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Your Editors: Joanna Lambe, Heidi Brown & Natalie Dalley

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Picture: Light Up Hassocks 2023

Light Up Hassocks 2024 Friday 6th December

4 - 8 pm, Hassocks High Street



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Chris and Jill Kitcher would like to wish all  
of their friends and Neighbours a very  
Happy Christmas and a fabulous New Year.

### 1ST HASSOCKS SCOUT GROUP - CHRISTMAS POST DELIVERY SERVICE

The scouts are happy to offer a delivery service for local Christmas cards again this year. For nearly half the price of a second class stamp, the scouts will deliver your cards in Hassocks over two weekends in December, to raise funds for their big summer camp in 2025 where they join 2000 scouts across West Sussex.

There will be 4 Collection boxes located at: QD Stationery, Marchants Estate Agents, Age Concern and Hassocks Hardware.

Please bring along the correct amount, as the locations cannot provide change.

The boxes will go into the shops from the **1st December** service with the last collection at 4 pm on Friday **13th December** so cards can be delivered in time. *Lisa Sendall, Troop Leader*

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Friday 6 December 8:00pm (doors 7:30)

Join us for our Christmas Special as the wonderful Aneesa Chaudhry sings jazz, blues, classics and Asian fusion, backed by K2 (Ashley Knowles: piano/organ, Patrick Knowles: guitar, Gary Fairchild: bass and Dave Uden: drums) with special guest Angèle Veltmeijer on saxophone.

A selection of wines, beers and bar snacks will be available. We're expecting a high demand for tickets, so please book ahead if possible.

**Tickets £15 from Ditchling Post Office or online at [boatmancryptics.co.uk/live-music](http://boatmancryptics.co.uk/live-music)**

**THANK YOU** We would like to thank Christine who has been delivering this magazine in the Ockley Way area in Hassocks and Sue who delivered in the Trinity Road area in Hurstpierpoint.

*Editors*



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## **LIGHT UP HAS SOCKS - IT'S CHRISTMAS** Friday 6th December between 4 pm to 8 pm.

Mid Sussex District Council has supported our application for the following road closures for this event between 4 pm and 8 pm.

Keymer Road will be closed from Woodland Road to the entrance of the car park behind The Sussex Grocer (previously known as Knight's Budgens).

Additionally, Keymer Road will be closed from the western side of the mini roundabout by Station Approach East/Profiles Health & Beauty to Clerks Acre for the parade from approximately 4.15 pm to 5.15 pm.

The road closure will affect bus routes and a diversion will be in place. Access will be maintained for emergency vehicles and medical emergencies, but all other traffic will be asked to wait or diverted in order to ensure the safety of attendees and staff.

We do hope that you will be able to enjoy and support this community event with us. The evening will host a children's parade, food and craft market, fun fair, live music, and showcase lots of local community groups. There will be plenty of Christmas magic too!

May we suggest that if your arrival home is during the road closure periods that you use the Car Parks in Dale Avenue or the Car Park on the West side of Hassocks Station.

Should you urgently require access due to a gen-

uine emergency we will aid you where possible, but please be patient as you will need a police/marshal escort.

Please advise any likely visitors or carers well in advance so that they can plan their access routes and parking arrangements in plenty of time. Festive wishes.

*The Light Up Hassocks Team*

## **COME AND SING - HEBER OPERA'S 2025 PRODUCTION**

Heber Opera's next performance will be a rare chance to see Verdi's opera 'Un Giorno di Regno' (King for a Day), sung in English.

Baron Kelbar and his household are excited to receive a visit from King Stanislaus. But can anyone confirm that this really is the King? And can the King help two pairs of lovers achieve their dreams? There follows a tale of frustrated romance, jeopardy, political ambition and amorous intrigue.

The only way to find out whether the thwarted lovers are eventually reunited and live happily ever after is to take part or come and see one of the performances: **17th, 18th, 24th and 25th May 2025.**

We always welcome new members and rehearsals start in January in Hurstpierpoint.

If you would like to take part in the performances, to find out more contact [jenny@heberopera.co.uk](mailto:jenny@heberopera.co.uk). *Jenny Hawkes*





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## **THE HASSOCKS TWINNING ASSOCIATION**

has some exciting upcoming events in December where we will be delighted to welcome people from all of the local community.

As part of the Light Up Hassocks event on Friday **6th December** we will be running our very popular Tombola stall where you can win exciting prizes. Come and give it a go!

This year we are taking part in the Ditchling Christmas Tree event being held at St. Margaret's Church from **6th – 8th December**. All organisations taking part decorate their trees reflecting the theme of their group. These trees together with a beautiful life size nativity, seasonal music and refreshments will make for a lovely activity. Do go along and have a look at what is going on in Hassocks and the local community. On **17th December** we will be holding our very successful Christmas Quiz in the Green Room in Adastra Hall. We start at 7.30 pm ticket entry includes the first glass of wine, you can join a team of 4 – 6 members for an evening of great fun. If you would like to join us for this evening, please contact

[stephaniewhite@btinternet.com](mailto:stephaniewhite@btinternet.com) by **10th De-**

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**cember.** Come along and give your brains a 'workout'!

*Stephanie White*



**TOY RUN** The Black Widows Bikers Association Sussex Chapter will be collecting new toys or vouchers to be dropped off to children in hospital over Christmas. They will be visiting multiple hospitals in Sussex and new toys or vouchers would be greatly appreciated from anyone able to make a donation. Your local drop off point for donations is Serenity Treatment Rooms, 110 High Street, Hurstpierpoint.

Please drop donations for The Toy Run before it takes place on **15th December** departing Diplocks Café, Hailsham at 8 am. Thank you for any help you can give.

*Elaine Hughes*

**VISUALLY-IMPAIRED CLUB** Thank you for finding us a driver and a cook! We now have room for new members. We meet alternate Wednesdays from 10.30 am to 2 pm at Clayton Parish Hall in Underhill Lane.

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*Dorothy Lazenby*

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**DITCHLING FILM SOCIETY** It's December already and we wish all our members and guests a Happy Christmas and lots of winter pleasures.

On the **5th December** we will be serving our ever popular mulled wine and hot mince pies and showing a hilarious and charming Rom Com, *Rye Lane* (2023), directed by Raine Allen-Miller and starring David Jonsson and Vivian Oparah. It's hilarious and charming and will take you round the streets of Peckham and Brixton. Yes, our heroine, overhears recently heartbroken Dom sobbing in the gender-neutral lavatories. Two young strangers, both having had recent break ups, meet. She befriends him as he is about to lunch with his ex and her new boyfriend. She goes along pretending to be his new girlfriend all of which ends in chaos. They cheerfully connect with each other as they move around sunny south London. A film with street-smart grit, warmth and charm.

*Rye Lane* (2023) 82 minutes. English. Certificate 12A.

We will be having a slightly different format in 2025 with special events and guests being planned. Our next programme is being put together now. Watch this space and keep up to date via our website, [ditchlingfilm.org.uk](http://ditchlingfilm.org.uk), or Instagram @ditchlingfilmsoc and Tweet @Ditchlingfilm

Members of the Ditchling Film Society are eligible for a 20% discount on pre-booked meals and drinks at The Bull Pub on film night.

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Films usually show on the first Thursday of the month at Ditchling Village Hall. Doors open at 7.30 pm and you can buy a glass of good wine before the show which starts at 8 pm. Cards accepted.

There's plenty of parking next to the village hall. Thank you to all that have joined us throughout the year. See you on **5th December**. *Kate*



**CANDLELIGHT CONCERT** The Bothy Singers are a very small, local singing group and we are joining with Brass Fusion BF5 to present a festive concert at Woodmancote Church on **5th December** at 7 pm. This is an annual event and great way to start Christmas festivities!

