

IGHTHAM MAGAZINE

OCTOBER 2026
PUBLISHED FOR THE COMMUNITY
BY ST PETER'S CHURCH

£1.00



Services in the Benefice in October 2026

Ightham

Wrotham

Sun 4th Oct	9am	Breakfast@Church	10:30am Harvest Celebration with Holy Communion	
	6pm	Evensong		
Sun 11th Oct	10am	Harvest Celebration with Holy Communion	9am	Breakfast@Church
			10:30am	Service of the Word
Sun 18th Oct	10am	Service of the Word	10:30am Service to be confirmed	
	6pm	Evensong		
Sun 25th Oct	10am	Holy Communion	9am	Breakfast@Church
	4pm	In Loving Memory service	10:30am	Sung Matins

Wednesday services

7th October	10am	Morning Prayer
14th October	10am	Holy Communion
21st October	10am	Morning Prayer
28th October	10am	Holy Communion

CONTACTS

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

Registered Charity No. 1136162

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IGHTHAM MAGAZINE

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Copy deadline for the Nov edition is 15th Oct

Penny for your thoughts...

I recently went on a trip to Northumberland, a form of pilgrimage following the Northern Saints of Bede, Aidan and Cuthbert. Intriguingly we were told of the seven key words ascribed to a pilgrim and I was reminded of these when preparing copy for the October Ightham Magazine. Musing over the abundance of information, it felt as though the pilgrim words of simplicity, sharing, spirituality and light-heartedness were particularly interwoven in October's articles. I'll leave our readers to decide which word matches which Magazine

section! So with that very slight tease, I'll encourage you to enjoy each and every page as you metaphorically pilgrim through our lovely village's many church services, community and local interest groups, heritage events, farmers' market and hospitality venues. We are truly blessed with an abundance and richness of offerings. Happy reading!

Penny Cracknell



IN LOVING MEMORY service at St Peter's – Sunday 25 October, 4 pm

This is a very special annual service to remember those we have loved but lost. If anyone would like to join us for the service with tea following, please contact the Parish Administrator, Jane, for further information.

Email: admin@ighthamchurch.org.uk

Have faith and wholeheartedly trust God who will never abandon those who love him.

St Cuthbert of Lindisfarne

MEDITATE

Could sleep be spiritual?

“Sleep is spiritual,” is the claim made in a newly-published guide to discipleship, written by London-based Church of England vicar, Sarah Guinness.

Although overlooked by many, ‘The Alternative Guide to Discipleship’ places sleep firmly at the core of growing in Christian spirituality.

Sarah Guinness writes, “Sleep is not wasted time. It is an opportunity for God to seal our dreams, and to deposit things and ideas in our hearts and minds. I’d like to imagine that at night God, who knit our brains and bodies together, stands by our beds, ready to sort through the day that we’ve had, patching the holes, processing that conversation, mending the tears in our armour so that we wake up feeling repaired, refreshed and ready for another day.”

Guinness, the Vicar of Brentford, West London, believes that sleep can be creative, an opportunity for God to speak to us, a place to be vulnerable and a practice run for our Christian lives. She cites how Adam fell into a deep sleep, and wakes to find Eve; how God speaks to a sleeping Abram about His promises and seals a covenant with him, and how Jesus sleeps and then wakes with clarity to curse a fig tree and clear the temple.

In Mark 1, Jesus goes to bed, sleeps and awakes early to pray, and later in the day tells the disciples they need to move on to other towns. “It’s as though,” says Guinness, Jesus “goes to sleep, has a divine download and feels focused on His priorities.”

It’s in our dreams that God speaks to us most powerfully, she explains. “God, being God, can do far more in our sleeping than we can do in our waking. He uses dreams to get our attention. “People talk about being woken in the night with a strong urge to pray for a person or a situation. Why? Because sleep isn’t dead space when our bodies reboot. Sleep is spiritual.”

In ‘The Alternative Book of Discipleship,’ Sarah Guinness goes beyond the importance of sleep to map out a route to spiritual growth based on managing boundaries, embracing emotions, learning to play, surrendering outcomes, and other insights. It is founded on the author’s experiences as a parish priest and, before that, 12 years as an occupational therapist.

WINTER FLU AND COVID VACCINATION CLINIC

Flu and Covid Clinics have been confirmed and are being held on 3rd October and 17th October 8am - 12pm but the time maybe extended depending on demand.

Eligible patients will be invited by Text or via your NHS App.

Please see below conditions that are eligible for the Flu Vaccine if under 65.

All Over 65's Eligible.

Carers are eligible for Flu only.

