided to not have a television in my house about four years ago, as I felt I was watching mindless nonsense much of the time instead of actually “doing something” with my spare time. I struggled for a few weeks, but then I started walking even more and pursuing my interest in medieval history - now I just yearn for more spare time!

CAROLINE HUBAND

Another Sunset Sky Photo from WAB



Photograph from the Strollers Walk of the Dudwell Valley shrouded in mist with a sensational sky



BURWASH PARISH MATTERS

following the Parish Council Meeting on 13th January

Councillor Training

The Parish Council received training on Councillor Roles & Responsibilities in January from Mulberry Local Authority Services in its continued bid to ensure that it is working within current guidelines and has the most up to date information, in being able to support the Parish.

Precept for 2026-2027

At the December Full Council Meeting, Councillors voted to increase the precept request from Rother by 7% to £121,121. This represents a 0.49p increase per month for the average Band D household. The Council considered any increase very carefully, but the reality of running costs, combined with the Council being asked to take on assets from Rother District Council as part of Devolution means a small increase is needed. Any shortfall for projects benefitting the community can be taken from reserves or can use Community Infrastructure Levy funds.

New Local Plan & Housing Sites

Consultation on a new allocation of potential sites for planning is due to take place mid-January for six weeks. The Parish Council will shortly be advertising public meetings that residents can attend to view which sites are included in the plan and read the factual assessment of these sites from the Parish Council. Council hopes to hold the first meeting by mid-February. The reality of a stronger top-down pressure from Government, means every parish is being asked to look at sites again, even if they were previously discounted. The Parish Council needs your views to ensure that any building in the parish takes into consideration the needs of residents and is in line with the sustainability of the parish as a whole. The public meetings will be advertised on the E-Bulletin, on Facebook and through a household leaflet drop. For more information, please contact the Clerk.

The next full council meeting is on Tuesday, 10th February at 7 p.m. at Burwash Parish Rooms and you would be very welcome to attend. The Parish Clerk is Emma Neil and she can be contacted at the Council Office, High Street, Burwash, TN19 7EU.
Tel.: 07375 809660.
Email: parishclerk@burwashparishcouncil.gov.uk

Neighbourhood Development Plan

The Parish Council alongside interested residents are also looking at sites so that the Burwash Neighbourhood Plan can be revised ensuring information is up to date. If you would like to join the group, please contact the Clerk.

Community Build Project

The Steering Committee looking at the potential new Community Building, is meeting on 20th January 2026 where it is hoped a concept design and cost will be discussed. There is much work to do and consultation within the community is key. If you are interested in the project, please speak to the Clerk. All supporting papers and minutes of the meetings can be found on the website at www.burwashparishcouncil.gov.uk.

Local Government Reorganisation & Devolution

The consultation for your views on how Sussex should be split in the Local Government Reorganisation closed on Sunday, 11th January. Comments will be fed into departments responsible for LGR and the Government should decide by mid-March. Meanwhile, the Parish Council have been working on obtaining the freehold of the main car park and public toilets from Rother District Council. The Parish Council have a long-term lease on these assets but believe the freehold would hold definite benefit for the community long term. We are currently waiting on the devolution panel to assess our bid and make a decision.

EMMA NEIL

CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH 2025

I am writing to thank Michelle and her team of helpers who worked tirelessly to make the lunch this year really lovely. The food was excellent and the company likewise. We all went home with a goody bag and a meal for Boxing Day.

Andrew did a really good quiz and we divided into teams, so it was competitive as well as fun.

Thanks once again Michelle! May the tradition continue and I'll see you again next year, God willing.

JEAN CRAWLEY

BURWASH SOUP LUNCH

Another of our popular soup lunches is being held on Thursday, 26th February in the Burwash Village Hall at 12.30 p.m. for 1 p.m. Entry will again be £10 per person, for which you can try as many of the delicious homemade soups as you like, plus the naughty but nice desserts.

As always we will have a raffle. Proceeds will be given as usual to the Get Together Lunch for our seniors. Please contact Mary on 01435 882107 or email marybarrytaylor@hotmail.co.uk to book places. I look forward to seeing you all again.

HAMPER RAFFLE

Barry and I held a hamper raffle at Violet Cottage on the Burwash Festive Evening. As the weather wasn't very good, we held it in our kitchen, which worked really well. We would like to thank anyone who kindly gave items for the hamper. We had two nice hampers, one of my homemade Christmas cakes, several bottles of wine, a tub of Quality Street and a couple of smaller prizes. We also served hot freshly made soup, as this proved very popular last year. It was lovely that so many took the time to visit us despite the weather. We raised £117 for the Get Together Lunch.

BURWASH CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH

This lovely event did go ahead this year, thanks to the lovely Michelle Gaines and her children, Theo and Mary.

I understand that she catered for 20 people, which is the same number I started with 20 years ago.

From comments I have heard, I understand they did a fantastic job and that everyone was happy and well fed. Participants even took home a doggy bag for the next day.

Well done to them all on taking this over and making it a lovely time for those who went along. Thank you too, to everyone who donated food items or money.

BURWASH CHRISTMAS BINGO

The Christmas Prize Bingo was held on Sunday, 7th December, in the Burwash Village Hall. We had a wonderful crowd turn out to enjoy a fun-filled afternoon.

I would like to thank everyone who gave us a hand on the day: without lovely people like you, I wouldn't be able to continue holding this. Thanks too, to everyone who so kindly donated prizes. We had some lovely gifts. We raised £431 for Burwash Village Hall.

The next bingo has been booked for Sunday, 14th June, so keep this date free.

GET TOGETHER FUNDS

As most of you know, I had been raising funds over the last year for the Get Together Lunch for the seniors of our three villages. My aim was to try and raise £3,000 before the event. Holding the hamper raffles, the Tea at the Ritz plus my postal quizzes, I am delighted to say that I gave Steve Mintram £3,150 or thereabouts.

However, I can only do this with the support of you lovely people, so thank you so much. I shall continue to raise money for this lovely event all the time I am able. I would also like to say a big thank you to Steve Mintram for organising this event again, and all the amazing volunteers without whom this wouldn't be so easy to run. Our grateful thanks to all of them and the staff at the Bear.

MARY TAYLOR BEM





NEW YEAR, SAME OLD BURWASH

Last time you heard from us we'd just won our first cup game in years and were rewarded with an away tie to Bognor Regis. We travelled there full of hope and whimsy, and they absolutely battered us 5-0. There are some 5-0 losses where you all kind of feel angry afterwards as it feels that a million butterfly wing flaps have conspired against you to set up several moments of misfortune. Alas, this was not one of those, it could have been more and we took the pasting on the chin, it happens. Just a shame it involved an hour's drive each way!

In the league we had a 4-1 home win against Sedlescombe Rangers, followed by a 2-3 home loss and then a 1-4 away win at Hollington United, finally rounding the year off with a 1-0 loss away at Tackleway. My memories of these games have been lost to the temporal void that exists between Christmas and New Year, intermixed in such a way that I'll probably get flashbacks to those matches the next time I do something Christmasy, like play scrabble or get annoyed at a relative.

It's been very much the season for postponed games, with some teams unwilling to play football in the mud or on a frozen pitch. If we could all be less energy efficient, maybe we could supercharge the whole global warming thing and stop this kind of weather from happening. I'm not a scientist, so no guarantees that would even work...

In other news, eagle-eyed fans should be on the lookout for Burwash FC Merchandise that will be launching in the coming weeks. Nothing major I should add, just a few items that'll help keep the (flood)lights on. We haven't sought sponsorship from meal plan delivery companies yet, but if the merchandise doesn't do well, I am sure we could get some money from that company that sells male grooming products. You know the one, the one that seems to sponsor 90 % of podcasts. Maybe we could even do a tastefully nude album using their products...

