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PEMBURY HOUSE, CLAYTON SNOWDROP GARDEN



Over the years Jane and I have opened our garden at Pembury House for the National Garden Scheme to raise money for the nursing and health charities including Macmillan Cancer Support, Marie Curie, Hospice UK and the Queen's Nursing Institute.

Sadly, Jane died suddenly in October. I know she would have wanted me to continue looking after and developing the garden. This I intend to do to the best of my ability.

Pembury House will open as usual for snowdrops, hellebores and winter flowering shrubs on Thursdays and Fridays from **12th February to 6th March** with 90 minute slots from 10.30 am and 2 pm. Tickets need to be pre-booked on the NGS website **ngs.org.uk**. More details can be found at the website **pemburyhouse.co.uk**. The admission price includes tea/coffee and cake.



Please bring cash if you wish to purchase plants, snowdrop mugs, rusty robins, tote bags and cards.

Parking will be at Clayton Village Green, opposite the church. The only visitor entrance is at the back gate from the footpath which runs by the railway line between Clayton and Hassocks.

My friends and I look forward to meeting you. *Nick Baker*

STAR CINEMA 'The Penguin Lessons' on Friday **13th February** at the Adastra Hall. Starring Steve Coogan as an English teacher who rescues a penguin and brings it to his school. .....set in 1976 Argentina and based on a true story. Doors open at 7 for a 7.30 pm start. Tickets available on the door. Tea, coffee, wine, and the usual popular raffle. The Star Team look forward to welcoming you. *Liz Edmunds*

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On behalf of our President, Mrs Virginia Lewis-Jones, Vice President, Mrs Juliet Olsworth-Peter JP DL, Chair, Mrs Catharine Robinson, and the Branch Committee, we would like to thank everyone who has supported and donated to the 2025 Poppy Appeal.

This year our total has so far reached £4,164 for which we are so very grateful.

The Branch has also put Poppy Boxes in Keymer and Hassocks, and the total so far is £2,629**.**

Please accept a very heartfelt thank you to all who have given so generously. The Branch (which consists of Ditchling, Streat and Westmeston) plus our friends in Keymer and Hassocks would like to take this opportunity of wishing you all a very happy and successful 2026. *Margaret Bovill*

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We had a computer glitch with Ian's Poem last month, below is the correct version. Ed.

JACK THE LAD

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Jack the lad
He ain't so bad
He'll probably get a tattoo
If he's feeling sad
Wears Martin Luther boots
Dons a cloth cap and two- tone suits
Always has a cheeky grin
Drinks his lager from a ring pull tin
Drives his motor fast and skids
A local hero to the local kids
Sports a haircut ash blonde dyed
Wears it long, worn with pride
Likes a bit of aggro at a football match
Then it's down the pub lager down at the Hatch
Got no future, lost his job
Social misfit part time Yob
Needs a partner, needs one quick
Needs a partner to crack the whip
Jack the lads now thirty four
Youth is fading, what a bore
Ooh Ah lifes not fair
Jack's a lonely lad with a vacant stare
Ooh Ah R.I.P.
Couldn't face the music now he's ceased to be
Couldn't face the music now he's ceased to be.

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HURSTPIERPOINT HOLY TRINITY CHURCH - MUSIC AND WINE EVENING: THE SUSSEX WAITS The next concert in this series will take place in Holy Trinity church on Saturday, **21st February**, 6 pm to 7.30 pm. It will feature The Sussex Waits in a programme entitled "The Leaves be Green – Renaissance Fantasias and Dances". Waits were musicians employed by the civic authorities in many towns and cities during the 16th and 17th centuries to carry out a variety of functions, mostly out of doors. They played their instruments through the town at night, sometimes helping to wake the citizens on dark winter mornings. In addition, the Waits played at all sorts of civic and ceremonial occasions.
The Sussex Waits will perform their repertoire on instruments used during this period: shawms, sackbut, curtals, crumhorns and recorders. The concert promises to feature music and sounds not often heard in 21st century mid-Sussex!
To book please email **margaret@112a.co.uk** or telephone **01273 835113**. You can also just turn up and pay on the door. The doors will open at 5.30 pm and there will be a licensed bar. *Mike Clemens*

WHAT TO DO DURING ICE AND SNOW being prepared means you are better able to respond to an emergency. For power cuts call freephone **105.** For water supply visit **www.water.org.uk/customers/find-your-supplier**. For clearing snow or ice visit **www.gov.uk/clear-snow-road-path-cycleway**. If you're feeling unwell call the NHS on **111**. If you have an emergency dial **999**. Support for the homeless **www.streetlink.org.uk.**

BEACON DISTRICT TREFOIL GUILD
January was our A.G.M. and planning for the year ahead.
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IT IS THE DAY AFTER TWELFTH NIGHT and Christmas has been mothballed and put away for another year. The full moon brought a crystalline beauty to the traditional end-of-festivities, with the finest powdering of snow. The snow lay on top of the ice on the Stoneywish ponds and held the footprints of the waterfowl in beautiful script like Islamic calligraphy.

Phil, who keeps beehives on the farm, has been sending me notes of his bird-spottings for the past few weeks. He was anxious to see winter thrushes and this miniature winter of Epiphany has at last ushered long-awaited redwings into the Reserve and drawn crowds of small birds – tits and nuthatches - and a couple of woodpeckers to his bird-feeders. Sadly, no field-fares spotted yet.

What have I seen, he asks excitedly? Well, I am pretty well blind as a bat and certainly no 'twitcher', but I want to join in, so two days ago I pulled on my wellies and set out from the house just as the sun was beginning to set. The snow was full of tracks, rabbit, sheep, fox and squirrel, but the trees seemed empty of birds. I slowed down, sat awhile on a bench to 'get my ear in' and at last my senses attuned to a *sotto voce* of winter song. There were high 'tseep-tseep' calls in the Christmas trees around me. Usually this would mean goldcrests, and since I could not actually see them I added them to my 'bag' – pure cheating but what did it matter!

Next, I noted an unknown, rapid song and cries of 'weet-weet-weet' from the topmost branches of the alders fringing the pond. High up in the sunlit canopy was a flock of small birds, swinging on the alder catkins. White bellies and pink bibs, brown wings. No yellow to be seen anywhere, so not goldfinches. Mixed in with them were slightly smaller birds with buff-coloured undersides. They were having the jolliest time, teasing the seeds out of the catkins and dangling and twirling in the sunshine. There is a delicious freedom in *not knowing.* (I cannot help thinking that phone apps are such spoilers – like know-it-all bores at parties).

Later rummaging through bird books, of course, never identifies the thing you have seen – which is half-intoxicated vision, half an effect of the light, tempered by memory and imagination. So, I recklessly decided they were redpolls and bramblings, and perhaps, who knows, they *were*!

I filed my report to Phil, who was suitably

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speechless.