Qualifying Medical Conditions

- Respiratory conditions
- Heart conditions
- Kidney or liver disease
- Neurological conditions: multiple sclerosis (MS) or cerebral palsy
- Diabetes and endocrine disorders
- A weakened immune system
- Spleen problems
- Learning disabilities
- Severe obesity

For Autumn 2026, COVID-19 vaccination is offered to:

- adults aged 75 years and over
- residents in care homes for older adults
- individuals who are immunosuppressed aged 6 months and over
- organ, bone marrow or stem cell transplant patients
- those being treated with systemic steroids for more than a month
- those living with HIV
- those receiving immunosuppressive or immunomodulating biological therapy
- those undergoing chemotherapy or radiotherapy
- those requiring long-term treatment for immunosuppression
- those with a history of haematological malignancy including chronic leukaemia, lymphomas, and leukaemia
- those with genetic disorders affecting the immune system

These clinics are not walk in and patients will need to book a time with Reception 01732 883161.



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Dear Friends and Parishioners,

After the hot weather of the last couple of months, as I write temperatures have dropped to a more normal September levels. We have even seen some rain! And it has brought relief to parched plants and trees. I suspect that there will have been a few casualties but nature, given to us by our Father God, has a wonderful way of bringing plants back to life.

Appropriately, in September we began the Season of Creation, and this continues until 4th October, St Francis Day. It is an idea shared with the Orthodox church, bringing churches and congregations together to pay attention to our shared responsibility to the earth and everything that lives on it. The theme for 2026 is living water, which links to the image of God's life-giving water flowing from the temple of God, restoring barren land, reviving waters, and sustaining flourishing ecosystems, outlined in Ezekiel 47.

It is a reminder to us that we should not take nature completely for granted. You do not need to look far to see evidence of the ecological damage in our world. Whatever our belief, we need to safeguard our natural world and work to protect and renew creation.

It is no coincidence that the natural world can be part of healing prescribed by the medical profession – the opportunity to work with growing plants can lift spirits and show something positive, as leaves grow and flowers or fruit gradually appear. And we will be able to celebrate our crops in our harvest festival this month.

It is also useful to pause to appreciate and give thanks for those people who provide us with our food – many farmers and

fishermen work long hours in challenging conditions to harvest their produce.



This month we enter the last quarter of the year. It is too soon to think about winter – first we have the prospect of the yellows and reds of autumn and the delightful crunch of dry leaves underfoot. The high temperatures caused some of this to happen early this year, but hopefully cooler months will give trees a chance to recover.

Perhaps we also feel in need of some recovery. Busy summer months can be exhausting for parents with young (and not-so-young) children. Back to school in a new school year can have the challenge of new clothes, new teachers and changing friendships, but hopefully this will have settled down by October.

Amidst our busyness, it is good to take some time, even a few minutes, to appreciate our natural world, whatever the season. A walk around our garden, or a green space such as a local wood, gives us a breather and a chance to be closer to nature. There is a creator, our Father God, who can be close to us if we wish. As the seasonal cycle continues, always with something to see and to look forward to, with the excitement of reviewing seed catalogues to come, let us pause to say thank you to God for all that He has given us, from seeds to sow, to fruit and vegetables to harvest. Saying thank you to Him feels like the right thing to do. Amen.

John Webster

IGHTHAM IGHTHAMS

On Saturday 10th October we will have our monthly Men's Breakfast at the George and Dragon in Ightham, at 8.30 am. This continues our monthly visits which have taken place for over 16 years. We enjoy an excellent full English breakfast on the second Saturday of the month.

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

jnhjk.webster@btinternet.com;

or phone: 01732 884819.

Please book your place by contacting John Webster
jnhjk.webster@btinternet.com.



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to 11.45am
every
Wednesday

Church
Centre

The charity for **October** is **DAVSS** (Domestic Abuse Volunteer Support Services), an award winning community based charity supporting any victims (aged 16 and above) of domestic abuse, who are living in West Kent.

MORE IGHTHAM IGHTHAMS

Ightham Magazine

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



St Peter's Church Parent, Baby & Toddler Group

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



**Thursday
10 - 11.30 am
(term time only)
in St Peter's
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From napping newborns to toddlers on trikes, this friendly and welcoming group would love to see you! Come along to meet local Mums and carers over coffee/tea, and yummy home-baked cake.

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

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STARFISH MALAWI **“Without prayer, we can do nothing, for God provides for us and those we seek to serve”**

Many at St Peter's will remember visits by Chris Knott, Starfish Malawi's founder. The charity does wonderful educational work in Malawi, transforming lives through education and support. Paul's updates have been inspirational, highlighting the very practical impact which Starfish Malawi has had on so many young people.