Apologies for conjuring that image in your mind's eye.

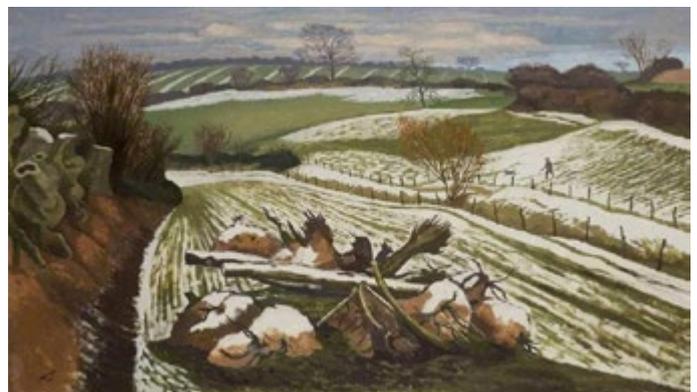
All silliness aside, we want to do more of the same really in 2026. We want to continue to be the kind of club that we've been since the reformation, one with close ties to the area. One who promotes local business with a meal after games, even when no other team returns the favour. One who plays on a local pitch, even when everybody else sends us to the soulless Bexhill Road Recreation Ground. One who, hopefully, you are proud of.

Have a great year!

Behind the scenes spotlight: Dan Murrell

Dan is in charge of player recruitment and team socials. Considering we have a full squad but had no Christmas party, it's fair to say he takes one responsibility more seriously than the other!

ALEX ROXON (CHAIRMAN)
burwashfc1890@gmail.com



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BURWASH WALKING FOOTBALL



I love writing about the exploits of us footballers but you have to be a bit of a fortune teller or be able to see into the future as, due to magazine deadlines, and personal commitments, these articles are written several weeks in advance of publication.

Writing this just before Christmas Day I was tempted to start with a 'Happy New Year' but realised that many would be reading it in mid-February and you'd be thinking I had gone nuts.

And so it is with our league campaign. The league table was the latest available at the time of writing but who knows where Burwash could be by mid-Feb?

The table doesn't lie and, although we are proving hard to beat, having a rock-solid defence, it's upfront where we are struggling. If only we had managed a goal in those drawn matches, we would be run-away leaders – but we didn't!

Back to Christmas.....

We had our final kick-about session just a few days before Christmas with three teams of six playing four games each - all winning one and drawing two so, in true festive spirit, it was all square – no overall winner or loser and everyone happy. Afterwards we retired to The Ostrich in Robertsbridge for a final Christmas drink.



The walking Footballers send their regards

If you think you can score a goal against a bunch of old blokes with beer bellies and arthritic hips, I suggest you come along and show us how it's done. Every Thursday evening 6.30 – 8 p.m. at The Robertsbridge Community College. Call me, Laurence on 07714 935915 or contact Steve Mintram on 01435 882444 for more information.

POS Team	PLD	W	D	L	SF	SA	SD	PTS
1 Battle Knights 60's	6	4	0	2	7	5	2	12
2 Hastings United 60's	5	3	1	1	8	3	5	10
3 Eastbourne United Whites 60's	4	2	2	0	9	4	5	8
4 Burwash 60's	5	1	3	1	3	3	0	6
5 Eastbourne United Yellows 60's	5	1	0	4	6	13	-7	3
6 Bexhill Alha 60's	5	0	2	3	4	9	-5	2

W - Games Won, L - Games Lost, D - Games Drawn
 POS - League Position, SD - Score Difference, SF - Score For
 SA - Score Against, PLD - Games Played, PTS - Points Earned

01435 882444 for more information.
www.burwashwalkingfootballers.co.uk

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LAURENCE WORTON

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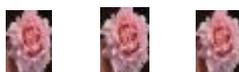
BURWASH AND DISTRICT FLOWER CLUB

Burwash & District Flower Club

2026 Programme

Chairman: Mrs Peta Highton Tel: 01435 882626
 Hon Treasurer: Mrs Linda Mintram Tel: 01435 882444
 Secretary: Mrs Jan Macfarland Tel: 07792 929523

*All demonstrations and meetings are held at 2.15pm at the
 Burwash Village Hall (unless otherwise stated)*



Monday 9 th February – 2.15pm	AGM
Monday 13 th April – 2.15pm	Demonstration by Michelle King
Tuesday 12 th May – am or pm (TBC)	Demo and Club Workshop
Thursday 4 th June – 9am to 5pm	Chichester Flower Festival (Provisional)
Monday 8 th June – 2.15pm	Demonstration by Graham King
Friday 3 rd July – 2pm to 5pm	65 th Anniversary Celebrations with Summer BBQ
Monday 14 th September – 2.15pm	Demonstration by Brenda Bull
Monday 9 th November – 2.15pm	Demonstration by Vivian Witters
Monday 8 th February 2027 – 2.15	AGM

We are starting our exciting programme for 2026 with our AGM on Monday, 9th February.

For anyone new to the village, this is a friendly, very popular club and new members are always given a very warm welcome.

JAN MACFARLAND

Burwash & District Flower Club

Annual General Meeting

Monday 9th February 2026 – 2.15 pm

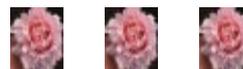
at Burwash Village Hall

Tea/Coffee and cakes will be served

by the Committee

Raffle tickets will be on sale

Free Entry for members and non-members



For further details, please contact:

Peta Highton (Chairman) – 01435 882 626





Wadhurst Bowls - steeped in tradition not stuck in the past.
Your local club since 1934

Well, as you can imagine, there is not much happening at the bowls club during the winter months, apart from our gallant group of volunteers working daily to get the green ready for the next season.

However, it is not all about work and no play. In November we had our annual lunch at Dale Hill Golf Club near Ticehurst. This gives us a chance to meet up with members since the lawn was put to bed, and to have some fun and games. It is also the occasion when the prizes are awarded to those members who won the many and varied competition matches that take place during the season.

An award of note this year was one that is actually given by Bowls International Club, a magazine dedicated to all things bowls. It was membership of the Hot Shot Club, given to four members of Wadhurst Bowls Club who between them managed to score a maximum of eight shots in a single end in a match that they were playing in August last year. Did I mention that I was one of them! The other members were David Smith, Peter Burns and George Webster.

We each received a certificate signed by the 15 times world champion legend, Tony Allcock OBE, as we are proudly displaying below!



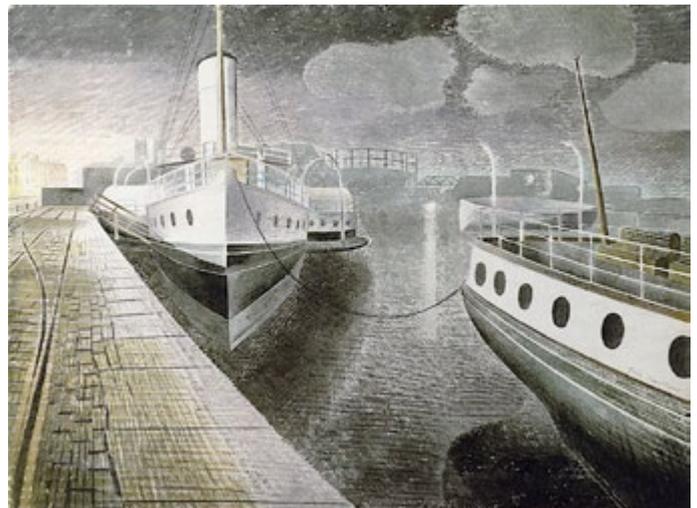
Talking of games, coming up next month we have a jigsaw competition, so will let you know how that went. It's all go at the moment.