Today the snow has gone and I have heard the first woodpecker of the year, drumming down on the Black Swan Pond. Joking aside, I do think there is something important about having one's experience *un*mediated, that is, experiencing life at first hand, without the perpetual redaction of some Mephistophelian media device. Being alive, sentient and responsive, *has* to take precedence, surely, over being merely correct.

I know I will be shot down for saying this, but I call on the birds themselves and the whole of Nature, to bear me out.

Living by one's wits is the only authentic way to live and keep the mind alive. The mystic philosopher, Krishnamurti, began each of his private journal entries with the description of a walk or an encounter with some precious element of Nature. Hardly ever does he specify the name of the birds or trees he sees – the name is of small account beside the vital fact of *being* and sharing existence. When the data centres of the world have eaten every natural resource, the names of all the things which have been annihilated will be encrypted for eternity.

What is the point? A more radical approach might be to decline to have power over the world and taste its mystery instead. In the days when people (scientists and naturalists, too, mark you) believed that barnacle geese were a kind of fish and that swallows hibernated in mud, and that flowers turned into butterflies (this last was the belief of Erasmus Darwin) there was still room for creatures to inhabit the Earth. The mindset of the conquistador has powered the material progress which will be the end of us all.

As the lunacy of this mindset hurtles mankind towards Armageddon, can we find the capacity to reclaim for our lives an alternative destiny? The maverick historian and scholar of comparative religion, Peter Lamborn Wilson,

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coined the phrase 'Temporary Autonomous Zone' for a period of spontaneous congregation; revolt against the diktats of Conquistador culture; celebration of the values of freedom and communion; revival of the ancient indigenous pathways of gift-giving, and food-sharing and honouring others.

This just about covers everything from an anarchist rave to a family campsite, to Christmas at its best: a re-summoning of the values of the Golden Age, which is exactly what the Romans attempted at their Saturnalia festivals.

Our Christmas gift-giving, feasting, jesting and party games are their legacy to us. They also freed their slaves for the duration of Saturnalia and masters waited on servants. They ran amok in the streets, wearing wolf-skins and decorated their houses with holly. Ancient Carnival opened a window onto wild time – the free time of the god Saturn which ran parallel to everyday material time - and the exhilaration and release which flooded through, brought invigoration and hope for the year to come.

Old Folk Christmas, throughout Europe, was strictly homemade. The food, the music, the entertainment, the masking and mumming were local, communal events, a far cry from our celebrity t.v. virtual-cooking orgies and piped pop-videos. They were also symbolic, not merely hedonistic. Encounters with wolves and 'wild men', enacted in Christmas guizers' plays and pantomimes, were a way of facing the darker and more fearful aspects of both our outer and inner worlds, allowing them to be confronted and re-integrated into life.

When one carnival is over, there may be a period of sobriety before the next. But the spirit of celebration goes on. I do not see why we cannot make Autonomous Zones of our own lives to reclaim the immediacy and vitality of unmediated living – make our own news – *good* news - and reject the official will-to-de-

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pair of the media. I cannot think of a more satisfying and effective way of staging a revolt against grim Necessity.

What about an 'information fast' for January? I'd rather be swinging about in a tree with the redpolls, or drumming with the woodpecker, in innocent *joie de vivre,* than collude in mass extinction! Let's go back to valuing the things that really matter – corn for our bread and water for our corn and real birds and real stars overhead. Let's stop listening to people who hate and blame one another and invent our own independent ways to bind our communities together.

This new year I have burnt my holly without regret – the spirit of carnival, wild time, is still working its magic inside. There is a wonderful French word that resonates in my mind - "*la réjouissance*" - rejoicing.

If we could share this one thing and send it round the world, with smiles, (*not* emojis), who knows, we, and the wild we depend on, might just be around for another year! *Rosemary*

AGE CONCERN Dale Avenue, Hassocks, 01273 844461 www.achassocks.co.uk
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Although January was a quiet month in the centre, we are grateful to both Community Energy Pathways (CEP) and Silvertime Legal for giving our members their expert advice on energy saving, as well as Inheritance Tax, Lasting Power of Attorneys and Wills

If you are thinking of a fresh start, new friendships and activities this New Year, come along to our centre and have a look around. We offer delicious homemade 3 course meals Monday to Friday, a lovely selection of hot drinks and sweet treats, hairdressers, chiropodist and a host of activities including art and table tennis and some run by external organisations including Chair Yoga, Chair Pilates, Tai Chi, Whist, Mahjong, Board Games, Bridge etc.

We would like to start an additional table tennis group at the centre on Wednesdays, and we are also looking for someone qualified to start a singing group one afternoon a week, so if you are interested, please call us on the above number or pop in and see us.

We look forward to seeing you soon.

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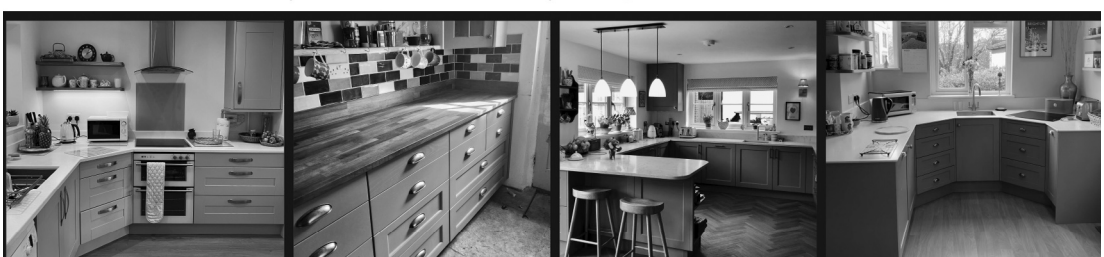
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We thank Helen Smith of Hurstpierpoint for the following letter:- I'd like to reply to the interesting piece in January's Talk About from Nicola regarding the 123 Bin collections. Like her I am not an expert, but I confess to being an AGW sceptic.

I agree climate change is real, almost within living memory we had the Little Ice Age with frost fairs on the Thames and before that was the Medieval Warm Period when global temperatures were higher than today. In Europe this resulted in food crops flourishing, grapes grown 'oop north' and the population more than doubling, so, broadly beneficial.

But as far as I know no one has suggested Mankind was responsible for either of those phenomena. As a teenager I remember the warnings of an impending ice age, due to a hole in the ozone layer caused by CFCs and the felling of trees to make paper bags! I vowed never to use an aerosol spray can or take an unnecessary paper bag again and from that day to this I never have. This was followed by warnings of acid rain then global warming, and when, despite jiggery pokery with recording temperatures, the earth steadfastly refused to show much gained warmth this became climate change.

If I'm wrong and manmade as opposed to natural climate change is a thing will the 123 bin regime help? Ignoring the fact that the new system is complicated, inconvenient for homeowners and as Sheila rightly points out very smelly and unpleasant for parents with kids in nappies, let's look at it in the round.