Excitingly many students have now been selected for secondary schools which they'll be starting in the imminent academic year.

This is great news. However, the Secondary School Sponsorship

Programme needs new supporters to help these students. If you would be able to sponsor a student through their four years of secondary education, please email, the charity would love to hear from you.



For more information email: admin@starfishmalawi.com

Visit the charity's website to read more about their work:

<https://starfishmalawi.com/aboutus>

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October – it's more than just pumpkins!

- Look forward to, yes the Spring, with **Great Comp Garden's** Bulbs 'N' Things Autumn Fair! 10 & 11 Oct, 10 am – 5 pm.
- Think you know art at NT **Ightham Mote**? Think again! Discover a unique art adventure this autumn – with Pikachu as the star! 1 Oct – 1 Nov: free with admission.
- Visit **Riverhill Himalayan Garden** for the 2026 season finale – a Pumpkin Festival! 17 Oct – 1 Nov: 10 am – 4 pm. BYO pumpkin carving & garden trail.
- Learn something new at **Chiddingstone Castle** with their 2, 18 & 29 October 'talks and tours' programme.
- Razzle dazzle in the Autumn tints with **Hever Castle's** self-guided Autumn Colour walks. 28 September – 1 November. Included with admission.
- Enjoy an exciting dusk family owl walk or bat safari at **Bore Place**. 22 & 26 October. Check the website for booking/event times.
- Mary Berry comes to town! Come and hear about her latest book, 'Mary all in One' at **Sevenoaks Stag**, Monday 12 October, 7 pm.

Check websites for full booking and ticket details.

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



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

Ramblers - OCTOBER 2026

Stroll or stride . . .

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

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



Autumn tints can be admired in their fully glory in October's varied walks. Full details can be found on [Upcoming Walks](#) link or [Facebook page](#) or E: info@tonbridgeandmallingeramblers.org.uk

We look forward to welcoming you!



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At our meeting in Ightham Village Hall on 8 September, our President welcomed everyone to the meeting including 3 members on Zoom, and a guest who hopefully will join as a member.

After the usual reports and information about upcoming activities and events, including trips to Godinton House near Ashford and Churchill's Colourful Christmas at Chartwell, the President introduced our speaker. Sophie Brigden talked to us about 'Navigating Toxic Workplaces and Trauma' including bullying, assault and mental health. Members were warned beforehand that this presentation included details of an assault on Sophie whilst serving in the army in Afghanistan.

Sophie talked about the time leading up to the assault; the ensuing factors which led to her suffering over ten years of PTSD; and her eventual ability to cope with the way the events had made her feel. Finally, she spoke about how she managed those feelings in a way that enabled her to start gradually living her life again. We were asked to think about the different ways bullying can start and gradually creep into a situation. Even though Sophie often runs workshops for workplaces, her presentation was relevant to all of us in everyday life. Without divulging anything personal, we were asked to

think about situations which had made us feel uncomfortable, then given coping strategies and mental tools which could lead to better mental health outcomes for us all. We all felt it was a well delivered, interesting and thought-provoking presentation which left us feeling positive about dealing with those difficult situations that can occasionally crop up in all our lives.

Everyone then enjoyed refreshments, socialising and browsing our Trading Stall. Sophie kindly stayed to chat to those with questions.

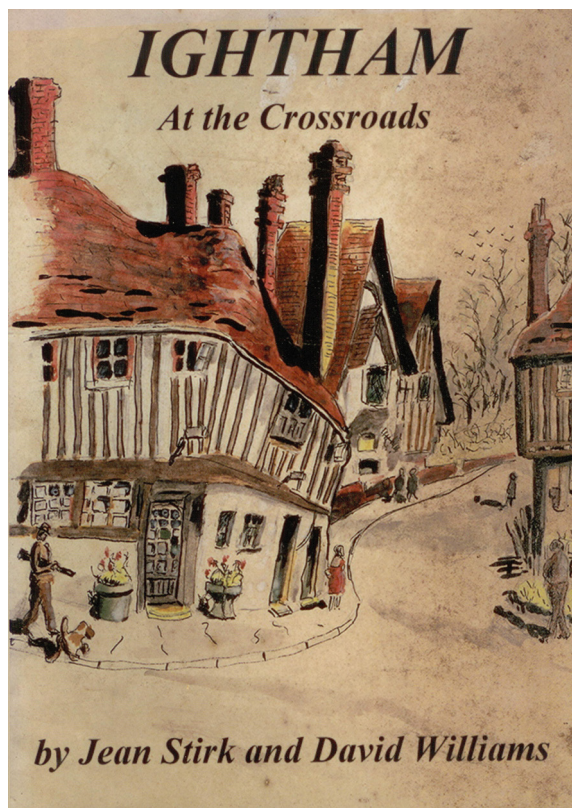
New members and visitors are always welcome. Any enquiries, please contact Helen Johnson, President, Ightham WI.