Follow the path of candles into the lovely church and join us for an evening of beautiful music by these two first class ensembles. If you can't make **5th** then we are at St. Giles Church, Horsted Keynes, at 7 pm on the **6th December**. Tickets from Eventbrite via website [www.brassfusion.co.uk](http://www.brassfusion.co.uk) or on the door (if available) *Jan Wright*

**A VERY PONI CHRISTMAS** Join us for a community celebration of festive music on Saturday **21st December** at St Cosmas and St Damian Church, Keymer at 6 pm. Live performance by Poni Mitchell and friends. Refreshments - bar available. Tickets [www.ticketsource.co.uk/poni-mitchell/tingnkla](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/poni-mitchell/tingnkla). *Kaori*

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**NEWS FROM STONEYWISH** This Hallowe'en, the 'in thing' seems to be spiders. People have festooned their hedges and the fronts of their houses with yards of gauze and laid out giant cobwebs in their gardens along which monstrous spiders are merrily cavorting, quite putting any pumpkins or witches' brooms in the shade! Are spiders the scariest thing since Harry Potter? Despite the terror which they often evoke, the old belief was that spiders did more good than harm and that it was therefore bad luck to kill one.

My grandmother would go through the terrible ordeal of catching a daddy-long-legs and carrying it outside, rather than break this rule. And I have to confess that I have made a truce with ours at home. If they will eat up flies in the kitchen, I will tolerate a web or two. It is a curious thing that the more you observe a creature you fear, the more you can become captivated by its complexity and virtuosity until the fear is replaced by wonder and respect.

At this time of year, the garden is full of spectacular orb webs. These are made by fat-bodied garden spiders, the 'heavyweights' of Britain's 600 different species. So, what is in a name? Our word 'spider' comes from Old English '*spithra*', meaning spinner. And 'cobweb' comes from '*cop*', or '*attercop*', the Medieval term for a spider. As for '*Arachnid*', that derives from the Greek myth of Arachne, a woman who rashly challenged the goddess Athene to a weaving contest. This was never going to end well, and poor Arachne was turned into a spider.

An abundance of gossamers or spiders' webs on an autumn morning was supposed to predict a fine day, perhaps because they are at their most visible when shimmering in low sunlight. Certainly, the skill and patience required to construct a web is considerable, for the spider must ensure that her handiwork is sticky enough to capture her prey, without getting stuck to the threads herself. Orb-webs are actually constructed twice: first in a non-sticky silk, which the spider painstakingly eats and replaces with gummed silk,

having first oiled her feet so that *she* can move about with impunity. She recycles her web, if necessary, simply by eating it and spinning it anew. Perfect economy! Garden spiders are pattern-builders and connectors, and the spirals of their web-forms mirror growth patterns to be found at every level of creation, from sub-atomic spinning particles, to swirling galaxies.

As participants in this cosmic dance, we humans are also adept at weaving. Textiles, baskets and fishing nets are only some examples of our practical skill, but we also excel at crafting figurative webs: webs of intrigue and deception for 'trapping' the unwary; webs of communication for sharing knowledge, and imaginative tapestries.

Since the dawn of time we, spider-like, have been weaving tales and spinning yarns to enthrall and captivate one another. The greatest of these - the primal myths - and all true works of the imagination, tap into hidden depths where the secrets of creation lie. The frivolous merely entertain, and the manipulative, like the daisy compass-patterns once scratched onto the walls of Medieval churches, suck the mind into distraction and addiction. (Do you know anyone hooked on computer games?)

When I was a child at school we used to spend hours drawing these daisy-wheels and colouring them in,



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little knowing their history. Yet Christians, not so very long ago, feeling that their world was haunted by demons, used such devices to protect themselves from harm. Demons, like anyone else, like to follow a path, so it was thought they could be trapped in the continuous loops of the daisy, like a fly in a spider's web, for eternity. The wheel patterns were traditionally placed near fonts for the protection of newborn infants. In a similar way, the American Indian Ojibwe people wove webs to hang above their children's beds at night.

Asibaikaashi, or Spider Woman, was, in Indian mythology, the 'grandmother' who took care of infants and adults. As the Ojibwe nation dispersed over a wider area, Spider Woman found it harder and harder to take care of everyone, so the people made webs on her behalf. These dream-catchers were said to entrap nightmares in their strings. The nightmares would be held overnight and then 'released' when daylight came. Good dreams, however, could climb up the pendant feathers attached and slip through the central hole into the sleeping mind. So negative and positive turn out to be a matter of perspective.

Is the spider a predatory, Hallowe'en monster, or a caring grandmother, watching over the cradle? Are

webs for our entrapment or our protection?

In the fluid dimension of the quantum universe nothing is ever just one thing. A light particle can also manifest as a wave. Reality is not a solid mass, but rather a potential. And in this life, we are not the only observers.

*Everything* is dynamic and intelligent and interactive, so the way we see things can hardly be separated from the way they see us. To have any idea whether you should trust a story-spinner, (or an advertiser, or a politician!), you need to know how they see you. Do they really want to help and protect you, or do they want to eat you for dinner? We might ask the same question of ourselves. How do we view our fellow passengers in life? How do we perceive the plant nations, the two-leggeds and the four-leggeds of the animal world, the swimmers of the deep, the insects, the rocks, and our own human brothers and sisters? Do the webs we weave bind us to them in mutual respect? Or do they enable us to predate on all without a thought? Does the way we view the world affect not only our own dreaming, but the actual physical structure of reality itself? If so, we have the potential, through finding our own creative depths, to become co-creators of the future. By choosing to belong to positive or negative, dream or nightmare, we construct the world we desire.

The naturalist John Muir anticipated Einstein by observing: "When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe." We are all in this soup together. We can't outlaw spiders and save thrushes. We can't reject certain life-forms without sending parts of ourselves into exile with them. We can't exploit or cull at will, without invoking the same fate for ourselves. Sufficiently weakened in this way, humankind will have no choice but to give up on natural life and exist merely as an encryption in some AI memory bank. This seems like a pretty bad dream. But there is another possibility...

In his field journal, John Muir, still an unbroken child at heart, inscribed his address as: "Earth – planet, universe." Everything belonged. In Hawai'i, the




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practice of Aloha cultivates connection, from person to person, community to community and from each individual to the myriad creatures and entities which surround them. This breathing from the heart, draws humankind and the 'ten thousand things' of creation into one dynamic whole. It acts like the mycorrhizal mycelium of the forest floor, nourishing and distributing resources - like the invisible strings of 'dark matter' which bind together the particles of the quantum world. Without such cohesion, everything would fall apart. We are not individuals but multiverses: accretions of whole nations of microscopic life-forms, of star-dust, of cosmic energies, all wildly communicating with one another.

The Ancient Hindus depicted this miracle of All-in-One, One-in-All, 2,500 years ago, in the dazzling image of Indra's net. Above the palace of the sky god Indra, (says the Avatamsaka Sutra), there stretches a net of pearls, each one reflecting all the others, (just like the raindrops in a spider's web! or the molecules on a strand of DNA). Each gem, each spark of life can thus be seen, nested in every other. Does it sound familiar? William Blake 'got' it on the beach at Felpham: "To see the world in a grain of sand/... Hold infinity in the palm of your hand..." And since you and I are also sparks or jewels in the cosmic web, (Pavey now) we are part and parcel of

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it too. Our faces and our dreams will be reflected in the stars which made us. What a beautiful opportunity!

Just to think of it, makes the world feel a better place!

*Rosemary*



### KEYMER AND HASOCKS POPPY APPEAL NOVEMBER 2024.

With help from RBL Ditchling & District we would like to thank the following shops and businesses in Keymer and Hassocks for their support with Poppy Appeal 2024.

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The total collected in Keymer and Hassocks for Poppy Appeal 2024 will be published in the January edition of Talk About.

*Margaret Bovill*



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**HASSOCKS WI** Meets 3rd Monday in the month at Adas-tra Hall. Doors open 7.30 pm for 7.45 pm start.

Our 15th Birthday party was enhanced by the enthusiastic ukulele playing of Ron and his WUPs band of players. Thank you. We enjoyed a loud singalong and made a donation to the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air ambulance on your behalf. Thanks to everyone who helped, especially the kitchen ladies for the tasty food and Nicky

for making the beautiful cake.

Hassocks WI ran the refreshments for Hassocks on Show, raising a good amount shared between WI and Adasra Hall. We are so lucky to have such great community facilities in our village.

Our table highlighted Craft, Campaigns and Cake (of course). We talked to lots of you and hope to greet you again as visitors (donation) at one of our meetings. Our November meeting is

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an active one 'Steps Line Dancing Club' with Lesley and her team. And importantly we have an open meeting raising awareness of WI Campaign 'No More Violence to Women and Girls'. December meeting is a talk by Andy Thomas - 'Christmas - a festive History', plus nibbles and our usual festive raffle with amazing Xmas prize hampers. Do come along.