Well, that is all for now other than to advise you that Laurence Worton, the previous author of these articles for Wadhurst Bowls Club is taking a well earned rest for a while. I hope I can live up to his talents and humour.

JANE GILBERT

www.wadhurstbc.com
Washwell Lane, Wadhurst, TN5 6BN.

Steamers Docked at Night, 1938





BURWASH PLAYING FIELD ASSOCIATION

Bookings for stallholders and events can now be made directly through our website:

www.bpfa.org.uk 01435 583039

Email: bpfaswanmeadow@gmail.com

Swan Meadow Playing Fields and the Eddie Workman MBE Pavilion have hosted an amazing range of activities and events throughout January, including:

- The Community Farmers' Market - next column.
- Tuesday Village Playgroup - contact Jo Murrells.
- Brazilian Jiu Jitsu classes - contact Daniel on burwashbjj@gmail.com
- Music and Movement classes - contact Dianne on dianne@seated-exercise.co.uk (see page 15).
- Football Training and Burwash FC in full swing.

100 PLUS CLUB JANUARY DRAW

The January draw took place at the Bear. There were 247 balls in the draw, which was made by Mrs Sophie Wood.

Congratulations to the Winners!

1st Ball Number	29	Mrs Dolly Tester	£60
2nd Ball Number	280	Jean Crawley	£30
3rd Ball Number	118	Mr Norman Pickles	£20

If you are new to the village, please do consider signing up for the 100 Plus Club to support the running of Swan Meadow Playing Fields and the Eddie Workman Pavilion.

STEVE BENNETT

THE NEXT BURWASH COMMUNITY MARKET IS ON SATURDAY, 7TH FEBRUARY 2026



THE MONTHLY COMMUNITY FARMERS' MARKET

The December Community Farmers' Market could have been a bit of a wash-out, given the torrential rain the night before and the wet weather in the morning. (Yes, you did read that last month.) However, the weather brightened up as the morning progressed, as did the social atmosphere in the Pavilion. The fish stall, the cheese stall and the plant/vegetable stall braved the elements but us soft types retreated to the inside space.

It was the morning after the Bear chimney fire, so the High Street was out of action, but Isabel Lloyd had kindly been out putting up notices to remind everyone that the Market was still on (now she really did get a second shower). Most of our regulars still attended and we seemed to have more doggy visitors than ever (I did feel a bit sorry for the cleaner).

I can't speak for all the stallholders, but Val and I had a great time and sold out of our vegetarian option. The January Farmers' Market was not as busy, but all the 'regulars' turned up.

There is a real sense of commitment from the Stallholders, which makes it all so worthwhile. It is the only time I get to see my mates from Burwash Common too, so let's make 2026 markets even better.

Details of features and special products appear on the E Bulletins.

THE EDITOR

WALKS FOR STROLLERS

There were only four Strollers for our December walk. We set off from the Bear Car Park in Burwash, taking the footpath to Bateman's. It was a lovely sunny day.



Passing Bateman's, we went on the bridle path up through Park Wood and, on reaching King's Hill road, we turned right. We then went left on to Perryman's Lane, continuing on to Fontridge Lane and turning left on the footpath leading to Old Brick Farm.



Crossing the river Dudwell, the footpath took us back to Burwash. The total distance was 4.5 miles.

For the first Strollers walk of 2026, five Strollers set off in the January sunshine along Burwash High Street to St. Bartholomew's Church. Taking the footpath towards Grandturzel, we reached the river Dudwell where we took the footpath to Borders Farm. We then turned right on Borders Lane and right again on to the footpath leading up to Fontridge Manor.



On reaching Fontridge Lane we turned right along the lane.

There was no snow left but, due to the overnight rain, the lane was very slippery with black ice. We then took the lane down to Grandturzel and picked up the footpath back to Burwash.



The total distance was 5.8 miles. An enjoyable walk in good company.

Our next walk is on Wednesday, 4th February meeting at the Bear Car Park, Burwash at 9 a.m.

Any new Strollers are most welcome to join us. Please ring, if you have any questions.

**PETER AND KAREN FARLEY
01435 883141**

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FAIRFIELD SURGERY NEWS

Welcome to the 2nd edition of The Patients' Participation Group newsletter. Each month we will endeavour to keep you updated on any new developments within the practice and support health awareness. Your Patient Participation Group welcomes new members to help us understand fully the needs of our patients, so if you can spare the time to help we would love to hear from you. Please contact ppg.fairfield@gmail.com

Start the New Year with a new App!

The NHS App is a free and secure way to access a range of services from the surgery. All you have to do is download it from the App Store on to your smartphone or tablet, prove who you are by using photo ID and off you go.

It will enable you to:

Order repeat prescriptions without having to call the surgery;

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Have better communication with the surgery by receiving messages and notifications securely from your GP and hospital.

Consent to Disclose Form. Did you know that when you need added support from a family member or carer to liaise with the surgery on your behalf all you have to do is complete a "Consent to Disclose " form available from the surgery to make your life easier.

Role of Advanced Nurse Practitioner by Suzanne Levett, Nurse Practitioner

After 22 years in general practice, I have been fortunate enough to expand my role and responsibilities within primary care now working at Fairfield Surgery for the past 5 years. I have a background in district nursing and worked for a short while for Sussex Police as a forensic nurse gaining experience in more acute care.

As a Nurse Practitioner/Independent Prescriber my role is one of first contact diagnosing and treating illnesses, prescribing medication, ordering and interpreting tests and making referrals on to secondary care.

I enjoy managing both acute and chronic conditions focusing on health promotion and disease prevention to improve health.

I run three minor illness/triage clinics a week, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, involving seeing patients face to face with conditions such as: coughs, chest infections, urine infections, dermatology including rashes, suspicious skin lesions, chronic disease management, asthma and diabetes. Paediatric illnesses: rashes, ENT problems, tonsillitis and ear infections. I have a particular interest in women's health: contraception, HRT queries and breast lumps.

BURWASH NOT SO YOUNG CLUB

On the 20th November 2025 we had a last minute change to our programme. David Hetherell stepped into the breach, greeting us with a warm smile, to give us '*Spike Milligan, A Rare Talent*'. The club had met David before as he has extensive knowledge as well as doing considerable voluntary work for Bexhill Museum. He even joined us for tea.

It was a bitterly cold November day. Holidays or sickness meant a reduced number of members gathered in Burwash Village Hall. There were apologies from missing members; volunteers offered to provide cake for our January meeting and then David started his talk.

Spike Milligan was born in Ahmednagar in India. His father was serving as a gunner in the Army, as had his grandfather and great-grandfather.

There was so much that I did not know about Spike. Firstly, he was a gifted musician and won a scholarship to Goldsmith's School of Music for Trumpet and Guitar. His 'Goon' scripts are perhaps his most famous work, but drained him. Sadly he was prone to fits of melancholy, which he possibly inherited from his father. At times in his life, and for those that loved him, it was very difficult. Genius and depression walk very closely together and there was much sadness in his life due to this.

Milligan was stationed in Bexhill while serving as a signaller in the Artillery during World War 2. He used to joke about Bexhill being 'the only cemetery above ground' but in fact had a genuine affection for it. There is a pillbox at Galley Hill associated with him, and a 'portrait bench' at Glyne Gap which includes a tribute to him, commemorating his comedic and writing career.

In 1973 'This is Your Life' was filmed with Spike Milligan at Bexhill's De La Warr Pavilion. (Eddie Izzard also lived in the town as a child.)

It was not the only place he lived but I have focused on it due to its relative closeness. '*The Dreaded Batter Pudding Hurler*' (of Bexhill-on-Sea) was written by Milligan who chose Bexhill as the location because he had been stationed there in World War II. Spike was billeted in Bexhill between 1940 and 1943.