E: happyflowergs@live.co.uk

Next meeting: 13 October, 7.30pm at Ightham Village Hall. Speaker: Timothy Millet will talk about Convict Love Tokens 1787-1850. Timothy is a numismatist and offers a fascinating story of how he became interested in the love tokens and his subsequent research.



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FROM YOUR MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

September often brings surprises and new beginnings. For me, that has meant taking on a new role as shadow Foreign Secretary. Working alongside Kemi Badenoch, the Leader of the Conservative Party, I will be helping shape our foreign policy, working to make Britain safer and more prosperous, and boosting our role in the world.

Iran has targeted our infrastructure at home, Russia has sailed unregistered ships through our waters and China intimidates dissidents in Britain. It is clear that events overseas can threaten our security but those threats are not limited to conventional war. They also affect our food supplies, energy security and cybersecurity. Keeping our country safe requires Britain to stand up for its interests on the world stage.

After serving in uniform and in government, I want to see our country use every skill and talent to make us stronger and more prosperous; all so that we can defend what we love at home.

I will continue responding to residents' concerns, supporting local businesses, charities and community groups. From improving phone signal to ensuring that upgrades are made

to local water infrastructure, I am working for the people of Ightham.

As always, I'm here to serve you. If you have a concern, suggestion or question, my contact details are as follows:



Contact details:

E: tom.tugendhat.mp@parliament.uk

T: 01732 441563

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

Web: www.tomtugendhat.org

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Best wishes

Tom

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

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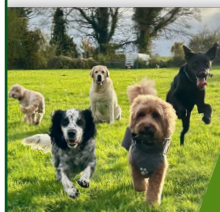
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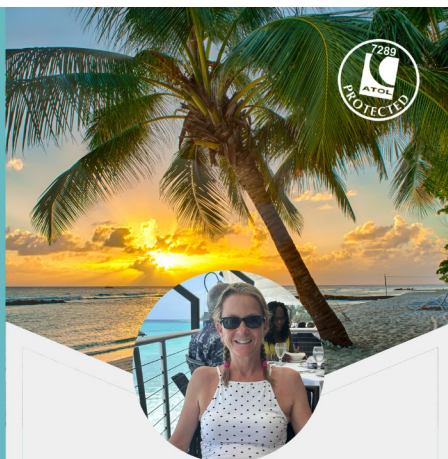
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Highway problems including potholes, drainage and overgrown roadside foliage: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem>

Community Police Contact:

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



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NEWS FROM IGHTHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

We have had a fantastic start to the year. The children have settled back into school very well. They thoroughly enjoyed celebrating Roald Dahl Day: completing themed activities, reading his books and dressing up as characters.



We were also delighted to share our latest Ofsted report and to celebrate the overwhelmingly positive findings that recognise the strong standards across every area of our school. The report captures what we see every day: a school where children are happy, safe, included and inspired to learn; a community where staff are committed to ensuring every child achieves their very best; and a partnership with families that helps our pupils flourish.



Inspectors highlighted that pupils “thoroughly enjoy attending this school” and develop “a deep sense of belonging.” They described our school as “a vibrant and harmonious place” where “a palpable sense of care and respect permeates.” We are particularly proud that inspectors recognised that “this is

a community where pupils flourish.”



Inspectors found that pupils achieve highly across subjects and produce work of a consistently high standard. Children develop a deep understanding of the curriculum, use accurate subject vocabulary and retain knowledge well. Pupils’ attitudes to learning were praised and attendance is described as “extremely high” and persistent absence “very low,” because children are “inspired to learn.” Inspectors observed pupils being polite, kind and courteous, respectful to adults and each other, confident and increasingly independent learners.



The inspection recognises our ambitious curriculum and the expertise of our staff. Teaching is delivered consistently

well; teachers are skilled at explaining new concepts, checking understanding and adapting learning so every child can succeed. The report praises our continuing focus on reading, writing, spelling and mathematics, and our work to develop pupils’ vocabulary and communication. Inspectors also found that children receive “an excellent start” in Early Years. They thrive in a nurturing, stimulating environment and quickly develop secure foundations in reading, writing and mathematics.

Ofsted recognised that inclusion is central to everything we do. Leaders

and staff know pupils extremely well and provide highly effective support to remove barriers to learning and wellbeing. The report states that “all pupils thrive personally and academically” because of the school’s welcoming culture and commitment to meeting individual needs.