Then down to business at our January meeting when we will be discussing upcoming 2025 resolutions. Plus, we will continue making/stuffing the breast cancer cushions so valued and necessary comforters for the many women who require them every year. To date we have made over 300 cushions in the years we have supported this charity.

Happy Xmas to everyone. Come to a meeting as a visitor (donation), stay as a friend, become a member and enjoy all the activities, smaller clubs, social events we do our best to provide.

Any ideas and information are always considered, as we start to plan our next years' programme. Just a note our year ends in March and the new one starts in April. Best wishes for 2025.

Gerry

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### **BURGESS HILL CHORAL SOCIETY CHRISTMAS CONCERT**

Get into the Christmas spirit at Burgess Hill Choral Society's forthcoming concert when we shall be performing Saint-Saëns' moving *Christmas Oratorio*, Chilcott's celebratory *On Christmas Night* and Fauré's *Cantique de Jean Racine*. The event includes professional soloists, and the choir will be accompanied by South Downs Sinfonia who will also be playing Corelli's *Christmas Concerto*. In addition, there will be carols for choir and audience.

In *On Christmas Night*, Chilcott presents a sequence of eight original carols in which he incorporates traditional melodies within his own settings which results in a work of many moods ranging from reflective to jubilant. He also uses lots of different musical styles, from jazz to folk music. Saint-Saëns' *Christmas Oratorio* is widely loved for its simple lyrical beauty; it is a work which includes drama as well as gentle passages and leaves listeners with a sense of joy.

The concert takes place on Saturday **7th December** at 7.30 pm at St Andrew's Church, Burgess Hill, RH15 0LG. Tickets are available at: [www.ticketsource.co.uk/burgesshillchoral](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/burgesshillchoral), from Burgess Hill Help Point, on the door, by phone **07522 493966**, or visit our website at [www.burgesshillchoral.org](http://www.burgesshillchoral.org).

Jane Leng



**HDD u3a** The phrase 'Trick or Treat' really fitted the u3a Monthly Meeting. Halloween was pending, and the subject was 'Ghosts and the Paranormal.' Once figures like Conan Doyle believed in seances and poltergeists but these were mainly 'tricks', speaker Andy Thomas felt contemporary examples of poltergeists, in Battersea and Enfield, were more authentic. In films visitors from outer space might just want, like ET, to 'go home' or, in 'Mars Attacks!', are set on destruction. Pure fiction but now UFOs are UAPs, 'Unexplained Aerial Phenomena', are being taken seriously by a US Congressional Committee.

For Andy ghosts are also examples of our living side by side with other dimensions and take many forms. Shakespeare has spirits haunting the murderous Macbeth while Hamlet's father delivers a message to his son. In 'Truly, Madly, Deeply' the dead lover stays until his widow is ready to love another. In the TV series 'Ghosts' the deceased just want to hang out.

Andy's talk raised many questions and his openness allowed people to share their own, mostly benign, encounters with ghosts.

That was one of the regular HDD u3a Monthly Meetings which runs alongside our nearly 50 interest groups. For more information visit [www.hhd.u3asite.uk](http://www.hhd.u3asite.uk).

Jeremy Weinstein



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**THE WINDMILLS JUNIOR SCHOOL** What a fantastic October we have had. We had a great Harvest assembly which involved making rice crispy cakes; the Reverend then delivered all of our donations to the Burgess Hill food bank who were delighted with the quantity of produce donated by our families. We also celebrated other important events that happen in October such as: Black History month, national poetry day and World Mental Health Day—so much to think about, and we are grateful for the amazing community that we are part of, and the opportunities that we have.



Our Year 3 children had the opportunity to travel back in time - by about 2.5 million years! They delved deep into Stone Age life; exploring jobs and life skills of hunter gatherers, documenting beasts and stories with cave paintings, building replica Stonehenge monuments, and weaving with natural materials. Most excitingly of all, they visited a Stone Age encampment pitched on our school field to find out more and sample some of the tastes, smells and textures of Mesolithic life.

Year 6 took part in Hidden Nature Week. The aim of the week was to discover wildlife in and around our beautiful school grounds that wasn't in plain sight—a fair amount of rummaging and exploration was required over the course of the week. Year 6 applied their photography skills to search for bees behind benches, creepy crawlies on climbing frames and millipedes outside Mrs Murray's office (!) and we couldn't believe some of the images that the children captured! We can't wait to spend more time in our beautiful grounds, despite the onset of the chilly winter months just around the corner!

Some of our 'All About Me' members had the amazing opportunity of going to the Autism Conference at the Amex stadium this week. Pupils from many different schools played a part in organising this event, from having a say which speakers there should be, to what they would like for lunch! Speakers included people with Autism including a comedian, a fireman and a Paralympic swimmer – it was a truly inspirational day!

On 16th October, our boys and girls squads represented the school in the Mid Sussex football tournament. We are immensely proud that they won both tournaments against some very stiff competition from other schools. Over the course of 4 hours in the beautiful October sunshine, Windmills won nine and drew one of their ten games, scored a whopping 25 goals and conceded just one. Things will certainly ramp up in the next round of fixtures and we can't wait to see how these amazing individuals do again next time around.

Well done, champions!

*'on behalf of The Windmills'*



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### **THE BEACON PARISH OF DITCHLING, STREAT & WESTMESTON**

We have a lot of Christmas services this month as well as a Christmas Tree Festival and a concert.

On Sunday **1st December**, Morning Worship with Holy Communion and Little Beacons activities for younger visitors will be at 10 am at St. Margaret's Ditchling.

Our Sunday service of Morning Worship with Holy Communion on Sunday **8th December** will be held at St. Martin's Westmeston at 10 am.

This is because St. Margaret's will be hosting our first Christmas Tree Festival from **6th December to 8th December** inclusive. See separate article for full details.

Saturday **14th December** sees the first of this year's Carols by Candlelight services, at Streat Church beginning at 4 pm followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

Sunday **15th December**, our Morning Worship with Holy Communion will be at St. Margaret's Ditchling. At 4 pm we welcome Brighton Singers to the church for the first time. Tickets available online at [www.brightonsingers.org.uk/](http://www.brightonsingers.org.uk/) or on the door.

Saturday **21st December** is the date for Carols by Candlelight at Westmeston Church at 4 pm with mulled wine and mince pies.

Sunday **22nd December** sees our Morning Worship with Holy Communion service at St. Margaret's at 10 am and our Carols by Candlelight service at 6 pm again followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

The crib service will be at 4 pm on Christmas Eve in St. Margaret's. Always very popular with all ages and is one of our busiest services of the year. On Christmas Day, there will be services of the celebration of Christmas with Holy Communion at St. Martin's Westmeston at 10 am and St. Margaret's



Ditchling at 11 am. Do join us.

The service of Morning Worship with Holy Communion on Sunday **29th December** will be at St. Margaret's Ditchling at 10 am.

Everyone is very welcome to all of our services and events. Why not bring along any visitors who are staying with you for Christmas? Please check our website [www.beaconparish.co.uk/](http://www.beaconparish.co.uk/) for any changes.

A happy Christmas and every blessing for a healthy and peaceful 2025. *Sherrian Guest*

### **THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION DITCHLING & DISTRICT BRANCH**

would like to thank the following for their support with the 2024 Poppy Appeal: Ditchling Pharmacy, Ditchling Post Office, Ditchling Museum, Dumbrells, Macs Farm, Mid Sussex Golf Club, Notcutts Garden Centre, Perretts Farm, Perretts Farm Shop, St George's Retirement Village, St Margaret's CoE Primary School, The Bull Hotel, The Green Welly, The Nutmeg Tree, The White Horse Public House and Village Hair Studio.