David also shared how Spike's musical talent developed by being part of music groups and performing around the area.

Milligan's unit saw action as part of the First Army in the North African Campaign and then in the Italian Campaign. He was appointed Lance Bombardier and was about to be promoted to Bombardier when he was wounded in action in the Italian theatre at the Battle of Monte Cassino. Subsequently hospitalised for a mortar wound to the right leg and shell shock, he was demoted back by the unsympathetic commanding officer. After hospitalisation Milligan drifted through various rear-echelon military jobs in Italy, eventually becoming a full-time entertainer. After demobilisation Milligan remained in Italy playing with a trio before returning to Britain. While he was with the Central Pool of Artists (a group of happy squaddies he called them), he began to write parodies, which were key elements, and would later become part of 'The Goon Show' with Peter Sellers, Harry Secombe and Michael Bentine.

A side of his life that I knew little of was his role as a father. He was married three times and had six children. There were also 'love children' as his private life was complicated. There are extensive records recording how much he loved his children but their life was certainly very different. In typical Goon style Spike Milligan's headstone is in the churchyard of St. Thomas the Martyr in Winchelsea, where famously the epitaph reads 'Duirte me leat go raibh me breoite'. This is Irish Gaelic for 'I told you I was ill'. Milligan had wanted the phrase in English, but the Chichester Diocese considered it inappropriate for a gravestone. A compromise was reached by inscribing it in Irish, allowing his final joke to remain.

David Hetherell had called his talk '*Spike Milligan, A Rare Talent*' and he certainly was. We had such a good afternoon. Why not come along and try the Club? We meet on the third Thursday of most months at 2.15 p.m. and - for a mere £3 and lucky raffle ticket - a delightful afternoon is followed by tea and substantial nibbles. Members volunteer to buy or make a cake occasionally and donate lovely raffle prizes.

VERONICA FARLEY

SEAGULLS OVER BURWASH

The Sack Race, Old Men and Kids, Romance and Poetry

Back in the October Seagulls Over Burwash rambling, I mentioned the early season odds for who would be the first manager to be sacked. At the time, the odds were stacked against former Brighton and Hove Albion gaffer, Graham Potter, who was at 3/1 to be removed from his post. So, if you placed a tenner on Potter to be first out of the door you would have won..... absolutely nothing. As it happened, Nuno Espirito Santo was unceremoniously booted out of Nottingham Forest at the beginning of September after having a falling out with his Chairman, despite leading his team to a very creditable seventh place finish the previous season. His replacement, Ange Postecoglue, lasted little over a month before he was shown the door. As for Mr Potter, he survived until the end of September and, with his side sliding down the table, he was replaced by Forest reject, Santo. Before the end of the year, Wolverhampton Wanderers had also sacked their manager Vitor Pereira making it four down before Christmas.

Since the turn on 2026, the Premier League manager merry-go-round appears to have gone into overdrive. On New Year's Day Enzo Maresca was sacked by Chelsea. He has since been replaced by ex-Brighton defender and Under 18s coach Liam Rosenior, making Liam the ninth Chelsea manager since 2020. Well at the time of writing that was the case, it might have changed again by the time you read this....! Manchester United boss, Ruben Amorin, survived for three days longer than Maresca and was sacked on 4th. It seems only a matter of time before West Ham are looking for their third manager of the season as they are now entrenched in the relegation zone and Tottenham Hotspur's latest saviour, Thomas Frank, has not turned their fortune around and the Spurs fans are baying for his head as well.

It seems that both fans and club directors expect instant success whenever they appoint a new manager or head coach. That is, however, totally unrealistic as coaching just applies finishing touches to a team and if the players just aren't good enough to achieve the club's expectations, no amount of coaching will make them more talented. As they say on the terraces, 'you can't polish a.....sow's ear?'

Alex Ferguson (oops, sorry, Sir Alex Ferguson) took four seasons to win his first trophy with Manchester United, the FA Cup in 1990. Had he been sacked after his first few fruitless months, United may have missed out on the subsequent 39 trophies he amassed during his legendary reign at Old Trafford.

The January transfer window saw Brighton and Hove Albion continue their policy of signing old men and kids. Back in August 2024, after seven years, 228 appearances and 30 goals, Albion's German midfielder, Pascal Gross, left Sussex to finish his career at the club he supported as a boy, Borussia Dortmund. He left as a club legend and with the good will and best wishes of all at Brighton. Eighteen months later, the now 34 year old, has re-signed for the Seagulls and immediately went into action against Burnley the day after he arrived back. The recruitment model Brighton have applied so successfully over the past years involves signing young, talented but largely untested players from around the world.

However, in order for that to work, the presence of model profession 'old men' such as Gross, Kames Milner (40), Danny Welbeck (35) Lewis Dunk (34) and Joel Veltman (34) in the squad is essential. These players are not only a huge asset on the pitch in terms of footballing nous and match leadership (they have all played at international level), but they set the example of how to behave and train diligently and can pass their knowledge and experience on to the younger players. There is little doubt that the up and coming first team players such as Charalampos 'Babis' Kostoulas (18), Tom Watson (19), Stefanos Tzimas (19), Jack Hinshelwood (20), Yankuba Minteh (21) and Carlos Beleba (21) are all benefiting greatly from playing and training alongside these experienced campaigners. Oh yes, and also, from the club's bean-counters point of view, the old men were cheap: Welbeck, free transfer; Milner, free transfer; Gross, £1 million (after selling him for £8 million 18 months ago). Very good business, I think you will agree.

CONTINUED OVERLEAF

SEAGULLS OVER BURWASH

Continued

As all you romantics will be aware, it's Valentine's Day this month and, I'm sure you, like me, will be wining and dining your loved ones and giving them the 100 % attention that they deserve on this special day. However, when I put my new 2026 wall chart up, the alarm bells started ringing..... oh no.... the 14th is a Saturday! Quick, check the fixture list. Great, we don't have a Premier League home game on that day.

Hang on..... there are no Premier League games at all because it is the fourth round of the FA Cup. What do you do? Romantic meal for two in a cosy corner of a dimly lit restaurant or a pie and a pint at the footie. There is no debate really is there? The footie wins every time. The sporting press are always banging on about 'the romance of the FA Cup', so why not kill two birds with one stone and take your 'other half' to the game; a pie and a pint for two....doesn't get much more romantic than that. In fact, during my extensive research for this article, I came across a survey from 2013 in which 33% of men said they would go to a football match on a first date. Hummm, good luck with that one. I thought I was pushing my luck taking my now wife to a beer festival on our first night out.....

For further information on joining Seagulls Over Burwash and details of forthcoming events, meetings or coach travel, please visit our soon to be revitalised website at

www.seagullsoverburwash.co.uk or email me at simon.forster@seagullsoverburwash.co.uk.

Alternatively, please feel free to contact our cherished and esteemed Chairman, **Mr Teskey O'Neil, on 01435 884344 or tesbar80@btinternet.com**. Teskey, or, as he was known as in his younger days 'The Casanova of Burwash', has always held St Valentine's Day in great reverence and has been known to resort to romantic verse in order to woo his ladies. Recently, the archivist at the Burwash Museum of High Arts rediscovered one of Teskey's early missives and we are lucky enough to be able to share it here

*A young Brighton fanatic from Ticehurst,
Was in love, with a heart fit to burst,
But how his love died when his young lassie cried,
"Will you come to watch Palace at Selhurst?"*

A moving tale of love, deceit and treachery is it not? For those who are poetry aficionados, a six volume compilation of _____ poems and sonnets will be published as soon as he gets his dot-matrix printer fixed.