Inspectors were complimentary about the range of personal development opportunities we offer. Children

understand and live our values of respect, responsibility, honesty, caring, tolerance and aspiration.



Inspectors praised the strength of leadership across the school: leaders are united in their vision that every child should

feel included, achieve and thrive. The report highlights strong professional development, supportive governance and positive relationships with families; parents’ views are reflected through recognition of our warm, welcoming atmosphere.

This achievement belongs to our whole school community. Together we have created a school where children are safe, happy, learning and flourishing.

We hope you enjoy reading the report and celebrating this success with us.
Sue Earl: Headteacher, Ightham Primary School

Editor comment:

Congratulations to Ightham Primary School, pupils and staff on this fantastic achievement of our much-loved village school

FRIENDS OF IGHTHAM SCHOOL

Friends of Ightham School (FOIS) are an active support and fundraising group for Ightham Primary School.

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

SHIPBOURNE FARMERS' MARKET



This article is being written on the eve of the annual Harvest Supper in Shipbourne and Plaxtol, held at Fairlawne's Home Farm Barn. An evening of good food, drink, chat, music and fun. But most importantly a celebration of the harvest and a thank you to our wonderful farmers.

The long and very hot days of Summer are over, fields have been harvested and it's the month to rediscover the delights of cooler weather eating with all the wonderful Autumnal ingredients at our disposal. Our fresh fruit and vegetables are at their best. Onions, leeks, beetroot, carrots and tomatoes are all full of flavour at this time of year whilst the glorious array of squashes and pumpkins offer so much more for the Cook than just as Halloween lanterns. Root vegetables such as parsnip, swede and celeriac are all wonderful roasted or mashed and perfect with new season's game. Use them in soups, stews, curries and pickles for rich seasonal colour and taste. Kentish cobnuts, walnuts, hazelnuts and chestnuts have been harvested – try them now when they are 'wet' and discover a whole new intensity of flavour. Use in autumn salads or scattered on meringues and in fruit compote - delicious.

We have a much larger variety of apples at the market than at

supermarkets so try different varieties. Bramleys are ideal for cooking – it's definitely crumble season - and making

into chutneys and jellies to enjoy throughout the winter. The later ripening apple varieties are good for keeping so you will be able to enjoy them from now until next summer.

Much of our seafood is at its best caught from colder waters so as the sea temperature drops this month, fish just gets better and better. Sea bass, haddock and Dover sole will be fishing well. Remember the better the quality of the fish, the simpler it needs to be cooked.

The changing season herald a longing for richer, more comforting meat dishes and it's the start of the game season with pheasant appearing once again at the Market. Use it like chicken – cubed breast meat works perfectly in curries, stir fries or just marinate the whole breasts and cook on the griddle. Lean and tender, it suits quick cooking methods such as frying and grilling. Try with mushrooms, the perfect partner for seasonal game.

To stay up to date with “what’s on” at the Market, request our weekly e-newsletter by visiting www.shipbournefm.co.uk or email lindsay_miles@btinternet.com

COOKERY CORNER

SILKY SQUASH RISOTTO

SERVES 4 / NOT TOO TRICKY

Ingredients

- 1 butternut squash (1.2 kg)
- 1 bunch of fresh marjoram (20g)
- Rapeseed oil
- 1.2 litres vegetable or chicken stock
- 1 onion
- 1 stick of celery
- 300g Arborio risotto rice
- 150ml dry white wine
- ½ a lemon
- 50g parmesan cheese
- 1 knob of unsalted butter

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180c/350f/gas 4. Scrub the squash (there's no need to peel it), carefully halve it lengthways and de-seed, then chop into 2cm chunks (the seeds can be roasted and sprinkled on top).
2. Place the squash in a roasting tray, pick and chop most of the marjoram leaves, then toss with 1 tablespoon of olive oil or rapeseed oil and a pinch of sea salt and black pepper. Roast for 1 hour or until soft and caramelised.
3. With 20 minutes to go on the squash, simmer the stock over a low heat. Peel and finely chop the onion and celery, then place in a high-sided pan on a medium heat

with ½ tablespoon of rapeseed oil. Cook for 10 minutes, or until softened but not coloured, stirring regularly, then stir in the rice to toast for 2 minutes.