Under the old system over a 6-week period we had 6 bin collections, under the new one it's 11. So, surely that nearly doubles the distance travelled by bin lorries and therefore the fuel consumed and wear on tyres and other parts, and presumably it also halves the life of a bin lorry which means more will have to be built/scrapped using more energy. Then there is the cost in raw materials and energy used in manufacturing two new bins for every home in the country, and the energy used in making the biodegradable bin liners they suggest we buy for them, or providing us with clean water that we also have to buy to wash out these bins which will otherwise become smelly and a festering mass of germs. Do the sums add up. How much energy is actually generated by first sending food waste to an anaerobic digester to harness the methane as it degrades, and is it enough to offset the increases in energy use and emissions set out above? I have no idea, but I seriously doubt it so I'm with Sheila on this.

BIN COLLECTIONS - MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL. Visit **www.midsussex.org.uk/waste-recycling/bin-collection** where you can register for an alert the day before as to which bins are being collected or download the MSDC app.

BURGESS HILL HERITAGE & HISTORY ASSOCIATION meets on Friday **13th February**, for a Talk on 'The History of Witchcraft in Sussex'.

It's at The Cyprus Hall, Burgess Hill, doors open 7.30 pm. All welcome. For more details visit

www.burgesshillheritagehistory.org.uk.

Peter


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DITCHLING DOWNS WI In a change from previous years we held our Christmas Party in the lovely Ditchling Village Hall. It was a DIY affair this time with the committee cooking and serving out a delicious supper, and from the all the feedback we've been receiving - it was a great success and enjoyed enormously by everyone.

Our 2026 programme started in January - as always, our monthly meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month, 7 pm for 7.30 pm, in Ditchling Village Hall. Our speaker for February will be Helen Poole who will talk to us about 'The Gages and Firle Place'

We love to welcome visitors and new members to our group - if you're interested, please email **gmtennant.ddwi@yahoo.com**.

Alison White

HASSOCKS WI Meet 3rd Monday in the month at Adastra Hall. Doors open 7.30 pm Evening starts at 7.45 pm.

January snow was a bit of a surprise, but a good number of members turned out for our first Craft Club meeting of the year. Hopefully our January meeting is also well attended as we have lots of breast cancer cushions to stuff and resolutions to discuss.

February is our annual meeting, with a recap of our year. We will enjoy musical entertainment from Belinda and Dave.

March promises to be a good evening as we welcome Margaret Watson with her Golden harp, sharp wit and fancy costume.

It is the time of year when our events group is busy sorting out our new programme taking onboard suggestions from our members and aiming to fulfil them.

This reminds me the WI is the largest UK women's organisation which is constitutionally bound to be non-sectarian and non-party political. When we book speakers for a talk, it is the subject matter of the talk we wish to hear, and we do not express any views on any of the speakers' other work.

Don't forget we have our lovely Ladies community choir which meets on Tuesdays (excluding 2nd Tuesday in the month), 7.30 pm at St Francis Church, Priory Road, Hassocks. All ladies are welcome.

The next Craft Club will be on Monday **2nd February**.

Don't be stuck at home feeling miserable come along and cheer up with us, visitors welcome (donation) and there will be cake.

Stay warm. *Gerry*

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HASSOCKS FOOTBALL CLUB We're over the halfway stage and doing our best to try and survive at this level on the pitch. Performances have been good despite some sticky results in November and December. Every point matters and your support is so important to helping the team.

Our attendances have been really encouraging; we have an above average amount for our league which is a credit to all you locals who turn up and amazing considering we are a village. The team is settled and we have a group of players who are racking up their appearance numbers which shows they're proud playing for our top village club. That is good for stability and good for supporters to know these players care for the club. Work should now have started on an electricity trench and cable being laid to improve infrastructure. This is going to link together the power to the far side of the ground to use new solar panels on our stand roof and our new LED scoreboard, which should look really impressive and kick the ground and facilities on. We have submitted planning permission for a kitchen extension, so we'll see what becomes of this. In terms of catering, we received a 5-star hygiene rating recently for our kitchen which is a credit to our food staff. South field training pitch plans are still being persisted with, it is not our end slowing things down as we wait for all assessments and planning permission for that.

My contact number is **07843 762132** to answer any questions about rearranged fixtures or cancellations or suggestions to improve match day experience etc.

Here are the current February fixtures at the Hassocks Hotel Beacon ground: Saturday **7th February** 1st vs Faversham Town 3 pm ko. Saturday **14th February** 1st vs Erith Town 3 pm ko. Saturday **28th February** 1st vs Beckenham Town 3 pm ko. *Pat Harding*



CELEBRATE VALENTINE'S DAY WITH HEBER OPERA'S SERENADE TO LOVE. **13th February** at 7.30 pm at the Chapel Royal in North Street, Brighton and Hurstpierpoint Village centre on **14th February** at 6 pm. Tickets on sale now from **www.ticketsource.co.uk/heberopera** or by calling **07867 975967** between 9 am and 5 pm. Tickets include a glass of wine.

Join our talented soloists for an evening of celebrations. *Jenny*

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His son Gareth was born in 1976 and Roland always hoped that he would join the business and that one day he would be able to carry out a father and son building company.

In 1995 Gareth completed his apprenticeship and the company RD Jenkins and Son was set up.

This year 2026 celebrates 50 years of our company having traded locally with many residents in Hassocks Ditchling, Hurst, Keymer, Burgess Hill and the surrounding areas and although Roland has now retired Gareth wishes to continue the business with past and future customers for many years to come with my grandson and his son Lloyd.

We look forward to continuing our business in the local area providing a service that is welcomed by local people.

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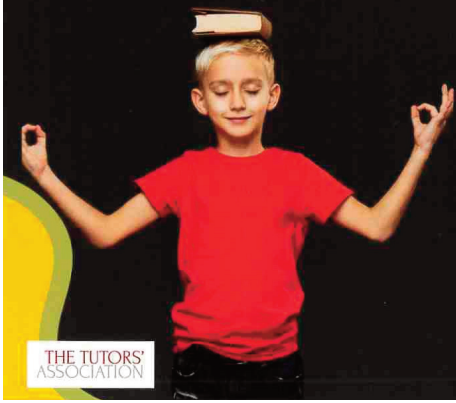
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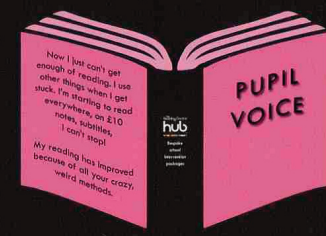
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THE READING DOCTOR I qualified with a PGCE in Primary Education in 2006 and have over 19 years of experience teaching across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in primary schools throughout Hertfordshire and Sussex including The Windmills Junior School in Hassocks.

During my career, I supported many children who struggled with reading due to additional learning needs or gaps in confidence. I often saw how these challenges affected not only their progress, but their self-belief and enjoyment of school.

After stepping away from the classroom last year, I began tutoring children on a one-to-one basis and witnessed the transformative impact of truly personalised teaching. Discovering The Reading Doctor felt like a natural fit. Its values and ethos align closely with my own, and it allows me to provide the focused, child-centred support I believe every child deserves. Please see advert opposite for more information. *Suzanne Llewellyn*

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

This month we will be sharing seeds as we plan our vegetable growing for the year ahead.