SIMON FORSTER



*The Seagulls Over Burwash Tree at Burwash
Christmas Tree Festival*

BURWASH COMMON PAVILION NEWS

The New Year clear up included locals bringing Christmas trees to add to the 'dead hedge' at the Goodsoal end of the playing field. The boule pitch has been used intermittently weather permitting but a solution has to be found to keep animals from fouling it. The field has cameras positioned to enable us to see which dog owners are not clearing up, although it's sad to have to resort to this.

The Burwash Weald Cricket Club held their Awards Night at their home ground to celebrate the excellent sportsmanship of the team, who were top of the league in 2025 under the excellent guidance and encouragement of their Captain, Monty Hadow.

Here are the individual trophy winners.



There is not a photo of Lawrie Taylor, who won the bowling cup for taking 17 wickets in the 2025 season.

We hope our team have another successful season this year. They are a talented, friendly, fun team of varying ages from 20 to 70. If you are interested in playing, umpiring, scoring or helping with ground prep, ring the number below.

The snooker tables are being used more frequently now and, if anyone is keen to play, please ring the number below.

THE COMMITTEE
07813273977

AGM

Monday 9th March 2026 at The Pavilion
Doors open 7.15pm Meeting Starts 7.30 pm - Bar Open

Speakers

Julian Kenny and other members of the Wild About Burwash group talking about the many interesting and varied projects in and around the local area

Non-members as well as members are welcome to attend our General Meetings, so if you are not already a member, come along and meet us.

Contact us by email at bcwra2017@gmail.com

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Burwash, Burwash Common, Burwash Weald and the Surrounding Areas

Recent Incidents:

Once again there have been several reports around the area of thefts and attempted thefts from farm outbuildings, sheds, garages, storage containers and parked vans, almost certainly all occurred overnight.

Stolen items include strimmers, chain saws, cordless drills and tools.

In one instance, just off our immediate area in Church Street, Ticehurst, two offenders wearing balaclavas were disturbed and made off in a silver saloon.

Several of these incidents occurred when we had the particularly bright moon which meant that thieves could look around without torches and even drive without headlights!

If you see a vehicle driving without lights, report it.

Scams:

Hardly a day passes without a report of a new scam or another variation.

Recent local reports involve so called Fixed Penalty Notices. Two people who received them don't even drive, so they were pretty sure someone was trying to steal money from them.

If you receive any sort of notice of a motoring fine, make sure you check it out or ask someone to do it for you before you even consider paying.

Even real Penalty Notices such as the Dart Charge can get registration numbers wrong!

NHW by Email:

Burwash and surrounding areas - new to the area or want to know more, then contact:

steve.mintram@btinternet.com

Contacting the Police:

ALWAYS Use 999 if you think a serious offence is happening or has just happened, there is immediate danger of harm to persons, damage to property or serious public disruption.

Call 101 or visit <http://www.sussex.police.uk> for non-emergency situations (online reports are assessed in the same way as an 101 call).

Deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired with textphone can **text 18001 101**, or BSL users can use SignVideo to provide a Video Relay Service <http://signvideo.co.uk/>, to report crime through a live online interpreter, who will contact the Police on your behalf, when you do not require an urgent response.

STEVE MINTRAM



Bereavement Friendship Group

For anyone who has suffered a bereavement

CHANGE OF VENUE

The Bereavement Friendship Group meets on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 10.30 a.m. at Petals Nursery, Burwash Road, Broad Oak, TN21 8XG.

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**OR SEND AN ARTICLE
TO THE EDITOR**

THE AFTER EIGHT CLUB BURWASH COMMON

The After Eight Club had a busy and positive 2025. We enjoyed a variety of talks, outings and shared experiences and most importantly friendship.

Our Club is made up of local ladies of all ages who like to meet up once a month to share experiences as we either go on an outing such as the theatre or a local walk and pub meal, or help with the local fête and organise a coffee morning to raise money for local charities.

The next meeting, is our Annual General Meeting. This will be held on Wednesday, 11th March 2026 at 7.00 p.m. at the Burwash Common Pavilion. It would be great to see as many of you as possible to help plan our events for 2026 and early 2027.

We are always pleased to welcome potential new members!

If you would like to find out more, please ring or email me!

JACKY WOODLAND

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MAYFIELD AND DISTRICT U3A

On the 19th February at 2.30 p.m. Jane Scotchmer will be speaking about ‘The Curious Tale of the Surrealist Gentleman’ at Five Ashes Village Hall.

With apologies to Sara Coleridge, “January brought some snow, made our feet and fingers glow (albeit briefly).” Hopefully February won’t bring too much rain, though.

As winter wends its chilly way through towards spring, it’s a good thing to consider something other than the weather, and our monthly talk should be a pleasant antidote to deciding whether to take snow shoes or an umbrella out on our brisk (!) country walks.

Jane Scotchmer usually writes about gardens, but in our meeting this month she will entertain us with tales of Edward James, who is described as a ‘surrealist gentleman’. Having inherited a huge estate in West Sussex, he used his wealth to support famous artists, meanwhile joining a shocking society, of which we will no doubt learn more....

The magical surrealist garden he created, which is now a famous UNESCO site, may or may not be covered, but I hope we at least get a photograph or two, as I can’t imagine what a surrealist garden would look like. Actually, so many plants have weird and wonderful habits and shapes that it may be fairly mainstream! Anyway, time will tell.

While we wait patiently for our new hall, this talk will be at Five Ashes as usual. There will also be tea and cake, as normal. Visitors are more than welcome to come, for the modest charge of £3, and if they happen to join our U3A that will be refunded. It’s a bargain! We love new members!

More information can be easily gleaned from our website, which is mayfield.u3asite.uk.

ANNA THOMPSON



On Tuesday, 10th February Joanna Banham will be explaining ‘The Many Faces of William Morris’.

William Morris was a man of prodigious energy, talent and versatility. He was a designer, a craftsman, a writer, a lecturer, a conservationist and a revolutionary socialist. He is best-known today for his wallpapers and textiles, but he also designed embroideries, stained glass, mural decoration, books and tapestries. His firm, Morris & Co., was the foremost decorating company of his day. His over-arching passions were a love of art and making, and a hatred for what he perceived as the greed and inequality that characterised contemporary society.

In contrast, on Tuesday, 10th March Pepe Martinex will be addressing us on ‘Banksy – Fraud or Genius’.

The lecture will trace the story of Banksy’s humble beginnings as a tagger on the streets of Bristol in the 1980’s to one of the most recognisable names in the art world. We will examine the reasons behind his incredible rise, looking at some of his famous stunts and discuss what his influence has been on the art market today and look at what his legacy, if any, might be.

The annual subscription is £50 for our exciting programme of 10 monthly lectures. We welcome guests to individual lectures for £7.50. If you would like to try us, you can come to your first lecture free of charge. Our meetings are held at the Heathfield Community Centre, Sheepsetting Lane, Heathfield, TN21 OXG at 2.15 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month. If you wish to apply for membership, please email our Membership Secretary, John Larum: email at johnlarum@hotmail.com For queries, please contact Penny Spurrell on 07876565696.

www.theartsocietywealden.org.uk

PENNY SPURRELL - CHAIR



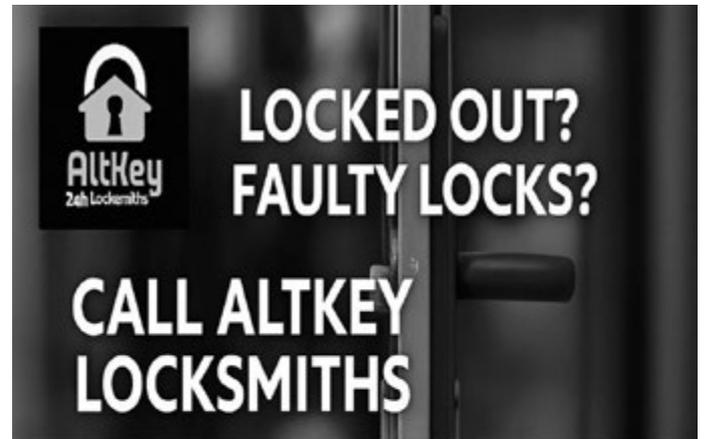
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ROYAL BRITISH LEGION Burwash Branch

You may have noticed that the Remembrance wreaths were removed from the War Memorial just before Christmas. This has become the practice in recent years as they obscure some of the names on the memorial when in situ.