4. Pour in the wine and stir until absorbed. Add a ladleful of stock and wait until it's been fully absorbed before adding another, stirring constantly and adding ladlefuls of stock until the rice is cooked. It will need 16-18 minutes.
5. Remove the squash from the oven and mash up with a fork, leaving some chunky pieces. Stir through the risotto about halfway through its cooking time.
6. When the risotto is done, add enough extra stock or boiling kettle water to make the risotto oozy, then finely grate in the parmesan and beat in the butter.
7. Cover the pan, turn off the heat and leave to relax for 2 minutes. Stir, season and plate up sprinkling the remaining marjoram leaves and roasted seeds on top. Delicious topped with tenderstem broccoli or crispy pancetta.

Stallholder Shopping List:

- Veg and herbs – Watts Farms
- Rapeseed Oil– The Cooperative Stall

Taken from www.jamieoliver.com

BRAIN MATTERS... handwriting matters

What a truly abrupt end to our glorious summer, but here's to forging ahead into a chilly, breezy autumn with a wonderful colour show.

We've started to hunker down and focus again on school, work and cosy activities. Instead of automatically relying on tech such as a tablet, a keyboard, or a phone let's consider the benefits of handwriting.

We know the saying that 'the pen is mightier than the sword' but what about 'the pen is mightier than the keyboard'? What benefits might we gain by relying and using handwriting more than we currently do?

The focus of this article is on a 2024 EEG study that examined which areas of the brain light up (in short, are used) when we hand write or type. We generally believe that typing is easier and faster but is it beneficial? This study used 256 electrode EEG caps to measure brain activity in two groups – hand-writing and typing for the same words. Handwriting consistently lit up the brain whereas typing barely did. Connectivity across brain networks was strongest in handwriting and crucially showed that brain communication was activated. Keyboard typing barely lit up the communication connections. Handwriting was most active in the parietal and central cortexes which are involved in processing sensory information, coordinating movement and forming memories. In typing these areas were significantly less engaged.

So why does handwriting activate the brain more? When we write by hand our fingers produce precise varied movements. This



means the brain simultaneously needs to track movement, create a visual tracker and produce sensory feedback on the pen's usage. When we type it's the same pressure and the same movement all giving an identical result, thus not engaging the brain to work hard. With handwriting the brain uses wide coherence; by contrast, typing far less so. The researchers also examined theta and alpha brain waves. The coherence of these brain waves is associated with encoding new information, namely storing and processing what you've seen or heard. The better the coherence, the better the encoding.

This is why research for the last few decades has consistently shown that when we take hand-written notes, we remember and understand what we've learnt better than if we'd typed even detailed notes! Why does typing work against your brain? In essence we have analog brains and when we type it's usually fast paced and we're in transcribing mode rather than a processing mode. Writing by hand forces you to slow down, use your own words and that extra processing step is what allows your brain to better consolidate the information in your memory. You can use a traditional pen/pencil or even a digital stylus so long as you're making the actual shapes and not just typing. Forming the letters is what drives the brain's network connectivity.

So take a moment to decide to physically write those notes, letters, to do or shopping lists first then, if necessary, type them up! Encourage your school age kids to make detailed hand-written notes and stories. You may surprise yourself, and yes I hand write every article before it becomes typed!

Chantal Montebello-Ealey

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clerk@ighthamparishcouncil.gov.uk

Councillors: Cllr Steve Burgham
Cllr John Benfield
Cllr David Emmett
Cllr Stephanie Gunson
Cllr David Hall
Cllr Tamsin Hogarth
Cllr Kirsty Mitchem

AN EXTRACT OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES Aug 2026

(Full Minutes can be found at www.ighthamparishcouncil.gov.uk, or by emailing the Clerk)

REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR - Cllr Rayner reported that he has been contacted by a resident about putting scaffolding up outside his property in The Street; Kent Highways have refused permission and Cllr Rayner has challenged this decision.

There have been numerous complaints about the condition of Fen Pond Road; immediately following the resurfacing there was a water leak requiring a further road closure. Cllr Benfield questioned why emergency notices were circulated despite residents receiving prior notification. Cllr Rayner said that it becomes an emergency if the stakeholder hasn't

been able to comply with the statutory notice period.

Cllr Rayner reported that there have been several major water leaks in the area, including in Shipbourne Road, leaving thousands without water. Some of the leaks are due to the dry weather conditions. Cllr Holden said that the diversion signage was appalling. Cllr Rayner agreed and said that it was the responsibility of the water company but he would be raising this at a meeting with KCC and the water utilities to encourage better consultation. Cllr Rayner explained that KCC had no facility to recharge the utility companies for poor diversions. Cllr Emmett noted that he had reported a leak between Copt Hall Road and Common Road and was told that it would take between 6 - 8 weeks to repair.