Plus, a huge thank you to our amazing house to house Collectors in Ditchling, Streat and Westmeston. Our total from this year's Poppy Appeal will be published in the January edition of Talk About. Lest we forget. *Margaret Bovill*

**HURST SANTA SUNDAY** Join us on **1st December** from 12.30 pm to 4.30 pm at Hurst High Street.

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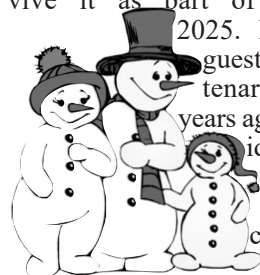
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**SUSSEX CHORUS** - 'Springing into Action'. Nearly 50 years ago when Sussex Chorus was called Ditchling Choral Society a piece of music was written especially for us by a young local composer called Howard Blake. He is now famous as the composer of 'Walking in the Air' for the 'Snowman' film - and many other compositions.

Our song was called The Song of St Francis, using the words of the saint, and it was appropriate because we sang it in the chapel of the then St Francis Hospital in Haywards Heath - now the apartment complex next to Princess Royal Hospital. We have sung it a few times since, a long time ago, but have decided to revive it as part of our Spring Concert



2025. Howard Blake was a guest of honour for our centenary concert a couple of years ago, is now our Vice President and will be to be at our Spring Concert.

The other piece in the concert will be Mozart's Requiem - so overall a

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musical delight. The concert will be on **22nd March** at 7.30 pm in St Andrews Church Burgess Hill.

We will be rehearsing from January 2025 and if you want to come and 'have a go' we are having an open rehearsal on **14th January** at 7.15 pm in the drama studio of St Pauls School, Burgess Hill. No charge for the evening, no auditions for joining the choir, but you do need to be able to sight-read your line of music. *Margaret Rea*

**CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL IN DITCHLING** From Friday **6th December** to Sunday **8th December** inclusive, the Beacon Parish is hosting its first Christmas Festival.

St. Margaret's Church in Ditchling will be filled with beautifully decorated Christmas trees supplied by many local organisations, companies and individuals. There will also be a small exhibition of photos and reminiscences about past winters and Christmases in the Parish area, plus festive music and refreshments.

Open from 10 am to 5.30 pm on each of the three days, do bring family and friends to this lovely community event. Admission: There is a charge for adults, children are free and a donation from the proceeds will be made to the Dame Vera Lynn Children's Charity, supporting young children with cerebral palsy and motor learning impairments.

No need to book, just turn up. We really look forward to seeing you. *Sherrian Guest*

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### THE HURST, HASSOCKS & DITCHLING U3A

is a thriving local organisation, having increased its membership by almost 25% in the years since lockdown. Many visitors came to our stall at Hassocks on Show on 26th October, and we were happy to welcome several new members. The

success of the movement as a whole is perfectly stated in a new report published by the national u3a, entitled *Learn to Live: A blueprint for better health and wellbeing*. This report sheds light on the value of a low-cost, non-formal learning model for better health and wellbeing, and for healthy and active ageing. Non-formal learning is a mutual experience with no strict hierarchies - everyone shares their skills and learns from each other. The u3a is arguably one of the biggest and most successful examples of non-formal learning in the world. The u3a model embodies five ways to promote wellbeing - connecting, being active, taking notice, continuing to learn, and giving. u3a members are active



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participants in society who continue to learn and give back to their communities.

For more information visit <https://www.u3a.org.uk/our-impact/learn-to-live>. And to find out more about our own local u3a, just search 'HHD u3a' on your web browser, or email [hhdu3a@gmail.com](mailto:hhdu3a@gmail.com). With 59 separate group activities, and continually growing, we always welcome new members. Merry Christmas!

Marie Fraser

**KEYMER FOLK DANCE CLUB** Following a fabulous Autumn session, the Keymer Folk Dance Club will meet twice in December. A standard meeting will take place on Monday **2nd December**, and the Christmas Party on Monday **16th December** where there will be extra food, with music provided by Sean Goddard and Michael Curry. We re-start in 2025 on Monday **6th January**. All meetings start at 7.30 pm at the URC Church Hall, Keymer Road, Hassocks. We meet on the first, third and fifth Mondays, and more details can be found at <https://keymerfolkdanceclub.co.uk/> or email [keymerfdc@gmail.com](mailto:keymerfdc@gmail.com)

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*Pictured Daves Grandad Antonio Faccenda selling the ice creams from his stall.*

**HASSOCKS FC** There's never been a better time to be a supporter of Hassocks FC. The team is challenging at the top of the Sussex County League, the crowds and atmosphere are growing. We welcome anyone who hasn't experienced to come along, and we've tried to make the whole set up as fan friendly as possible. We've created better parking and facilities so it's a great place to visit with family (kids have small goals to play in to the side of the pitch, while adults can relax and enjoy the football with food and drink on offer). We have a men's team, u23's, youth, and Ladies teams all playing at the Hassocks Hotel Beacon Ground and you're more than welcome to visit any of these games whenever you get the urge.

We welcome anyone who would like to volunteer

to help on match days, sponsor a board to help with running costs, or just provide input into what you think would make a better fan experience. Please contact me direct for opinions and suggestions: **07843 762132**. I will update the fixtures on the black board outside of the ground regularly. Here are the current home fixtures for December (U23's/youth have a delayed release) and any doubts about cancellations, just call/text me and I can keep you updated!

December Home Games: Saturday **14th December** 2 pm (Mens 1st) against Lingfield  
Sunday **15th December** 2 pm (Ladies) against Horsham

Saturday **28th December** 3 pm (mens 1st) against Roffey.  
*Pat Harding, Hassocks FC chairman*





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**HURSTPIERPOINT GYMNASTICS CLUB AWARD CELEBRATION** Hurstpierpoint Gymnastics Club celebrated the end of term with the presentation of over a hundred gymnastics achievement awards. Some of the recipients had worked for over a year – a usual progress speed - where some had only started in September.

Practice is already underway for the Arts Competition in March, with ribbon, beam and hoop routines being worked alongside the ever popular Sports Acrobatic Sixes. Pictured are all the winners from the 2024 Competition.

The Club are now offering 'Gym Collect' from St. Lawrence where they collect children in Key Stage One attending our 4 pm class directly from school at the end of the school day.

There are vacancies for pre-school children on Friday afternoons who have passed their third birthday and for girls from Reception to Year 11 on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Any others interested should contact the Club to find the up-to-date position.

Free starter places are available for Pre-school children from Sayers Common.

More details of the Club can be found at [www.hurstpierpointgym.co.uk](http://www.hurstpierpointgym.co.uk)



*Andrew Hair*



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on Sunday 8th Christingle at the URC 4 pm.

Sunday 15th December Carols together in the URC hall 3 pm - 4.30 pm with refreshments.

Saturday 21st December Carols in the Market Place. Join us to sing carols at 11.00 am at the village market. Mulled wine and mulled cider available at the CTH stand.

Sunday 22nd URC Crib service at 3 pm.

Christmas Eve - St Cosmas & St Damian Keymer 6 pm 9 Lessons and Carols and at 11.30 pm Midnight Mass.

St Francis, Priory Road, Crib service at 4 pm. St Edwards RC Church First Mass of Christmas 5 pm. URC Church Carols by Candlelight. 6 pm.

Christmas Day St Cosmas & St Damian Keymer at 8 am BCP Communion and 9.45 am Eucharist. St Francis at 9.45 am Communion. St John the Baptist Clayton at 11.15 am BCP Eucharist. At St Edwards RC Church Lodge Lane Mass at 9.30 am. URC Church Christmas Day service at 10 am.

*Juliet Strange*

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Performances are from the **28th December until 3rd January**. Tickets are available on-line from [www.hurstplayers.org.uk](http://www.hurstplayers.org.uk) or in person from the theatre box office 10 am to 12 noon Saturday **6th December**.

*Richard Coney*

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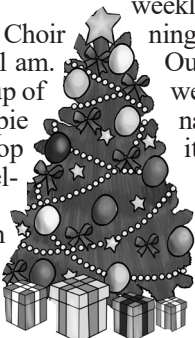
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01273 844461 [www.achassocks.co.uk](http://www.achassocks.co.uk)

Facebook - Age Concern Hassocks

December has arrived and we now have the countdown to Christmas to look forward to. We are holding our Craft and Christmas Fair on Saturday **14th December** from 9.30 am to 1.30 pm. Father Christmas will be joining us again this year with tickets being sold from **1st December** at the Centre. There will be a Raffle – tickets will be available from our Charity Shop from 25th November, Christmas cakes to buy and a Tombola. We are also welcoming back the Crafters and Makers from our last Craft Fair and several new faces will be joining us selling lots of lovely crafts for those last-minute Christmas presents or as a little treat for yourself! Our Coffee Shop will be serving drinks, cakes, mince pies and sausage rolls. There will be live music and our Charity Shop will be holding a clothing sale, so come and grab a bargain. Everyone welcome.