This year the wreaths that were removed were placed on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and private graves of the fallen Burwash men in the churchyard. We hope their families in particular, and anyone who saw the wreaths, will appreciate this as an extension of Remembrance. We Will Remember Them!

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission is a global leader in commemoration. Founded by Royal Charter in 1917, working on behalf of the Governments of Australia, Canada, India, New Zealand, South Africa and the United Kingdom to commemorate the 1.7 million men and women from the Commonwealth who lost their lives in the two World Wars.

The belief is that remembering individuals who have died in conflicts is of universal, perpetual relevance, and that reflecting on their deaths is of continuing and paramount importance for us all.

The cemeteries, memorials, graves, landscapes, and records in their care will be found at 23,000 locations and in more than 150 countries and territories.

If you have a relative who died in these conflicts you can research them on the CWGC website, locate where they were laid to rest, or are commemorated, and you may even be able to visit them virtually or find a photograph.

I recently fulfilled a promise I made to my Nan in 1972 that I would visit her only brother when I visited Voormezele Enclosure NO. 3 in West-Vlaanderen, Belgium and laid a Poppy Wreath at his grave, thanks to research on the CWGC website.

For further information about our Branch, please contact me on 01435 882444, steve.mintram@btinternet.com or Burwash.Secretary@rbl.community

STEVE MINTRAM (Hon. Sec.)



SOIL SUSTENANCE or Nature's Nourishment

Working something by hand, hence 'to cultivate land' gives us the word. In Middle English it was 'manouren' or in Old French 'manouvrer': yes manure. Sorry to lower the tone a bit. What brought this on was finding a source of well rotted horse muck at a good price, and my garden is going to love it. This piece is about animals nourishing the soil rather than compost generally or green manure (where a crop such as clover is deliberately ploughed in). In other words, dung.

As we all know, farmyard manure is animal faeces and urine mixed with straw or wood chips which all decompose together into a beautiful compost. Most people probably think well of the stuff, apart from the smell. But there can be surprising downsides: for example, in 2023 when (according to the web*) nearly 18,000 cattle were killed in a huge explosion and fire at a Texas dairy farm. One person was severely hurt as well. Apparently methane from slurry was to blame, slurry being a semi-liquid produced by more intensive farming methods. Another case was in Britain, where a lump of concrete was inadvertently mixed with the manure and was flung vertically by a muck spreader, crashing through the tractor cab and missing the driver by inches.

A muck spreader simply scatters the material as evenly as possible. Farm ones are usually drawn by a tractor and powered by the Power Take-Off (PTO). Typically 200hp is needed, first to tow many tons of load and second to break up and throw the material. That's equivalent to the power of two basic VW Golf cars. Liquid manure needs a different tool, and is sometimes 'knifed' (injected) into the ground to reduce smell.

Once manure lands on a field – or on your garden – what happens? It's a natural fertilizer, supplying essential nutrients like nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), and potassium (K), but also beneficial trace elements like magnesium. The proportions of N, P and K vary with the animal involved: sheep droppings are said to have a particularly suitable balance for flowering plants and vegetables, but chicken manure is the highest in N, encouraging green leafy growth.

Organic nitrogen becomes available to plants only after soil micro-organisms decompose the organic compounds, which occurs over a period of years. The actual amount of this conversion varies considerably but, in general, about 30% to 50% of the organic nitrogen becomes available in the first year, gradually decreasing thereafter. Roughly 70 to 80% of the phosphorus and 80 to 90% of the potassium will be usable in the first year after application.

Fungi are also essential decomposers in manure, breaking down tough organic matter, such as cellulose and lignin, that bacteria struggle with. At a higher level, insects such as beetles and flies are part of the reduction process. Dung beetles are the most specialized: they feed on dung and use it for nesting.

Fresh manure (less than six months old) contains high amounts of ammonium or soluble nitrogen. This results in a higher available nitrogen content compared to composted manure but it can burn plants. Poultry manure is the worst for this. Fresh manure may contain viable weed seeds, equine dung being notorious for this since horses don't digest what they eat as well as many other animals.

Because of the potential for transmitting human pathogens, such as E. coli, fresh manure should never be used on fruits and vegetables. If you are growing crops where the edible portion is in contact with the soil (such as carrots, beets, or potatoes) fresh manure applications should be made at least four months prior to harvest, digging it well in. On other edible crops, fresh manure applications should be made at least three months prior to harvest.

Composting manure eliminates some of the problems of fresh manure, including the odour. It is lighter and easier to haul, and the composting process may kill weed seeds and pathogens if the muck heap heats to at least 55°C for three consecutive days. But salts may be more concentrated and some of the nitrogen is lost, leaving the more stable organic forms. Composted manure has less available nitrogen and will contribute more to the organic matter content of the soil compared with fresh manure. It may not, alone, supply all the nutrients for fast growing plants.

Continued Overleaf

SOIL SUSTENANCE Continued

It is not as important immediately to dig composted manure into the soil as it is for fresh manure. If spread in the spring, it is best to wait at least one month before planting crops so the microbial activity it stimulates won't interfere with seed germination.

The organic matter in manure is a soil conditioner, improving drainage in our wet Wealden clay or helping to retain moisture in sandy soils. Before mankind cultivated the soil, it naturally contained 30-40% more organic matter than is now the case. Most soils in southern England have less than 2% organic matter, whereas that figure should be 3-6% for satisfactory plant growth. That's why farmers and gardeners have used well-rotted (composted) manure for centuries.

You can overdo the amount of muck to spread in your garden; adding too much can lead to nitrate leaching, nutrient runoff, excessive vegetative growth and, for some manures, salt damage. Apply a layer 2 to 3 inches (5 – 8 cm) deep. Apparently it is best incorporated at a depth of 6 to 8 inches (15 – 20 cm), but most of us apply it in autumn as a mulch and let the worms do the work.

Manures are too rich for drought-tolerant plants that need a free-draining soil, or for those that do best on a poorer soil. Root vegetables such as carrots and parsnips shouldn't be grown on freshly manured soil because the roots are likely to fork as the plant reaches out in several directions for the plentiful nutrients. Soil that has been manured at least a year previously is fine. Acid-loving plants such as blueberries and azaleas dislike manure.

Fungi at work on a muck heap



An average horse produces about eight piles of droppings a day totalling over 8 tonnes of manure per year. Multiplied by tens of billions of farm animals in the world, that's an ample supply of free fertilizer. The pleasing cycle of animal, useful waste, nourishing the ground, better crops and then feeding the animals is why mixed farms made sense for centuries. Specialist farming has its benefits, but a purely arable farm is imposing cost, financial and to the planet, by the need to haul manure some distance before it can be spread.

There are some other less helpful aspects to nature's nourishment. Newspapers often warn us about the amount of methane emitted by (particularly) cattle. Not only can it be explosive and poisonous, it is a greenhouse gas 25 times more potent than CO₂ over a 100-year period and 80 times over a shorter 25 year time period.

A local informant told me that if sheep have been dosed with certain medications, the end result (literally) can cause persistent damage. An obvious and visible effect of worming medication is that insects like dung beetles are killed, leaving the droppings smelly and uncomposted for much longer than usual. Stock may be kept off grass until all the chemical has come through, when the manure can be gathered and kept separate. One has to admit that quality control is not easy when it comes to manure production.