Cllr Mitchem asked whether there was an update on the Local Plan and whether TMBC are planning to proceed with Reg 19 despite SE Water saying that they can only provide water for an additional 6,000 homes. Cllr Rayner said that SE Water had written to TMBC twice to say that they have no further capacity and cannot provide water for 19,000 homes. Cllr Rayner said no new reservoirs have been built

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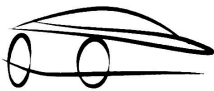
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in 40 years and the pumping capacity is inadequate. We are still awaiting a decision from TMBC on Reg 19, but Cllr Rayner thought that they would be going ahead regardless of the water situation to avoid central Government stepping in. He explained that KCC has little impact on housing, however, from April 2028 the new West Kent Authority will be responsible for all planning matters. Cllr Rayner reported that he would be putting himself forward as Councillor to the West Kent authority; there will be 84 Councillors in Kent, 3 for each electoral division. He expects there to be 15 -18 names on each ballot on 6 May 2027. Cllr Willingham gave thanks to Cllr Rayner for his update.

HIGHWAYS & PROW MATTERS:

HIP update - The Plough: Request for double yellow lines on junctions. The Clerk has emailed The Plough for their view and enquired about a google survey for residents. A point was made about enforcement if lines do get approved. Antique Road signs – repainting –The Clerk reported that the signs were due to be removed this week and they can then be assessed for repairs. Public Rights of Way Order: Modification to MR427 – The Clerk reported that we had been notified of a diversion to the route without prior consultation.

MATTERS ARISING

Recreation Ground: Southern Water drain – nothing to report. The Clerk reported that the play area has been

inspected and we have now received both the Rospa and Sovereign reports.

There are a few repairs required to the play equipment and the Clerk has asked Sovereign to provide a quote. The wetpour around most of the equipment requires repair or replacement and the Clerk will obtain quotes.

Village Hall: Drainage – Cllr Holden has received a quote for £2,250 + VAT to put a drain outside the archive room and this should also solve the damp issue. Sheffords have also suggested a drainage survey; this would show whether a new drain and the existing soakaway would have capacity to take away the water. It was agreed that we would have the survey first and then have the drain installed. The Clerk will ask James Hayward to weed around the Hall.

Oldbury Annexe: We have received a quote £295 + VAT for an asbestos report. The Clerk will liaise with the school to arrange it.

Noticeboards: The new noticeboard has been installed outside the Harrow. James Hayward is due to install the noticeboard at Stone Street Road.

Litter Collection: Update from Adam Mortimer – Cllr Mitchem reported that she had finally got a full schedule from TMBC and there are 33 areas within Ightham that should be litter picked. We still don't have information



on how often FCC do the litter picks; Cllr Mitchem has asked for this information. FCC has a budget of £1.4m.

Skips: New smoke alarm & gate – The Clerk will follow up on both items with Skips.

ASB Team: Request to monitor parking on Oldbury Lane at the start of term – Clerk to email the Team. The Clerk will also raise the issue of e-scooters. We have been asked whether there is a bylaw against dogs off lead in the Recreation Ground and it was agreed that dogs can be off lead as long as they are well behaved and under control. When, however, there are children present then dogs should be on a lead.

Recreation Ground: We have received a request to plant a memorial tree (Crepe Mertyl) and plaque for Geoff Turner. Agreed.

Annual Parish Meeting: It was agreed that the meeting should be postponed until early next year as we still have no information about the Local Plan. If necessary we can arrange a separate meeting to discuss the Local Plan in the autumn.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS: 6 applications were received and no objections raised. TMBC approved 2 applications.

The meeting closed at 9.50pm

LOCAL PLAN TO PROCEED FOLLOWING GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION

Tonbridge and Malling Borough

Council (TMBC) has been directed by the Government to proceed with a Regulation 19 consultation on its draft Local Plan.



The direction follows Full Council's decision on 3 September 2026 not to approve the draft Local Plan for Regulation 19 consultation. The Government has reviewed the implications and has instructed the council to move forward with the Plan.

Councillor Matt Boughton, TMBC Leader, said: "Councillors were firm that we should not pursue the Local Plan until there was a guarantee of water supply to every property the Government wishes to see built across the borough."

"This intervention by the Government flies in the face of the devolution agenda, aimed at empowering communities. The Government should not use its powers to overrule democratically elected Councillors and insist we proceed with the Local Plan on these numbers, despite there being no guarantee of water supply."

"We are considering our next steps and the decision last night was clear that the council will continue to work with Government and South East Water, but we will encourage every resident to tell the Government

that we should not be planning to build more homes than our water infrastructure is capable of delivering, now and in the future.”