We hope to be joined by some volunteers from a Touch of Gentleness who will be offering free hand massages.

We meet each month to share seeds, seedlings and extra produce along with gardening tips and friendship. We'd love to meet you whether you're a veteran gardener or would-be grower of vegetables and if you'd like to find others to help you get started on your gardening journey.

You don't even need to have your own garden, as there are some of us that like to collaborate by growing with others. Come along and see what we're up to and help yourself to the seedlings, seeds and produce on offer.

We will be meeting on Saturday **7th February** 10.30 am to 12 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)

Feel free to bring any seeds you don't need. Or just bring yourself!

Warm wishes. *Catherine, Imke & Julie*



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SUSSEX PATHFINDERS RAMBLING CLUB Those stargazers amongst you will not have failed to have seen the magnificent supermoon on Saturday, 3rd January. Some people refer to it as a wolf moon as many farmers believed wolves were more likely to be heard howling at this event. It was traditionally thought that wolves howled due to hunger during winter, but we know today that isn't accurate.

This isn't a scientific definition of a supermoon, but they appear about 14% bigger that a typical full moon and shine about 30% brighter, according to the Natural History Museum.

Getting technical - The reason it happens is because the moon's orbit of the Earth isn't a perfect circle, which means that sometimes during its orbit it's a little bit farther away, called apogee, it creates an effect called a micromoon and when it's at its closest point, called perigee, it creates a supermoon.

There will be no more supermoons until November 2026, so anyone interested in seeking the free spectacular sight should put a note in their diary for that month. Maybe I will remember to remind you.

On Sunday, 4th January I saw several beautiful sights of nature while on a circular 5 mile walk starting from the White Hart pub at Stopham Bridge (near Pulborough). The ground was rock hard with frost and ice, and the group enjoyed walking through crisp layers of dried fallen leaves.

There were many delightful long slim clusters of catkins on display, and this created a general discussion as to which tree was showing it's seeds - hazel or silver birch or maybe both.

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Spring is definitely on its way because someone pointed to a heavily wooded glade with a silver misty hue across a large area of the ground which will soon become a carpet of snowdrops in flower. Another note in my diary to repeat the walk in a few weeks time. Here are brief details of the walks in your area in February -

Saturday **14th February** 10 am Hurstpierpoint. 5.5 miles Undulating, paths, lanes and fields what3words: **ramp.frame.unfilled**. Meet in the public car park, Trinity Road, use long stay bays or nearby on-street parking.

Sunday **15th February** 10 am Woodingdean, Brighton. 8.5 miles Downland and urban.

what3words: **torn.admiral.reduce**. Meet at Sheepcote Valley car park on Warren Road, east of Brighton Racecourse.

Saturday **28th February** 10.15 am Weir Wood Reservoir. 5 miles Gentle hill to start, flat thereafter.

What3words: **charmingly.device.many**. Meet at Weir Wood Reservoir Nature car park, Legsheath Lane. Arrive early and spend a few magical moments in the Reserve Bird Hide, which is located at the west/far end of the car park. Site designated SSI since 1966.

Full details of all our walks can be seen at **www.sussexpathfinders.org.uk**.

No need to book just turn up and introduce yourself to the leader for that day.

Diann

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Wren & Blossom © Roger Wilms

A BUNDLE OF WINTER WRENS Someone once told me if you think you've seen a mouse it's probably a Wren. These diminutive brown birds make a habit of hopping about the undergrowth in stop-motion fashion, feeding on insects, spiders, and occasionally berries and seeds. Despite being the UK's most numerous breeding bird, they can be inconspicuous.

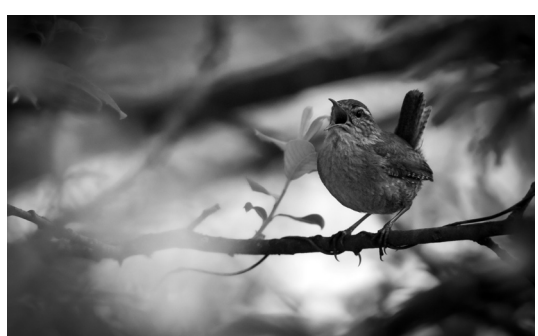
The similarity promptly ends when they open their mouth. Though weighing under 10g, the Wren's voice is bold and loud; a long, high-pitched whistle and trill, cutting through crisp morning air and reaching above that of larger songsters. If you watch a Wren singing, you'll notice the effort on its small body – beak wide and tail upturned.

Woodland understory is an ideal nesting habitat for Wrens, and males establish clear territories in early spring, using that powerful voice. They build five or even six nests to try and attract a female and will aggressively deter other males that dare approach.

However, when the chill of winter comes around, the male changes his tune. A balmy summer of successful shouting may have shown that a tiny body is no barrier to being heard, but it won't help with heat loss on cold nights.

So, the male starts collecting bedfellows. Flitting out on short trips, he again utilises his song, letting females and other males know they are welcome to join him for a platonic sleepover, starting after dusk and ending before dawn.

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Wren© John Bean



Wren in Nest © Alan Price

"Oh, that stuff I said in spring? Water under the bridge."

They gratefully accept, bundling into moss and leaf-lined woven grass, squidging tiny wings and bellies together to make room for just one more. Beaks in, bums out. Most consist of small gatherings, but records of dozens have been logged, and one count in the 1960s numbered 61 Wrens.

Not just super cute, the warmth-sharing of these communal roosts might be lifesaving. Although as anyone who shares a bed will know, there can be a waste of energy caused by the wriggling of others. Shuffling for space, preening, defecating in the roost; entirely unacceptable sleepover etiquette.

When warmer days thankfully return it's back to spring rules, and the male begins to banish other males from the roost, cosy winter cuddles forgotten until the cold starts to nip around tiny feet once more.

Next time you hear a winter Wren having a good yell, be sympathetic. It's survived the night, thank goodness, but it's had a terrible night's sleep. *Kerry Williams*

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HURSTPIERPOINT & SAYERS COMMON TWINNING ASSOCIATION are delighted to team up with Hurst Village Cinema and have chosen La Degustation (The Tasting) for this special event which will take place on Friday **6th February** at the Players' Theatre commencing at 7.30 pm. The Association is also offering 30 tickets to include wine tasting in the Bar after the screening.

Tickets are available to buy online at Hurst Films or at Charlotte Grace, 40 High Street, Hurstpierpoint**.**

A French romantic comedy that pairs wine appreciation with second chances. Bernard, a grumpy wine shop owner, meets Hortense, a warm-hearted woman longing for connection, and their unlikely bond grows through a tasting workshop.

The film blends gentle humour, vulnerability and a delightful celebration of life's small pleasures, a feel-good romantic comedy.