Tiny fungi on sheep's droppings



SOIL SUSTENANCE Continued

In some circumstances, production can exceed demand and muck becomes a nuisance. But did you know that you must use a licensed facility to get rid of solid waste? It's against the law to dump or burn it. The local authority can advise on what to do.

Then there's the infamous run-off, when incorrectly-applied manure washes into water courses. It raises the amount of nitrogen or phosphorus in the water which can cause algal bloom and low oxygen levels in the water. Water plants grow too much, fish die and beaches become polluted.

Manure is often accused of smelling foul, but it may not be offensive at all. My well-rotted horse manure hardly smells, and apparently elephant dung is the same. Grasses contain little protein which is why herbivores' droppings don't smell too bad.

There are other uses for muck. When it decomposes it generates substantial heat. Historically, and even today, gardeners use this property to create 'hotbeds' in greenhouses or cold frames to warm the soil and grow tender plants during colder months.

Early buildings were constructed with wattle and daub to fill the spaces between timbers. Wattle is a woven lattice of hazel or willow which is then covered with daub made of mud and manure. French farmers, of course, protest by dumping manure on the road and, in December, a British group left a pile of it beside the Ritz's Christmas tree. Apparently they did not like wealth. Dried animal dung has always been used for fuel, such as camel pellets in the desert and buffalo 'chips' encountered by the US pioneers.

Mostly, however, where there's muck there's not exactly brass but there is luxuriant life and galloping growth.

RICHARD HARDEN

*Thanks to the good old www for numerous references, too many to list. Most of the information is probably true. In particular the University of Wisconsin and the BBC were helpful sources.

Burwash Common Babies & Toddlers Group

Thursday Mornings 10-12

at the Burwash Common Pavilion, where we play, chatter, do some crafts and sing songs.

Turn up anytime from 10.00. Search for Burwash Common Babies & Toddlers for latest news.

£2.00 per family per session.

Jane Lloyd - 01435 883264



DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR NEAREST DEFIBRILLATOR IS? THIS COULD SAVE A LIFE!

BURWASH

Outside the Burwash Village Hall, left of the entrance.

Primary School, outside kitchen on the wall.

Batemans, at Visitor Reception (when open).

Corner of Burwash Park & Fontridge Lane.

Eddie Workman Pavilion, Swan Meadow, by main entrance door.

BURWASH COMMON

Outside Burwash Common Pavilion, left of front door.

ETCHINGHAM

In telephone box on Market Square, next to the school.

At the Station on the wall outside the gate to the Bistro.

On the wall at the Post Office.

The image shows two pages from a rainfall recording notebook. The left page is titled 'Annual summary 2024' and the right page is titled 'Annual summary 2025'. Both pages contain a table with columns for 'Average*', 'Amount', and '% of Av'. The data is handwritten in black ink.

Average*	Amount	% of Av
JAN	96.8	
FEB	220.6	
MAR	88.9	
APR	82.1	
MAY	72.3	
JUN	22.5	
JUL	76.0	
AUG	57.7	
SEP	186.4	
OCT	113.7	
NOV	85.1	
DEC	90.2	
YEAR 2024	1221.8	

*Average based on period to

Observers should follow the detailed instructions set out in the Met Office Leaflet Rules for Rainfall Observers. The notes overleaf give only general guidance on the more significant aspects of rainfall recording.

Beryl Swift from Burwash Common sent in her rainfall recordings for her home in Burwash Common. Will we have exceeded 104.70 in January 2026? We have left them in their authentic state, to reflect her endeavours. Any bets on the figure for January, or even this month? (Ed.)

CLUBS, SOCIETIES AND

LOCAL CLUBS, SOCIETIES AND OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

SPORT AND FITNESS-RELATED

Burwash Cricket Club:

Village club playing on Sundays.

Contact: Paul Morgan-Jones on 01435 882832 or

pmorganjones@holmewoodhouse.co.uk

Burwash Lawn Tennis Club:

With courts in Swan Meadow, the club encourages people of all ages to play tennis.

Club Secretary: Ben Mayhew

Email: burwashtennis@live.co.uk

Burwash over 50's Walking Football Group:

Meet every Tuesday evening for a kick-around. Age is no barrier as we currently range from 51-78 years of age.

Contact: Steve Mintram on 01435 882444 for more information.

Burwash Playing Field Association:

Bringing sport, fitness and well-being to the community of Burwash.

Contacts: Chair: Natalie Crabtree

Treasurer: Theresa Fox

Bookings Secretary for Field and Edward Workman Pavilion: on-line.

All enquiries and bookings: bpfaswanmeadow@gmail.com

www.bpfa.org.uk and 01435 583039.

Burwash Short Mat Bowls Club:

Informal, friendly evening at Burwash Village Hall every Monday from 6.30 p.m. If you fancy a try, come and join us. We can supply bowls to beginners.

Contact: Mary Taylor on 01435 882107.

Burwash Football Club:

Playing on Swan Meadow, Burwash.

Contacts: Will Pugh Jones, Club Manager or Alex Roxon, Club Chairman.

Email: burwashfc1890@gmail.com

Burwash Snooker Club:

Plays in Burwash Village Hall. New members welcome.

Contact: Mike Hill on 07518 914391 or Ron Allen on 09760 094334.

Kipling County Carriage Driving Group:

Carriage driving for the disabled.

Contact: kiplingcounty@aol.com.

Seagulls over Burwash:

Burwash Brighton & Hove Albion supporters club.

Contact: Simon Forster on simon.forster@seagullsoverburwash.co.uk.

Walks for Strollers:

Gentle walks through the countryside. Meet at 9 a.m. in the Bear Car Park on 1st Wednesday of the month.

Contacts: Peter and Karen Farley on 01435 883141.

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Burwash CEP School:

With an Outstanding OFSTED rating, the head teacher is Debbie Gilbert.

Contact: 01435 882440.

Burwash CEP School Parents, Teachers and Friends Association (PTFA):

Organise social and fund-raising events to support the school.

Contact: Caroline Locke (Co-Chair) or Joanna Murrells (Co-Chair):

Etchingham C.E. Primary School:

Contact: 01580 819218.

Burwash Guides and Brownies:

Meet in the Burwash Common guide hut.

Contact: Beverley Boakes on 01435 883473.

Explorers, Scouts, Cubs and Beavers:

Meet at the scout hut, Bear Car Park, Burwash.

Contact: Bernadette Spencer on bandescoutgroup@gmail.com.

Musical Theatre:

Musical theatre classes from 4 -19 years, Saturdays in Burwash Village Hall.

Contact: Jonny or Sandra Ball on 882946 or burwashmusicaltheatre@hotmail.com

Wednesday Club at St. Barts:

After school club in church, usually on the last Wednesday of the month. A fun afternoon of craft, stories, singing and snacks from 3.30 - 5 p.m.

Contact: Revd. Thomas Pelham on 07856 256 174.

Burwash Village Playgroup:

Stories, singing, toys and crafts. Tuesday mornings 10 a.m. - Noon, Edward Workman Pavilion, Swan Meadow.

Contact: Jo Murrells on 07747 806 191.

St. Bartholomew's Tuesday Drop-In:

Meet in church every Tuesday in term-time from 8.30 a.m. for children to have a snack on their way to school. Mums/Dads/Carers and pre-school children come in afterwards for coffee and a chat.

Drop in or contact: Joanne Brown on 01435 830869.

St. Philip's Parent and Toddler Group:

Meet every Thursday 10 - 12 p.m. in the Burwash Common Pavilion.

Contact: Anne Everall on 01435 883247 or Jane Lloyd on 01435 883264.