We are very fortunate to have the Sussex Choir visiting on Thursday **5th December** at 11 am. Please feel free to drop in and enjoy a cup of tea, coffee or hot chocolate and a mince pie or piece of cake from our Coffee Shop whilst enjoying the music. Everyone welcome.

We are taking part in the Beacon Parish Christmas Tree Festival at St. Margarets Church between Friday **6th December** and Sunday **8th December** – why not



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pop over to Ditchling and have a look.

Christmas and New Year opening times are Monday **23rd December** 9 am to 4 pm; Christmas Eve 9 am to 1.30 pm; Christmas Day Closed; Boxing Day Closed; Friday **27th December** Closed; Saturday **28th December** Closed; Monday **30th December** 9 am to 4 pm; Tuesday **31st December** 9 am to 1.30 pm; New Years Day Closed; Thursday **2nd January** – normal hours resume 9 am to 4 pm.

We are always happy to welcome new members to our Day Centre where we serve a three-course freshly cooked lunch Monday to Friday and our minibus picks up from Hassocks, Hurstpierpoint and Ditchling on Tuesdays and Thursdays. If you live outside our regular pick-up areas, please give us a ring and we will see if we can accommodate you. Please ask the Office to book transport and/or lunch the day before or up to 10 am on the day you'd like to join us. The menu changes weekly and is on our website which is up and running again.

Our Charity Shop is open 9 am to 4 pm every weekday and 9 am to 12pm on Saturdays. Donations are most welcome. While you are visiting the Charity Shop why not stop by for a drink and cake in our Coffee Shop – everyone is welcome 9 am to 3 pm Monday to Friday.

Feel free to come in and see what we have to offer. We look forward to seeing you.

*All at Age Concern*

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**A QUILT IS A HUG YOU CAN KEEP** At very short notice we were extremely fortunate to have a visit from Gilly Haigh of Project Linus on 5th November. This is a wonderful organisation which coordinates the production and delivery of quilts of all different colours and sizes to very deserving organisations dealing with babies, children and teenagers who are sick, distressed, disadvantaged or disabled. It was started in the US hence the name (Linus is the character in the Peanuts cartoons who always has a blanket/ quilt with him) and it came to the UK in 2000. Gilly is the coordinator for West Sussex - a very large region and she donates the quilts to organisations such as Portage, St Richard's hospital, Care Leavers, Kangaroos, Kinship Carers, the sexual abuse clinic in Brighton and also to the children of refugees. All of these organisations are in constant need of the quilts for the children they look after. The quilts are made by volunteers and if people don't feel they can actually make a quilt they can donate money, fabric, sewing thread or even a space for a meeting. Many sewing and quilting groups are involved, and Gilly collects them from these groups or individuals and distributes them. A truly worthwhile cause. For more information [www.projectlinusuk.org.uk](http://www.projectlinusuk.org.uk).



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**07HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL –**

Our next meeting is our Christmas party at the Whitehorse in Ditchling. Members only. *Susanne Pryde*

## HASSOCKS PARISH COUNCIL COMMUNITY GRANTS

**SCHEME 2024/25** Just a reminder that the deadline for the second submission of applications for Hassocks Parish Council Community Grants is Friday **31st January 2025**, for consideration by Council in February. The Council welcomes applications from local community groups or for projects and activities that will benefit local residents. Full details can be found on the website – [www.hassocks-pc.gov.uk](http://www.hassocks-pc.gov.uk) or for further information please contact the Parish Council Office on **01273 842714** or email

[info@hassocks-pc.gov.uk](mailto:info@hassocks-pc.gov.uk).

Parish Office Christmas Opening Hours - We will be open as normal until **24th December** when it will close at 2 pm. The office will re-open to the public at 10 am on Thursday **2nd January 2025**.

On behalf of Hassocks Parish Council, I would like to take this opportunity to extend Season's Greetings to all and to wish everyone a peaceful New Year.

*Ian Cumberworth, Parish Clerk.*

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**DOWNLANDS SCHOOL** is proud to announce that it has been awarded a prestigious national diversity award through the Equaliteach program. This achievement demonstrates the school's ongoing commitment to create a welcoming and inclusive learning community.

The Equaliteach program, a leading initiative dedicated to promoting diversity and equality in education, evaluates schools based on a range of criteria, including policies, practices, curriculum and student experiences.

Mark Wignall, Headteacher stated: "We are extremely proud of our Diversity award and the ongoing work of Governors, Colleagues and students in helping to make the school a community where all are welcomed, celebrated and included. We are aware that this award is just a beginning and are looking forward to building on these foundations." The school's commitment to diversity is evident in

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its creation of student diversity leaders, who have helped to organise cultural events such as Pride month. Students have also played a significant role in transforming the environment of the school so that it celebrates the contribution of diverse groups of people to our community.

*Jo Miles*

**HASSOCKSGOESGOLD** September 2024. What an amazing month! Smashed the target of £10K. Raised loads of awareness of Childhood Cancer and had a blast in the process! Thank you to everyone who donated and to those who gave their time, products or energy. Well done! The HassocksGoesGold 2024 fund is about to close for the year but not before we add in money from the astounding Halloween décor from Kate & Ed Bailey's house of horror on Grand Avenue/Adastra Avenue which both scared and charmed so many kids and adults! The Final Total is just over £16,400 including Gift Aid which is a phenomenal total. Thank you to SO MANY people who donated their money, products, time and energy. It really is a whole village effort. Thank you on behalf of the CCLG and the families and children affected by cancer. The planning is already starting for September 2025.

*Rachel*

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## **OUT WITH THE OLD...AND GIVE IT TO 4SIGHT VISION SUPPORT!**

When we welcome the New Year, it's a great time to reaffirm a commitment to recycling our everyday items to do our bit for the environment. 4Sight Vision Support will be pleased to take some domestic recycling off your hands, plus a range of old household items you might have lying around gathering dust! They would also be grateful for new and unopened Christmas gifts that you decide 'aren't for you', to use as raffle and auction prizes.

4SVS's long-established recycling scheme helps to raise funds to support blind and partially sighted residents across the county. Items collected include jewellery and watches, (all any condition or age), old or foreign coins and notes, and stamps from everyday post or stamp collections. Household items needed include old mobile phones, games consoles, cameras, video cameras, sat navs, ipods and MP3 players. 4Sight Vision Support would even love to have your old car, as they are now working with Scrap Car Comparison to turn old cars into cash!

Many additional accepted items would otherwise go to landfill: these include cracker, biscuit and cake wrappers, Pringles tubes, mini cheese nets, bread or bakery plastic packaging (inc. plastic trays, zipper bags, plastic packs, closure tags); cheese packets (please wash these first!) and ink cartridges (except laser toner cartridges).

Further details of items for recycling can be found at <https://4sight.org.uk/recycle>. Items and unwanted Christmas gifts can be dropped off at their Head Office in Victoria Drive, Bognor Regis, or at the charity's office in the Shoreham Centre, Pond Road, all during normal office hours. For further details, or if your business/club/society/café would like to become a public recycling point, please call the Fundraising Team on **01243 828555** or email [fundraising@4sight.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@4sight.org.uk).

It is estimated that there are over 2 million people living with sight loss in the UK, and over 36,200 people living with sight loss or low vision in West Sussex (RNIB Sight Loss Data 2023).

4Sight Vision Support is a registered charity founded in 1921. For over 100 years the team has been providing face-to-face specialist advice and

support to over 3,161 people living with sight loss in West Sussex each year.

4Sight Vision Support also supports parents, carers and other family members whose lives are impacted by sight loss. It works across West Sussex and all of its services are free. Its holistic and person-centred approach ensures that a diagnosis of sight loss is not a one-way road to loss of independence and reduced health and wellbeing outcomes. It delivers outreach services in urban and rural settings, social support, emotional support and advocacy, provides daily living aids and accessible technology, transport, as well as eye health information, including preventative information to help people retain and preserve their sight. 4Sight Vision Support achieves this with a small, highly skilled and dedicated team, and with the support of around 200 volunteers.