The Association looks forward to welcoming all, whether francophiles or not and having the opportunity to tell you about our twinned village in Normandy and future events.

Sue Deane

THE GROUP 2026 is going to be an amazing year for Sussex social club, The Group. It's the year when members celebrate the club's first twenty years!

The Group has venues in Worthing, Lewes, Burgess Hill, Hove and Pease Pottage and provides events all over Sussex for unattached men and women, aged 55+. It's not a business or dating agency. For a small yearly fee, which is not much more than when it started in 2006. If you enjoy walks, lunches and dinners, live music, theatre, holidays – and much more, take a look at The Group's website **www.thegroup.org.uk.** *Patricia Bentley*

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NEW OFFICERS FOR A NEW YEAR IN ADASTRA BOWLING CLUB

At the AGM in December three new Officers were elected for the 2026 season.

They were Brian Booth as President, Clive Everest as Chairman and Keith Woodman as Captain.



This dynamic trio will lead us to hopefully another successful season starting in April 2026.

Watch this space for our Open Days in May and come to meet us all or call me for more information. Happy Bowling in 2026!



Diana Webley Ward

KEYMER FOLK DANCE CLUB The Keymer Folk Dance Club will have two meetings in February. On the **2nd February** music will be provided by The Fiveways Ceilidh Band consisting of Sean Goddard and Michael Curry. The dances will be lead by Club Callers. On the **16th February** we welcome Colin Coard as our guest caller. Colin comes from Eastbourne and it will be the first time he has called at the club. He is a popular caller around the East Sussex Folk Dance Clubs and has an excellent repertoire of dances. More details can be found at **www.keymerfolk-danceclub.co.uk** or email **keymerfdc@gmail.com.**

Sean Goddard

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DITCHLING FILM SOCIETY Two powerful films coming up!

5th February 8 to 10 pm. **All We Imagine As Light.** 2024 (15). Mumbai is more than a city. It's an ever-expanding universe**.** Having captured the teeming collision of lives, Kapadia gently guides us to follow three nurses. Nurse Prabhais a veteran at the busy urban hospital where all three work; her younger colleague Anu (newly arrived from the south of India, is caught up in the first thrill of romance with her Muslim boyfriend and Pavarty a cook in the hospital kitchen, is facing eviction from a home that is due to be demolished to sate the voracious appetite of gentrification.

These are ordinary lives, with small sadnesses, twinging regrets and sparks of joy. In the second half of the film, when the women leave Mumbai to accompany Pavarty back to her coastal village, the skies lift, the air clears and the picture takes on a lyrical, dreamlike quality.

Primarily Malayalam and Hindi with English subtitles. 2h3m Director Payal Kapadia. Cannes Grand Prix.

5th March - I'm Still Here (15). 2024 Director Walter Salles · 135 minutes. Portugese & French.

An intense film based on the true story of Eunice Paiva, a mother and activist coping with the forced disappearance of her husband, the dissident Brazilian politician Rubens Paiva.

Despite being the target of an unsuccessful boycott by the Brazilian far-right, within 3 months of its release, the film surpassed 5 million admissions.

A beautiful film that portrays the strength of an individual fighting back, a triumph of humanity over state terror.

I'm Still Here received an Academy Award for Best International Feature Film. Golden Globe; Best Actress in a Motion Picture and Drama award for Fernanda Torres. Portugese, French

General - To keep up to date with our film showings and special events please go to our website, **ditchlingfilm.org.uk**. We are on Instagram **@ditchlingfimsoc** and X **@Ditchlingfilm**.

Doors open at 7.30 pm and you can buy a glass of good wine or enjoy a complementary soft drink. The film starts at 8pm.

Guest entry available. Half price for under 25s. A year's membership is available. Cards are accepted. 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!!

Venue - Ditchling Village Hall. There's plenty of parking in the village hall car park.

Kate for The Ditchling Film Society.

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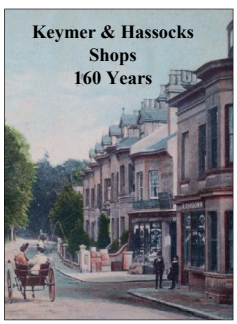
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DID YOU KNOW THAT THE U3A LOCAL HISTORY GROUP HAS PUBLISHED FOUR BOOKS IN RECENT YEARS?

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HHD U3A Local History Group



Hurst, Hassocks and Ditchling u3a Local History Group
2024



THE BUILDING AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE RAILWAY AT HASSOCKS



David Beard

HOSTELRIES IN HASSOCKS and
HURSTPIERPOINT, PAST and PRESENT



Compiled by Hurst, Hassocks and Ditchling U3A Local History Group

Hostelries in Hassocks and Hurstpierpoint Past and Present.
The Street Names of Hassocks, their Origins and History.
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The Building and Development of the Railway at Hassocks

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BEFRIENDED are delighted to have taken on the lease of the Emmanuel Centre in Ditchling. It will become known as the Befriended Hub. Over the next few weeks, you will see work happening on the building and activities starting up. When we're open the Befriended flag will be outside the building. Do drop in to say hello, we would love to meet you. All our current activities in Burgess Hill and Hurstpierpoint will continue as normal. We are really excited to have our own home and look forward to becoming part of the Ditchling community. *Susan*

HURSTPIERPOINT HISTORICAL & GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY Tuesday **10th February** 7.30 pm Talk on "Smugglers Sussex."

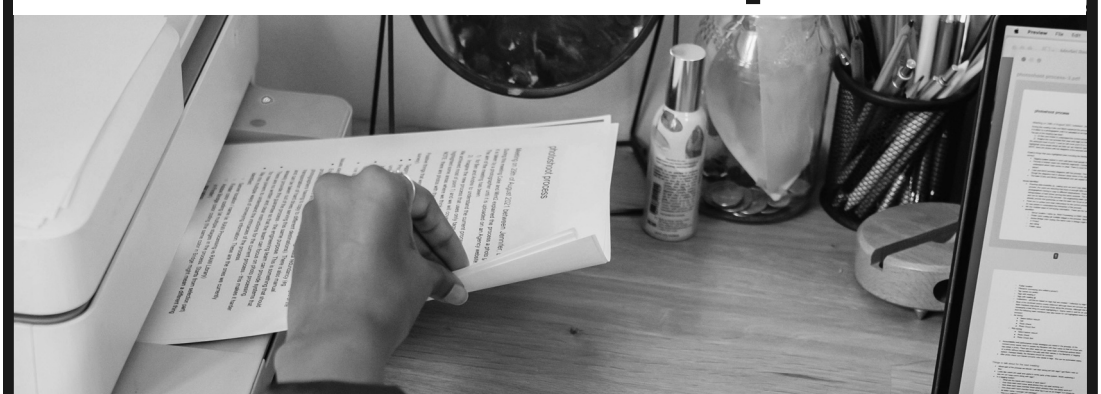
Discover the histories, stories and myths surrounding smuggling in 18th and 19th century Sussex. The speaker is Kevin Newman.