The council will now proceed with the Regulation 19 consultation in accordance with the Government’s direction. The consultation is expected to open on 11 September 2026. Full details of how to take part will be published on the council’s website. Regulation 19 is the formal stage of the Local Plan process during which residents, businesses, and other interested parties are invited

to comment on the proposed submission version of the Plan before it is submitted for independent examination.

Updates will be published on the council’s webpages at www.tmbc.gov.uk/localplan

Borough Green and Wrotham u3a

The next meeting of Borough Green & Wrotham u3a will be held on Monday 12th October at 2 pm in Borough Green Village Hall. We will welcome our speaker Andy Smith, a performance artist, entertainer, author, and former business communicator, who has two artificial limbs, a wife, three children, and a whippet. Andy engages audiences with stimulating poetry and related commentary, interspersed with humour, thought provoking insights, and an occasional spattering of history. He also presents the lighter side of disability while motivating audiences of all ages and abilities to “make the most of what they have got”.



We look forward to welcoming existing and new members (free), and guests (£5). Tea, coffee and biscuits will be served. Parking is free for Village Hall users, so please remember to register your car in the Hall lobby when you arrive. For further information, or to join your local u3a, please contact: info@bgwu3a.org.uk or visit our website <https://bgw.u3asite.uk>

For further information, or to join your local u3a, please contact: info@bgwu3a.org.uk or visit our website <https://bgw.u3asite.uk>

THE HISTORY OF THE HARVEST FESTIVAL

Harvest will be celebrated at St Peter's on 11 October. But why is this service still held annually in our churches?

The word 'harvest' derives from the Anglo-Saxon for autumn, 'haerfest'. By October, many of the harvests of either grain, fruit or seasonal vegetables, will have been gathered in. Harvests themselves were often joyful occasions. They provided both a welcome "holiday" in the fresh air for London's East Enders picking fruit and hops in Kent, the Garden of England, and country-wide opportunities for rural celebrations and parties. Corn dollies of varying designs and sizes would have been fashioned from the final corn stalks, representing the spirit of the corn, being kept until Spring to ensure a good harvest the following year. Farmers often hosted harvest suppers (or churn suppers from the accompanying jug of cream) as a 'thank you' to their workers.

It's said that church harvest festivals were the idea of Rev Robert Hawker, a Cornish vicar, first introduced in the 1800s, with hymns giving thanks for the earth's bounty. Goose Fair were often held throughout England, including the famous Nottingham Fair.



Today's Harvest Festivals are more multi-faceted. They primarily celebrate farming and those who work on the land, but they also give a wider thanks for our much-threatened natural world. Charity plays a major role, with harvest offerings of both fresh and dried food, being gathered as Food Bank donations.

So Harvest remains a memorable calendar date but now with a wider celebratory and charitable remit. Happy Harvest and please give generously to our Food Bank collection.

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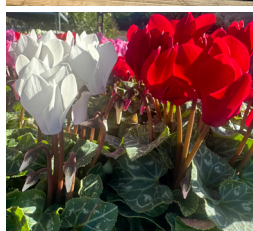
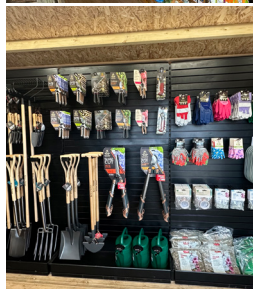
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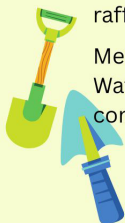
We're a local Gardening club, who meet once a month (other than January/December) in the evening at Ightham Village Hall.

Our talks are 'all things gardening'. Come along and meet us if gardening is a passion, a recent hobby, or if your garden shrubs and flowers need a little expert advice! If new to the area, we'd love to introduce you to fellow local gardeners.

Our club is friendly and sociable, with a wide age span and offers a warm welcome to all. We have wonderfully informative monthly speakers to entertain and inspire us. Post talk Q & As are sweetened by tea and home-made cake!

Annual highlights are bountiful seasonal shows with varied classes of fruit, vegetables & flowers plus domestic and floral classes. There's definitely something for everyone!

We'd welcome a visit from you, so join us for a sociable evening out whilst taking home ideas and tips, even a winning raffle prize.



Membership is £15 per year; visitors are always welcome. Watch out for our monthly Magazine ads to see what's on or contact us for more information.

Club Secretary: 07799 002129



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DIRECTORY

St Peter's Church

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

Ightham Magazine

Editorial	Penny Cracknell	T: 07811 066253
Advertising	E: stpetersadverts@btinternet.com	
Subscriptions/Distribution	E: magazine@ighthamchurch.org.uk	

Community Groups & Events

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

Sports

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



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Free tour, normal admission applies. Booking recommended.
Visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk/ighthammote

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