*Cathy Clark*

**STAR CINEMA** The first film of 2025 at the Adastra Hall (Friday, **17th January**) is 'A Good Woman' starring Scarlett Johansson, Tom Wilkinson, and Helen Hunt. It is a romantic comedy drama, based on Oscar Wilde's 'Lady Windermere's Fan'. Doors open at 7 pm and the film starts at 7.30 pm. Tickets are available on the door. Tea, coffee, wine, raffle. The Star Team look forward to welcoming you.

*Liz Edmunds*

## **THE GROWING NETWORK - INVITATION TO JOIN US FOR A CHRISTMAS LUNCH**

We are a freely-giving community network that supports local people to grow and share food, with no one left out.

Our December meeting will be later than the usual time as we will be gathering for a shared Christmas lunch. There will be a large pot of vegetable soup (with homegrown vegetables) for all to share. If you are able, please bring a small contribution to our feast (whatever is easy for you).

**Saturday 7th December** 12 pm to 2 pm at Friends Meeting House, East Gardens, Ditchling BN6 8ST. This is the Quaker Meeting House (not to be confused with the Old Meeting House in the Twitten). We look forward to seeing you.

*Catherine, Imke and Julie*

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## MID SUSSEX OLDER PEOPLE'S COUNCIL



Celebrated its 20th anniversary last month - the charity was set up as a voice for older people to ensure the authorities take their needs into consideration when making decisions, and to relieve isolation and loneliness in people in Mid Sussex towns and villages such as Hassocks and Hurstpierpoint.

The organisers were honoured to be host to a plethora of mayors, MPs and councillors from across Mid Sussex, including Cllr Robert Eggleston, leader of Mid Sussex district council, Cllr Janice Henwood, Mayor of Burgess Hill, Cllr Duncan Pascoe, deputy Mayor of Haywards Heath, Garry Wall, West Sussex County Council, Cllr Anne-Marie Cooke of Lindfield Parish Council, Cllr Will Blunden, the chairman of Lindfield Parish Council, who also gave an entertaining speech on his admiration for the charity and many more.

Guests were treated to an extensive buffet of food, then a huge array of cakes, singer Tobias Alexander got the whole room dancing with his 60s and 70s tunes, followed with a ceremonial cake cutting by the Burgess Hill Mayor, finally the big highlight of Peter Candy entering playing his bagpipes and then a toast as everyone cheered, it was an amazing atmosphere.

Barbara Baldwin, who founded the charity, spoke of the campaigns the charity has fought over the last 20 years, including campaigning against the closure of the Princess Royal Hospital in Haywards Heath and the closure of Clair Hall. The charity has also set up numerous IT help sessions over the years to help overcome the barrier that older people face now that nearly everything they need to access is online.

MSOPC is open to new members over 60 and is free to join. Phone **01444 242760**, e-mail [nicola@msopc.org.uk](mailto:nicola@msopc.org.uk), or use the online form on the website [www.msopc.org.uk/contact-us/](http://www.msopc.org.uk/contact-us/). *Nicola*

### **SUSSEX PATHFINDERS RAMBLING CLUB**

First a thank you to all of you who follow us, read our monthly posts, like them and even join us on some of our walks!

For those of you finding us for the first time, we are a walking group based in Sussex who regularly go out into the countryside for walks at the weekend. Usually, it is a 5-6 mile half-day walk on a Saturday and a 9-10 mile all-day walk on a Sunday. We often include 'Figure of Eight' walks which you could think of as three different walks with, say, a 5 mile walk in the morning, a 4 mile walk in the afternoon or do both for a 9 mile challenge.

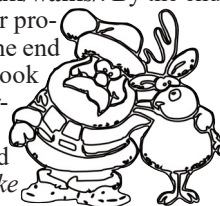
I know the days leading up to Christmas can be frantic for some people while others try to carry on with their lives as if nothing has changed. Back in October the supermarkets I visit had cleared the aisles of staple items and replaced them with a multitude of chocolates in every shape and form. The winners by far, when it comes to grabbing space, are those large

tubs of assorted chocolates - such temptations!

After Christmas, you could join the members of SPRC who will be pleased to meet you at the east end of Hove Lagoon on Sunday, **29th December** for our last walk of this year. It will be a 10 mile walk, starting at 10 am. However, if 10 miles sounds rather daunting there will be opportunities to shorten the walk by taking buses from Mile Oak and Fishersgate back to nearby starting point (bus nos. 1A or 700)

You can find the full details and our programme of walks through to the end of the year on the walks page of our website: [www.sussexpathfinders.org.uk/walks/](http://www.sussexpathfinders.org.uk/walks/). By the end of November, there will be our programme of walks through to the end of June 2025. No need to book just turn up and introduce yourself to Jean our leader.

Wishing everyone a happy and healthy 2025. *Diann Clarke*



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**SUSSEX WILDLIFE TRUST** I'm scrambling through the woodland undergrowth, anxious, sweating and clutching a 2 kg pouch of white powder and a spoon. I may look like some Colombian cocaine smuggler, but I've got the perfect excuse for the police: "I'm researching my parish magazine article". I've been writing articles Sussex parish magazines for many years, and I've received some lovely comments from many people – thank you. It's nice to know they are being read and enjoyed.

When I was a kid, I would read loads of wildlife books with names like 'the amateur naturalist' (not to be confused with 'the amateur naturist', a mistake you only make once). Each book promised to make you a wildlife detective and was filled with tips on tracking mammals in the countryside. Most British mammals are nocturnal and, after centuries of persecution, all of them are understandably rather wary of humans. We hardly ever see them. Yet these invisible animals leave behind tantalising clues which let us know they really exist droppings, nibbled nuts, pellets. But the biggest giveaway of all are their footprints.

Primitive mammals (such as Hedgehogs, Stoats, Badgers and you) are plantigrades. We stroll about on the soles of our feet and have five toes. When we run, we use our toes and the balls of our feet. For the mammals

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who spend a lot of time running and jumping this basic mammalian plantigrade foot has evolved and adapted over time. Some animals have lost a toe (Foxes, cats, dogs, Hares) while the real gymnasts, such as deer, leap around on two toes, and horses race on just one toe enclosed in a hoof. Like Sherlock Holmes with a foot fetish, you can examine each footprint's formula of toes, claws and pads to deduce just who has been sneaking around at night.

My books told me that, once you find a footprint, the best way to capture it is to make a cast – which explains why I'm crouched here in the undergrowth excitedly mixing up plaster of Paris powder and pouring it into a footprint in the muddy woodland floor. I've always wanted to do this since I was a kid but, well, I guess life got in the way. Now, sat proudly on my desk, I have my first footprint cast: a Badger (with five toes, a wide pad and obvious claws). And somewhere out there is a Badger completely unaware that its footprint has created a deeper enjoyment of wildlife and inspired someone to preserve it. Which now I think about it, is all I have hoped for from these articles too. I hope I've made an impression. Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and best wishes for 2025.

Michael Blencowe



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# Whats On in December

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## Church Services

### BEACON PARISH DECEMBER SERVICES

Morning Worship with Holy Communion 10 am St Margarets, Ditchling on **1st** inc. Little Beacons, **15th, 22nd & 29th** on **8th** 'Service of morning Worship and Holy Communion' 10 am St Martins, Westmeston. Wednesday@10 (am) Holy Communion weekly at St Margarets Church, Ditchling. Always check [www.beacon-parish.co.uk](http://www.beacon-parish.co.uk) to be kept up to date.

## Clubs

**BBT** - Hassocks (Bumps, Babies & Toddlers) - St Francis Church, Priory Road, Hassocks. Thursdays 1-2.30 pm. A group for play & chat.  
**DITCHLING MORRIS** - Practise Thursday at United reformed Church Hall at 7.30 pm. Pop in if you feel like joining.

**HEARTS OF SUSSEX BRIDGE CLUB** - Mondays online and Tuesdays Age Concern Hassocks. See [www.hsobcbridgeclub.co.uk](http://www.hsobcbridgeclub.co.uk)

**HUG IN A MUG** - A coffee (and cake!) morning for all. Mondays 10.30 - 12 pm at Keymer Church Hall and at Clayton Church Hall, every Tuesday at 10.30 am to 12 pm.