This talk will be held at our new venue, The Players Theatre at 147 High Street, Hurstpierpoint. All welcome.

For further details please email **hurst.hist.geog.soc@gmail.com**

Mrs J Simmons

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Hassocks - 01273 842779
Mon., Tues., Wed., Sat. 9am - 1pm
& Thurs., Fri. 1 - 5pm

HASSOCKS FOOD BANK
Open to anyone in need of support. Held in Powell House (next to United Reformed Church), Hassocks, 10am to 12noon, every Friday.
Or drop donations to Mansell McTaggart and The Sussex Grocer in Hassocks

DOCTORS
Mid Sussex Health Care
01273 834388
www.midsussexhealthcare.co.uk
Hassocks Surgery
Windmill Avenue BN6 8LY
Hurstpierpoint Surgery
The Health Centre, Trinity Road BN6 9UO
Ditchling Surgery
Lewes Road, BN6 8TT

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www.hassocks-pc.gov.uk
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Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common
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www.hurstpierpoint-pc.gov.uk
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Ditchling
01273 844733
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DEFIBRILLATOR LOCATIONS

are at the following locations in the parish. In an emergency please dial 999

HURSTPIERPOINT & SAYERS COMMON

Sayers Common Community Shop, London Road, Sayers Common
Village Centre Library Entrance, Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint, 40 High Street, Hurstpierpoint
Bowling Club, South Avenue, Hurstpierpoint
Court Bushes Community Hub, Willow Way, Hurstpierpoint
Fairfield Recreation Ground, Cuckfield Road, Hurstpierpoint

DITCHLING, STREAT & WESTMESTON

Ditchling Village Hall, Ditchling Church, Streat Church and Westmeston Church

HASSOCKS & KEYMER

Railway Station, Outside Ticket Office, **Adastra Hall**, Keymer Road
Adastra Bowling Club, Adastra Park (North Field), **Age Concern**, Dale Avenue
Freedom Leisure Centre, Downlands School, Dale Avenue, **Hassocks Dental Surgery**, 54a Keymer Road
Graystone Referral Centre, 38 Keymer Road, **Thatched Inn**, Grand Avenue
Keymer & Hassocks Sports & Social Club, Adastra Park (South Field)
Hassocks Health Centre, Windmill Avenue, **Oldland Windmill**, Oldlands Lane, Keymer
Weald Lawn Tennis & Squash Club, South Bank, **South Downs Garden Centre**, Brighton Road

Whats On in February

Clubs, Societies & Groups please let us have your programmes and/or events to **PUBLISH FREE** in this section. Email **ed@villagemagazines.co.uk** or send to **QD Stationery 52 Keymer Road, Hassocks, West Sussex BN6 8AR.** For more information call **01273 846978.**

Regular Clubs Meets

BBT - Hassocks (Bumps, Babies & Toddlers) - St Francis Church, Priory Road, Hassocks. Thursdays 1 - 2.30 pm. A group for play & chat.

BEFRIENDED CAFE NEURO Salvation Army Hall, Cyprus Road, Burgess Hill Mondays 10.30 am - 12 pm. - Support those living with dementia, their carers and loved ones. More info email office@befriended.org.

BEFRIENDED COMMUNITY CHOIR - Tuesdays (term-time) 10 am - 12 pm, Methodist Church, Burgess Hill. All welcome to sing for joy. More info www.befriended.org.

BEFRIENDED FALL-PREVENTION EXERCISE CLASS Gateway Baptist Church, Station Road, Burgess Hill Wednesdays 2 pm. More info www.befriended.org.

DITCHLING MORRIS - Practice Thursdays at United Reformed Church Hall at 7.30 pm. Pop in if you feel like joining.

GREYHOUND MORRIS Practice every Tuesday at Keymer Church Hall, 7 pm. We welcome new members of all abilities both musical and dancing, see you there.

HASSOCKS TABLE TENNIS CLUB - Mon & Thurs 2 - 4 pm at Adastra Hall. Roll up to play.

HASSOCKS WI LADIES CHOIR meet Tuesdays (except 2nd in the month) 7.30 pm at St Francis Church, Priory Road, Hassocks . All welcome.

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

HEARTS OF SUSSEX BRIDGE CLUB - Monday online and Tuesdays at Age Concern Hassocks. More info visit www.hsobcbridgeclub.co.uk

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

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

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.

MID SUSSEX RAMBLERS We offer a varied programme of walks for the new and experienced throughout the year to suit all ages and abilities. For more info www.midsussex-ramblers.org.uk or phone Sue Blandford 01403 255654.

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 for more details. (We do not meet in July or August)

SUSSEX FLY DRESSERS GUILD Clayton Village Hall, Thurs. 7 - 9 pm. Beginners to Advanced sussexflydressersguild.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 Thursdays at 6.45 pm. More info 01273 843390.

Church Services

DITCHLING UNITARIANS The Old Meeting House, The Twitten, Ditchling. Sunday Services at 11 am www.ditchlingunitarians.org.uk.

HASSOCKS UNITED REFORMED CHURCH Evening service 'Worship & Praise' at 6 pm on 3rd Sunday in the month. All welcome.

QUAKER MEETING FOR WORSHIP 10.30 am Sundays, Ditchling Friends Meeting House.
Also 2nd & 4th Sundays at 10.30 am, at The Yews, 55 Boltro Road, Haywards Heath.
All are welcome for peaceful worship and coffee. Our magazine "Friendly News" is available at Ditchling PO www.ditchlingquakers.org.uk

THE BEACON PARISH OF DITCHLING, STREAT & WESTMESTON Sunday Services of Morning Prayer with Holy Communion and Little Beacons, St Margaret's Ditchling at 10 am – **1st, 8th and 22nd February.** Sunday **15th February** will be at Streat. On Wednesdays we hold a weekly Holy Communion at 10 am in St Margaret's. The first Wednesday (**4th February**) of the month at 5.30 pm we have an informal SING! session where we learn new songs and hymns and revisit some old favourites – you don't have to sing well.
Shrove Tuesday (**17th February**) Pancakes in St Margaret's from 3 pm to 5 pm. Come and join us. Small fee to cover our costs and raise a bit of money for the Beacon Parish.
Everyone is welcome to all our services and events but please always check our website – **www.beaconparish.co.uk** – in case there have been any changes or contact Tessa on **admin@beaconparish.co.uk**. Tessa

THE PARISH OF CLAYTON WITH KEYMER Our usual pattern of Worship for Sunday services is 8 am 1662 Book of Common Prayer Eucharist st at Keymer. 9.45 am Mass at Keymer 9.45 am Service at St Francis and 11.15 am Holy Communion at Clayton.
For other information see our website **www.claytonwithkeymer.org.uk -** Fr Alex

Dated Events

1st BEFRIENDED St Andrews Church, Burgess Hill 3 - 5 pm. Afternoon Tea Party with quizzes, celebrations, making friends, information, advice and great entertainment. More info www.befriended.org.