Etchingham Village Playgroup:

Meet every Monday in the Parker Hall, Parsonnage Croft from 10.30 - 11.30 a.m.

ND OTHER CONTACTS

LOCAL CLUBS, SOCIETIES AND OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

Patients of Fairfield Surgery

Participation Group:

Involving patients and staff to consider and improve conditions in the Practice from a patient's perspective.

Contact: Claudette Neville on 01435 883043 or nevilleclaudette@gmail.com.

The Barnsley Foundation:

A trust with limited funds to assist the education of local young people.

Contact: Joanne Brown on 830869.

FOR OUR SENIOR CITIZENS

Not So Young Club:

Social events and guest speakers, 3rd Thursday of each month in Burwash Village Hall at 2.15 p.m.

Contact: Isabel Salmond on 01435 882452.

Burwash District Housing Association for the Elderly:

Providing homes for over 60s in our community.

Contact: Claudette Neville on 01435 883043 or nevilleclaudette@gmail.com.

Mayfield and District University of the 3rd Age (U3A):

A full programme of activities and speakers, meeting 3rd Thursday of the month at 2.30 p.m. in Five Ashes Village Hall, or Zoom, if you prefer.

Contact: Mary Brentnall on 01435 872289 or email marybrentnallu3a@gmail.com

Etchingam Tuesday Club:

Meets at various venues, no longer just on Tuesdays.

Contact: Linda Neve on 01580 819223.

HOBBIES

Burwash Horticultural Society:

Thriving branch of the society.

Contact: Richard Maude-Roxby on 01435 882243.

Burwash Flower Arranging Club:

A programme of demonstrations, craft clubs and outings.

Contact: Jan MacFarland on 07792 929523.

Burwash Monday Painters:

Meet to paint on Monday afternoons in Burwash Village Hall (Oct. to April) and at various outdoor locations May - Sept. All ages and abilities welcome.

Contact: Anne Everall on 01435 883247 or Jenny Pettman, email: petters5@aol.com

Burwash Quilters:

For all those with an interest in quilting, meet Monday mornings in Burwash Village Hall.

Contact: Julie Lewis on 01580 200280.

Etchingam Club:

Members Club. info@theetchingham.club

Bereavement Friendship Group meets on third Tuesday of each month at 10.30 a.m. at Petals Nursery, Burwash Road, Broad Oak, TN21 8XG.

Contact: Jan Wright on 01435 883748 or email: Laurenandjan@ymail.com

Heathfield and District Philatelic Society:

Meets at the Heathfield Community Centre, Sheepsetting Lane, Heathfield, TN21 OXG on 3rd Tuesday of the month from September to April.

Contact: Bob Ely on 01292 852659 or rdely@tiscali.co.uk.

Jane Coleman School of Dancing:

Dance classes for young people in Burwash Village Hall. Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons.

Contact: Katie Dahlstedt on 01580 200961 or katiedahlstedt@gmail.com

or Rachel Elliott on 01580 714442, rachelelliott21@hotmail.com

The Arts Society Wealden Heathfield:

Meets at 2.15 p.m. on second Tuesday of the month at Heathfield Community Centre, Sheepsetting Lane, Heathfield, TN21 OXG for talks. Visitors welcome.

Contact: Membership Secretary on 01435 408635 for further details.

Burwash Duplicate Bridge Club:

We are a friendly club which meets at 1.45 for 2 p.m on Fridays. in the Pavilion at Burwash Common. We welcome guests. You do not need to have played duplicate bridge before, but you do need to be able to play bridge.

Contact: Jenny Crisford on 01435 882416 or email: jenny.crisford@gmail.com

CLUBS, SOCIETIES

SUPPORT GROUPS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

British Red Cross:

British Red Cross Local Services (Red Cross Week, first aid group, equipment and wheelchair loans).

Contact: 0800 0280 831.

Royal British Legion:

The active Burwash Branch supports the Legion in helping ex-Servicemen.

Contact: Charles Merchant on 01435 882360 or Steve Mintram on 01435 882444

Neighbourhood Watch:

Contact: Steve Mintram on 01435 882444.

Admiral Nurses:

Helping to support & co-ordinate care for people with dementia and their carers.

Contact: Ruth Tomkins on 01580 200743.

Burwash Parish Council:

Meeting on 2nd Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m.

**Contact: Emma Neil
parishclerk@burwashpc.org.uk**

Etchingam Parish Council:

Contact: Paulette Barton, Parish Clerk on 01580 819048 or paulette.etchinghampc@gmail.com

Rother District Council:

Town Hall, Bexhill on Sea, TN39 3JX. **Contact: 01323 787000.**

East Sussex County Council:

County Hall, St Anne's Crescent, Lewes. **Contact: 0345 6080190.**

Sussex Police (non-urgent):

Contact: 101@sussex.pnn.police.uk, or call 101 (101 calls cost 15p from landlines or mobiles) or online at www.sussex.police.uk/contactus.

VILLAGE LIFE

Bateman's:

Rudyard Kipling's home, run by the National Trust, with a full programme of events and activities throughout the year.

Contact: 01435 882302 or www.nationaltrust.org.uk/batemans for more details.

Burwash Amateur Pantomime Society (BAPS):

Annual production involving all ages!

Contact: Polly Richardson on 07903347340 or Jane Lloyd on 883264.

Burwash Bonfire Society:

Fundraising and organising the Bonfire Night firework display.

Contact: Natalie Crabtree at natcooper13@hotmail.co.uk.

Burwash Common Pavilion:

For bookings contact: Alison Hayes on 07763376158. or bcpavilionbar@gmail.com.

Burwash Common After Eight Club:

Meets monthly, open to all ladies for talks, outings, theatre and dining.

Contact: Jacky Woodland on 883389 or 07770 489490.

Burwash Defectives:

Murder Mystery Evenings, fund-raising events for your own cause. For details and to book a date.

Contact: Del Smith Tel 07543 665532 or email dellights@btinternet.com

Burwash: Save Our Fields:

Set up to oppose inappropriate development of new houses in Burwash Parish in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Contact@burwashsaveourfields.org.uk

Wild About Burwash:

Community group focusing on the protection and appreciation of the natural environment of the Parish.

Contact: wildaboutburwash@gmail.com

Also Wild About Etchingam & Hurst Green

Burwash Village Hall:

For bookings contact: Emma Neil on 07375 809660.

Fairfield Surgery:

Open Mon-Fri 8.30 – 6.30 p.m. (Phone 111 when surgery closed.)

Contact: 01435 882306 (fax 882064).

Friends of Burwash Surgery:

Help less mobile people travel to appointments and collect medication from the Surgery. They also deliver them to Etchingam Post Office for patients to collect.

Contact: Chairman, Frank Smith, on 01580 819326 or Secretary, Sue Mumford, on 01580 819415.

Requests for transport or delivery of prescriptions should be made via the Surgery on 01435 882306.

Friends of Etchingam School:

Contact: The School on 01580 819218.

Etchingam Music Festival:

Contact: Mary Newington, www.etchinghammusicfestival.co.uk or on 01580 819384.

Londis

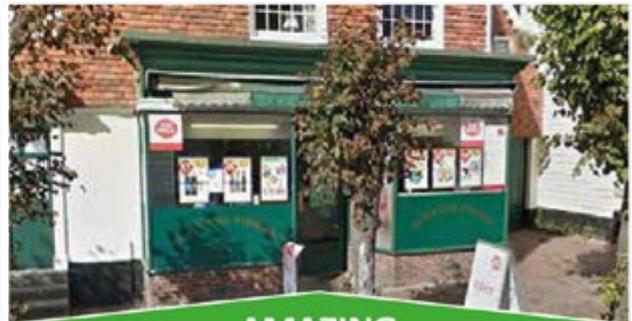


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