**MUMS, DADS & CARERS HUG IN A MUG** - 8.45 - 10.30 am every Monday, Keymer Church Hall, for Parents, carers or grandparents who look after children. Cake, coffee, toys & games.

**IRISH SET DANCING** The Emmanuel Centre, Ditchling 7.15 - 9.30 pm. Come and join us for some fun and active dancing (not Riverdance). We are an informal and friendly group. Beginners are very welcome, no need to bring a partner. Your first session is free call 07802 847234 for more info.

**THE KEYMER FOLK DANCE CLUB** Club nights are on the 1st, 3rd and 5th Mondays at the URC Church Hall, 7.30 pm.

More details can be found on the clubs website: [www.keymerfolkdanceclub.co.uk](http://www.keymerfolkdanceclub.co.uk)

**MID SUSSEX SCOTTISH COUNTRY DANCE GROUP.** Meet every Tuesday Evening, 7.30 pm, Main Hall Hurstpierpoint Village Centre. Anyone is welcome, no previous knowledge is necessary just a willingness to have fun. Please visit [www.msscd.org.uk](http://www.msscd.org.uk) for more details. (We do not meet in July or August)

**SUSSEX FLY DRESSERS GUILD** Clayton Village Hall, Thursdays 7 - 9 pm. Beginners to Advanced [sussexflydressersguild.org.uk](http://sussexflydressersguild.org.uk).

**HASSOCKS YOUTH GROUP** The Green Room, Adastra Hall, Hassocks. Thursday 5.30 - 7 pm School Years 4 - 13 (Term time only). All welcome for games, crafts and activities and social time.

**QUAKER MEETING FOR WORSHIP.** 10.30 am every Sunday, Ditchling Friends Meeting House. Also on 2nd and 4th Sundays at 10.30 am, at The Yews, 55 Boltro Road, Haywards Heath.

All are welcome for peaceful worship followed by coffee. Our magazine "Friendly News" is available at Ditchling PO [www.ditchling-quakers.org.uk](http://www.ditchling-quakers.org.uk)

**VISUALLY-IMPAIRED CLUB** We meet alternate Wednesdays from 10.30 am to 2 pm at Clayton Parish Hall in Underhill Lane. If you are interested, please ring me on **01444 450947.**

**WHIST DRIVE** - Our friendly club meets at Age Concern, Hassocks every thursday at 6.45 pm. More info 01273 843390.



## Regular Events

**1st SANTA SUNDAY** High Street, Hurstpierpoint 12.30 - 4.30 pm. A magical Christmas Market with live music, delicious treats, fun kids' activities, rides, and Father Christmas.

**1st HASSOCKS PHILOSOPHICAL FORUM** Purple Carrot Cafe, Hassocks 2 pm. All welcome.

**2nd HASSOCKS WI** Adastra Hall, Hassocks 2 pm. Craft Club. Visitors welcome.

**3rd MEMORY CAFE** Court Bushes, Hurstpierpoint 2 - 4 pm. These sessions are for anyone with memory problems, dementia and their family member or carer. More info call 01444 450248.

**3rd DITCHLING DOWNS WI** 7 pm. 'Christmas Party'.

**4th HOLY TRINITY CHURCH** Hurstpierpoint 7.30 pm. 'Mothers' Union Advent Evening with carols and readings followed by mulled wine & mince pies. Tickets 01273 833954.

**4th UKES OF HASSOCKS** Proper Cycling & Coffee 7.30 pm. Monthly community jam session, play and sing along, beginners welcome. All welcome.

**5th DITCHLING FILM SOCIETY** Ditchling Village Hall 7.30 pm. 'Rye Lane'. Tickets available on the door

**5th AGE CONCERN HASSOCKS** Dale Avenue 11 am. Sussex Choir will be performing. Free entry. Refreshments available.

**5th BEFRIENDED** Court Bushes, Hurstpierpoint 10 am - 12 pm. Bereavement Cafe - A safe place to chat about grief loss & share stories about loved ones. More info [office@befriended.org](mailto:office@befriended.org).

**5th BOTHY SINGERS** Woodmancote Church 7 pm. Festive Candlelight Concert 'Brass Fusion BF5'. Tickets [www.brassfusion.co.uk](http://www.brassfusion.co.uk).

**6th JAZZ ETC** Ditchling Village Hall 7.30 pm. Christmas Special with Aneesa Chaudhry & K2 Quintet singing Blues, Jazz Classics and Asian fusion. Tickets Ditchling Post Office.

**6th LIGHT UP HASSOCKS** Keymer Road, Hassocks 4 - 8 pm. Festive evening - see article.

**6th - 8th THE BEACON PARISH** St Margarets Church, Ditchling 10 am - 5.30 pm. Christmas Tree Festival.

**7th THE GROWING NETWORK** Friends Meeting House, East Gardens, Ditchling 12 - 2 pm. Shared Christmas Lunch. See article.

**7th COELIAC GROUP** South Downs Garden Centre, Brighton Road, Hassocks 9 am - 11am. 'Brunch and Chat'. All welcome.

**7th BURGESS HILL CHORAL SOCIETY** St Andrew's Church, Burgess Hill 7.30 pm. Saint-Saëns 'Christmas Oratorio'. Tickets 07522 493966. [www.burgesshillchoral.org](http://www.burgesshillchoral.org).

**7th BURGESS HILL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY** Cyprus Hall, Burgess Hill 10 am - 3 pm. 'Christmas Market' Stalls supporting local good causes and crafts people. [www.burgesshillhorticulturalsociety.com](http://www.burgesshillhorticulturalsociety.com). Free admission. All welcome.

**8th DITCHLING SINGERS** Old Meeting House, Ditchling 4 - 6 pm. New singers most welcome to come along and join us.

**8th CONCERT** Old Meeting House, Ditchling 7.30 pm. Musical evening with Mike Hatchard & Tom Arnold. Tickets [wegottickets](http://wegottickets.com).

**8th CHURCHES TOGETHER URC**, Hassocks 4 pm. 'Christingle Service'.

**8th HOLY TRINITY CHURCH** Hurstpierpoint 3 - 4.30 pm. 'Family Christmas Crafts & activities for pre school and primary children.

**9th THE GROUP** The Railway Pub, Station Road, Burgess Hill. 8 pm. A club for the over 55 unattached. [www.thereupon.org.uk](http://www.thereupon.org.uk).

**13th MID SUSSEX AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY** Cyprus Hall, Burgess Hill 7.30 pm. [www.midsussexars.org.uk](http://www.midsussexars.org.uk). 'Drinks and Nibbles' Refreshments available. All welcome.

**13th STAR CINEMA** Adastra Hall, Hassocks, 7 pm. Film - 'Rocket Man' the story of Elton John. Tea, coffee wine and raffle. Tickets available on the door.

**14th MENS BREAKFAST** The Greyhound, Keymer 10 am. For a social cooked breakfast. All welcome to book email [alexbaxter66@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:alexbaxter66@yahoo.co.uk).

**14th HASSOCKS FOOTBALL CLUB** The Hassocks Hotel Beacon Ground, Brighton Road, Hassocks KO 2 pm. (Mens) The Robins take on Lingfield. Bar and Food available. Free entry to kids 16 and under.

**14th AGE CONCERN HASSOCKS** Dale Avenue 9.30 am - 1.30 pm. Christmas Fair.

**14th CHURCHES TOGETHER URC** Hassocks 9.30 am. Messy Church - breakfast, crafts, games and story. All welcome.

**14th THE BEACON PARISH** Streat Church 4 pm. Carols by Candlelight followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

**15th THE BEACON PARISH** St Margarets Church, Ditchling 4 pm. Brighton Singers will be performing for the first time here. Tickets [www.brightonsingers.org.uk](http://www.brightonsingers.org.uk).

**15th ST BARTHOLOMEW CHURCH**, Albourne 6 pm. 9 Lessons & Carols followed by mulled wine & mince pies.

**15th PARISH OF CLAYTON WITH KEYMER**, Meeting Room, Keymer Church Hall. 9.45 - 10.45 am. Storytime Creative - Stories from the Bible and the heart and respond with your own pictures or creative writing. Bring an adult. More info 01273 845964.