2nd KEYMER FOLK DANCE CLUB URC Church Hall, Hassocks 7.30 pm. 'The Fiveways Ceilidh Band' Sean Goddard & Michael Curry. No partner needed just come along. www.keymerfolkdanceclub.co.uk.

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

3rd DITCHLING DOWNS WI Ditchling Village Hall, 7 pm. 'The Gages and Firle Place' Helen Poole.

4th HURST MONTHLY SOCIAL GROUP Guide HQ, Trinity Road, Hurstpierpoint 2 - 4 pm 'The Singing Chef' Trish Symon. Visitors welcome call 07806 670359.

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

4th AGE UK 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.

5th BEFRIENDED BOARD GAMES Hurstpierpoint 2.30 pm. An afternoon of games, giggles and company call 0300 772 7703 to book.

5th DITCHLING FILM SOCIETY Ditchling Village Hall 7.30 pm. Film - 'All We Imagine As Light'. Tickets available on the door - see article.

5th MID SUSSEX MUSIC HALL The Hassocks Hotel, Station Approach, Hassocks 7.30 pm. 'Dylan Leblanc' Tickets www.brighthelmstonepromotions.co.uk.

6th HURST VILLAGE CINEMA Players Theatre, High Street, Hurstpierpoint 7 pm. Film - La Dégustation (15). Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Twinning Association are offering 30 tickets to include wine tasting in the bar afterwards. More info and tickets from www.hurstfilms.com or Charlotte Grace.

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

7th THE GROWING NETWORK Friends Meeting House, Ditchling 10.30 am to 12 pm. Feel free to bring any seeds or plants to share or gardening books/tools you don't need - All welcome.

7th HASSOCKS FOOTBALL CLUB The Hassocks Hotel Beacon Ground, Brighton Road, Hassocks KO 3 pm. (Mens) The Robins take on Faversham Town. Bar and Food available. Free entry to kids 16 and under. Please check socials for any changes.

9th HASSOCKS FIELD SOCIETY Adastra Hall, Hassocks, 7.45 pm. 'Climate change and how to keep up with the grandchildren' Bill Avenell. All welcome.

9th THE GROUP The Railway Pub, Station Road, Burgess Hill. 7.30 pm. A club for the over 55 unattached for more info www.thegroup.org.uk.

10th HURSTPIERPOINT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY Hurstpierpoint Village Centre 7.45 pm. 'Withypitts Dahlias - the countryside renowned Dahlia growers who are used by leading event Florists. Illustrated talk by Richards Ramsey. All welcome more info hhs1886@btinternet.com.

10th HURSTPIERPOINT HISTORICAL & GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY The Players Theatre, Hurstpierpoint 7.30 pm. 'Smugglers Sussex' Kevin Newman. See article for more info.

10th AGE UK 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.

11th DITCHLING HISTORY PROJECT White Horse, Ditchling 2 pm. Monthly meet drop in all welcome.

11th POYNINGS POLICE BEAT SURGERY Rushfields Plant Centre, Poynings 11.30 am - 12.30 pm. Come along to get crime prevention & advice on neighbourhood issues.

12th HURSTPIERPOINT POLICE BEAT SURGERY Court Bushes Rec Ground, Willow Way, Hurstpierpoint 9.30 - 10.15 am. Come along to get crime prevention & advice on neighbourhood issues.

12th HASSOCKS POLICE BEAT SURGERY South Downs Garden Centre, Hassocks 11.30 am - 12.30 pm. Come along to get crime prevention & advice on neighbourhood issues.

12th FIBROMYALGIA SUPPORT GROUP Chloe Cafe, South Downs Garden Centre, Hassocks 10.30 am. Support group for Fibromyalgia or Chronic Pain. To book email hassocksfibrogroup@gmail.com.

12th WOMENS BREAKFAST The Greyhound, Keymer 10 am. For a social cooked breakfast. All welcome to book email mo.delaine@btinternet.com.

12th Feb - 6th March PEMBURY HOUSE Clayton Thurs & Fri 10.30 am - 2 pm. Open Garden - Snowdrops, Hellebores and winter flowering shrubs. Book your 90 minute slot at www.ngs.org.uk for more info www.pemburyhouse.co.uk.

13th STAR CINEMA Adastra Hall, Hassocks, 7 pm. Film - 'The Penguin Lessons'. Tea, coffee, wine and raffle. Tickets available on the door.

13th BURGESS HILL HISTORY GROUP Cyprus Hall, Burgess Hill 7.30 pm. 'The History of Witchcraft in Sussex. All welcome. More info www.burgesshillheritagehistory.org.uk.

13th MID SUSSEX AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY Cyprus Hall, Burgess Hill 7.30 pm. www.midsussexars.org.uk. 'Bring and Buy Sale'. Refreshments available. All welcome.

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

14th HEBER OPERA Hurstpierpoint Village Centre 6 pm. 'Serenade to Love'. Tickets 07867 979567.

14th SUSSEX SEWING CLUB Westmeston Parish Hall 10 am - 4 pm. Like minded makers spend the day doing a hobby they love. To book sussexsewingclub@gmail.com.

14th HASSOCKS FOOTBALL CLUB The Hassocks Hotel Beacon Ground, Brighton Road, Hassocks KO 3 pm. (Mens) The Robins take on Erith Town. Bar and Food available. Free entry to kids 16 and under. Please check socials for any changes.

15th BEFRIENDED Court Bushes, Hurstpierpoint 3 - 5 pm. Afternoon Tea Party with quizzes, celebrations, making friends, information, advice and great entertainment. More info www.befriended.org.

16th MID SUSSEX MUSIC HALL The Hassocks Hotel, Station Approach, Hassocks 8 pm. 'Jarrod Dickenson' Tickets www.brighthelmstonepromotions.co.uk.

16th KEYMER FOLK DANCE CLUB URC Church Hall, Hassocks 7.30 pm. Guest caller Colin Coard. No partner needed just come along. www.keymerfolkdanceclub.co.uk.



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16th HASSOCKS WI Adastra Hall, Hassocks 7.30 pm. Annual Meeting, with a recap of the year plus musical entertainment from Belinda and Dave. Visitors welcome.
18th AGE UK 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 01444 450248.
18th TREFOIL GUILD Guide Hall, Semley Road, Hassocks 7.45 pm. Monthly meeting visitors welcome.
19th DITCHLING VILLAGE ASSOCIATION Ditchling Village Hall 10 - 11.30 am. Coffee Morning run by Royal British Legion. All welcome.
20th HURST VILLAGE CINEMA Players Theatre, High Street, Hurstpierpoint 7 pm. Film - Elaha (15). More info and tickets from www.hurstfilms.com or Charlotte Grace.
21st MENS BREAKFAST The Greyhound, Keymer 10 am. For a social cooked breakfast. All welcome to book email alexbaxter66@yahoo.co.uk
21st HOLY TRINITY CHURCH Hurstpierpoint 6 pm. Music and wine evening. 'The Sussex Waits' To book call 01273 835113. See article for more info.
22nd HURST VILLAGE CINEMA Players Theatre, High Street, Hurstpierpoint 2.30 pm. Film - Belle (12A). More info and tickets from www.hurstfilms.com or Charlotte Grace.
23rd HASSOCKS FIELD SOCIETY Adastra Hall, Hassocks, 7.45 pm. 'The history and natural history of the Ditchling Commons' Phil Cribb. All welcome.
23rd CAMEO Keymer Church Hall 2 pm - 4 pm. Open to all - come and enjoy an enjoyable afternoon over a cup of tea.
24th CITIZENS ADVICE LEWES DISTRICT Quaker Meeting House, East Gardens, Ditchling 10.30 am - 1.30 pm. Drop-in for a chat, free, confidential and impartial advice. Email info@lewesdistrictca.org.uk.
24th FIBROMYALGIA SUPPORT GROUP Chloe Cafe, South Downs Garden Centre, Hassocks 10.30 am. Support group for Fibromyalgia or Chronic Pain. To book email hassocksfibrogroup@gmail.com.
25th SOUTH DOWNS WOODTURNERS Upper Beeding Village Hall, 7pm All welcome to the monthly meet. Please visit southdownswoodturners.com for more info. Visitors welcome.
26th BEREAVEMENT WELL-BEING GROUP Clayton Wood, Natural Burial Ground, Brighton Road, Clayton 10 am - 12 noon. Come and meet others who understand what you are going through. www.bereavementcare.uk.
26th LIBERAL DEMOCRATS SURGERY HASSOCKS Parish Council Offices Committee Room 11 am - 12 pm. Sue Hatton, Kristian Berggreen, Chris Hobbs & WSCC Councillor Erika Woodhouse-Truman. No appointment necessary.
27th MID SUSSEX AMATEUR RADIO SOCIETY Cyprus Hall, Burgess Hill 7.30 pm. www.midsussexars.org.uk. 'Nag and Natter Evening'. Refreshments available. All welcome.
27th HURST, HASSOCKS & DITCHLING U3A Adastra Hall, Hassocks 2 pm. 'A Manor in the Making (Preston Manor)' Dan Cox. Small entrance fee. Refreshments inc.
28th HASSOCKS VILLAGE MARKET Age Concern Car Park, 9 am - 1 pm. Local produce, bread, honey, cheese, wine, veg etc.
28th REPAIR CAFE Age Concern Centre, Hassocks, 9.30 -11.30 am. Bring items for repair more info call 01273 040110 or www.hkdtransition.org.uk.
28th HASSOCKS FOOTBALL CLUB The Hassocks Hotel Beacon Ground, Brighton Road, Hassocks KO 3 pm. (Mens) The Robins take on Beckenham Town. Bar and Food available. Free entry to kids 16 and under. Please check socials for any changes.



GILES TURNER
FINANCIAL PLANNING

Have you used your ISA allowance?
How much can you contribute to your pension?

With the end of the tax year on 5 April now only a couple of months away, these questions become increasingly important. This short window provides a valuable opportunity to review your finances and ensure you are making the most of the allowances available to you before the tax year resets.

Building long-term financial security is an ongoing process that requires regular attention and timely decisions. Taking action now can help keep your plans on track and avoid missed opportunities. One of the key roles of an Independent Financial Adviser is to review your financial arrangements and help ensure that, where possible, you are fully utilising the tax-efficient allowances available to you, such as ISAs and pensions.

Effective tax planning plays a crucial role in achieving your long-term financial goals. Each year, a range of allowances and exemptions are made available to help reduce the amount of tax you pay and to encourage saving and investment. However, some of these allowances are strictly time-limited. Once the tax year ends, many of the unused allowances are lost and cannot be reclaimed. Repeatedly missing these opportunities can, over time, have a significant and lasting impact on your financial position and future outcomes.

With the tax year end now firmly in sight, this is an ideal time to take stock, ask the right questions, and put any necessary plans in place while there is still time to act.

“The path to the financial future you desire starts with the plans that you make today.”



If you would like to find out more, please get in touch.

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STEVE'S BACK PAGE GOSSIP

Welcome to 2026 everybody strap yourselves in I think we're in for one hell of a ride.
Memo to the organisers of Light Up Hassocks - if we're going to actually have one this year - could you make sure the Happy Christmas sign on the side of Hassocks Hardware is actually switched on. It seems a bit of a waste of time having it otherwise I assume there is a money issue going on here as to who pays for the electricity for it?
I know it's a bit early in the year for any kind of excitement, but rumour has it that after De la Casa finally closes down the shop will reopen as a wait for it – an Estate Agent. Yippee we really need another one of those that'll have hoards flocking to Hassocks. Don't get me wrong there's nothing wrong with estate agents a nicer bunch of people you couldn't hope to meet, unless you're buying or selling a house. It's a waste of a retail outlet and I was hoping for something a bit more exciting than that. Sadly, at my age that's a thing of the past and have we really got enough houses coming on to the market to supply all these estate agents.
Because of Nola's acid reflux and me having teeth like an old horse so I can't chew very well, we decided for our Christmas treat we'd do something a little less gastro and a bit more cardiovascular. So, we went on the Glow Walk at Wakehurst Place. It was absolutely brilliant, thoroughly enjoyed that very much and would recommend it to anyone which we did. We were told to go to Leonardslee which was amazing and we'd love that too. Well, I think we were spoilt by Glow Wild, there was this very annoying music playing over and over again, you couldn't get away from it and I'm fairly fit, but it was a bit more like scaling Everest. I was expecting to find a defibrillator station around the next bend, however it was very busy probably with people training for the next Olympics, but for us it lacked the wow factor, which we definitely got from Glow Walk – Sorry Leonardslee it just wasn't for us.
What else is going on locally? Well after nearly 60 years on our High Street 'Deux Amies' has disappeared - but in name only – you'd still got the same great service and wonderful staff in the newly titled hairdressers, but who remembers the original owner Brian Penny? He was very well respected in the hairdressing industry and used to teach in the local colleges. He was particularly famous for putting hair up, this was definitely his forte, every Saturday morning there was a steady stream of brides and bridesmaids turning up to have their hair done. He was very proud of the name he chose 'Deux Amies'- two friends, but nothing is forever and now we have 'Hair Edit'
Across the road on the other side 'BN6 Beer & Tap' haven't changed their name - but they do have new owners, Claire, James & James. They've been very busy giving the place a real makeover ready for you to go in and enjoy yourself with all sorts of events including live music.
A few shops down from BN6 is 'My Vintage' the property including the flat above is on the market as a property investment. I'll be interested to see who takes it and for what.
Anyway, I'd better go now, people please keep shopping locally we need every penny so we can get to stay where we are. If you listen to Jeremy Vine you'll know what lies ahead for small shops but in the meantime thank you for letting me know how much you enjoy the back page of the Talk About. If you got new towels for Christmas presents you can always give us the old ones if you don't want them. Thank you Steve

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