**15th CHURCHES TOGETHER** URC Hall, Hassocks 3 - 4.30 pm. 'Carols Together' with refreshments.

**15th HASSOCKS FOOTBALL CLUB** The Hassocks Hotel Beacon Ground, Brighton Road, Hassocks KO 2 pm. (Womens) The Robins take on Horsham Women. Bar & Food available. Free entry.

**16th HASSOCKS WI** Adastra Hall, Hassocks 7.30 pm. 'Christmas - a festive History' Andy Thomas. Visitors welcome.

**16th POLICE BEAT SURGERY** South Downs Garden Centre, Hassocks 10.30 am - 12 pm. Come along to get crime prevention and advice on neighbourhood issues.

**16th CAMEO** Keymer Church Hall 2 pm - 4 pm. Open to all - come and enjoy an enjoyable afternoon over a cup of tea.

**17th HASSOCKS TWINNING ASSOCIATION** Adastra Hall, Hassocks 7.30 pm. Christmas Quiz. Tickets email [stephaniewhite@btinternet.com](mailto:stephaniewhite@btinternet.com) - See article.

**18th MEMORY CAFE** Adastra Hall, Hassocks 10.30 am - 12.30 pm. These sessions are for anyone with memory problems, dementia and their family member or carer. More info call 01444 450248.

**19th WOMENS BREAKFAST** The Greyhound, Keymer 10 am. For a social cooked breakfast. All welcome to book email [tamarajane-baxter@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:tamarajane-baxter@yahoo.co.uk).

**19th LIBERAL DEMOCRATS SURGERY** HASSOCKS Parish Council Offices Committee Room 11 am - 12 pm. Kirsty Lord, Sue Hatton, Kristian Berggreen & Chris Hobbs. No appointment necessary.

**20th CHRIST CHURCH**, Sayers Common 6 pm. Village Carol Service followed by mulled wine & mince pies.

**21st CHURCHES TOGETHER** Age Concern Car Park 11 am. 'Carols in the Market Place' mulled wine and cider available from our stand.

**21st THE BEACON PARISH** St Martins Church, Westmeston 4 pm. Carols by Candlelight followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

**21st HASSOCKS VILLAGE MARKET** Age Concern Car Park, 9 am - 1 pm. Local produce, bread, honey, cheese, wine, veg etc.

**21st ST COSMAS & ST DAMIAN CHURCH**, Keymer 6 pm. 'A very Poni Christmas' Festive music by Poni Mitchell and friends. Tickets [www.ticketsource.co.uk/poni-mitchell](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/poni-mitchell).

**22nd CHURCHES TOGETHER** URC, Hassocks 3 pm. 'Crib Service'.

**22nd THE BEACON PARISH** St Margarets Church, Ditchling 6 pm. Carols by Candlelight followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

**22nd HOLY TRINITY CHURCH** Hurstpierpoint 6 pm. 'Candlelit Carol Service' followed by mulled wine and mince pies.

#### CHRISTMAS EVE CHURCH SERVICES

CRIB SERVICE Hurstpierpoint Church 3 & 4.30 pm

CRIB SERVICE St Francis Church, Priory Rd 4 pm

CRIB SERVICE Ditchling Church 4 pm

CRIB, CAROLS & PETS Twineham Church 4 pm

FIRST MASS St Edwards RC Church, Keymer 5 pm

CANDLELIT CAROL SERVICE URC, Hassocks 6 pm

9 LESSONS & CAROLS Keymer Church 6 pm

MIDNIGHT MASS Albourne Church 8 pm

MIDNIGHT MASS Keymer Church 11.30 pm

MIDNIGHT MASS Hurstpierpoint Church 11.30 pm

#### CHRISTMAS DAY CHURCH SERVICES

BCP Keymer Church 8 am

CHRISTMAS COMMUNION Hurstpierpoint Church 8 am

MASS St Edwards RC Church, Keymer 9.30 am

EUCCHARIST Keymer Church 9.45 am

ST FRANCIS COMMUNION ' 9.45 am

EUCCHARIST Sayers Common Church 10 am

FAMILY COMMUNION Hurstpierpoint Church 10 am

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICE URC, Hassocks 10 am

CHRISTMAS COMMUNION Westmeston Church 10 am

CHRISTMAS COMMUNION Ditchling Church 11 am

BCP EUCCHARIST at Clayton Church 11.15 am

Hassocks KO 3 pm. (Mens) The Robins take on Roffey. Bar and Food available. Free entry to kids 16 and under.

**28th Dec - 3rd Jan** HURST PLAYERS Players Theatre, High Street, Hurstpierpoint various performances. Panto 'Robinson Crusoe and Friends'. Tickets [www.hurstplayers.org.uk](http://www.hurstplayers.org.uk).



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# David J Stevens

Property Maintenance

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## STEVE'S BACK PAGE GOSSIP

I'm going back almost 15 years when kittens weren't the money making commodity they are these days. On more than one occasion I'd arrived at the shop in the morning to find a cardboard box on the doorstep which would be full of very young kittens with mucky eyes and infested with fleas. They were then taken over the road to Graham, who was a brilliant vet at The Ark, then when they were well and old enough they were found good homes. However, it didn't always go that smoothly.

Once again, I had arrived at the shop to find another box, but this one was gaffer taped all over. Normally, I'd pick the box up and take it in the shop, but the gaffer tape made me very curious and stupidly I decided to just pull the lid back a bit to see what was inside. I peered in the top of the box and all I could see were these two huge yellow eyes. At first, I thought it was a young owl then without warning this thing came out the top of the box screaming and with the velocity of an Exocet missile, it flew across the yard and under one of the pallets which was full of horse feed. I followed in hot pursuit not wanting to lose sight of it when I got down and looked under the pallet once again all I could see was these huge yellow eyes. I put my hand in to see if I could touch and grab whatever it was - BIG MISTAKE! It certainly was nowhere near the size of a tiger, but it did a very good impression of one. This was day one of my life with a cat that we named Owly, he was the ultimate feral cat and defied all attempts to catch and trap him. Although, stupidly I did manage to corner him just once and if you have seen any of the Alien films you will remember the Face Hugger, that was nearly my fate. Thankfully my reaction to duck served me well. My belief that love and kindness conquers all obstacles didn't materialise where Owly was concerned, which was a shame because he was a beautiful cat and just once I would have loved to have picked him up stroked him and told him I loved him.

Over the years he got braver and decided he would prefer to come in at night instead of the house which we'd made for him outside he'd learned to recognise the time I was about to close and this black flash would suddenly shoot past me and into the shop. Owly's biggest fault was his smell, he left his distinctive male odour wherever he went, inside and outside, but it was a cross I'd learned to bear. More time passed, then one morning I opened the shop to find Owly sitting hunched up on one of the sofas, I approached him, and he didn't move off. I sat down next to him, he looked at me with those huge yellow eyes and after nearly 15 years I finally managed to touch him. I immediately phoned the vets, and got an emergency appointment. I put him in a basket and rushed him to the vets, after a thorough examination they discovered a tumour in his stomach which had spread through his body, the kindest thing was to let him go. They put a catheter in his leg and left us alone. I held him and stroked him, I've always believed cats communicate by blinking. I blinked 'love you' he blinked back 'thank you', those huge yellow eyes struggling to move but they were defiant to stay open. Then the vet came in and connected the drug to the catheter, I kissed him again and again he looked at me those big yellow eyes shone out love and slowly they closed. I shouted love you Owly. He was at peace and those big beautiful yellow eyes were closed forever. After all those years that short time together at the end were the most precious.

We have two new additions in the shop they are therapy Guinea Pigs, they are brothers 18 months old from Guinea Pig Rescue and are for people who just want to sit and relax with a Guinea Pig on their lap to stroke. It's been very popular with both young and old there is no charge, so if you're feeling stressed come in and meet Starsky and Hutch - you'll love the experience.

Christmas is fast approaching, and we live in hope locals and even out of towners will think to give a little of their Christmas present business to the local shops. We all have some great Christmas ideas and believe you and me we need your money now more than ever. If you love us and want us to be here this time next year, then please support us or the High Street will just be coffee shops and charity shops.

Merry Christmas Love Steve, Nola and all the animals you love to visit xxx

**HASSOCKS PET CENTRE, KEYMER ROAD, HASSOCKS 01273 842392**