

Biobead Pollution threatens Kent coastline

Calls for heavy fines as environmental fears grow



Checks are underway along the Kent coastline after millions of tiny plastic pellets – known as biobeads – were washed up at Camber Sands, sparking fears the pollution could soon reach beaches in Lydd-on-Sea, Greatstone and Dungeness.

The pellets, used in wastewater treatment, are believed to have entered the sea through a “damaged filter screen” at Southern Water’s Eastbourne Wastewater Treatment Works. The company has admitted it is “highly likely” the biobeads came from its site, and has launched an internal investigation.

Folkestone and Hythe District Council (FHDC) has confirmed that precautionary checks are being carried out on beaches across the

district, including the Romney Marsh coast, to monitor for any signs of contamination.

A council spokesperson said: “We are aware of the matter and have carried out beach checks since Friday.”

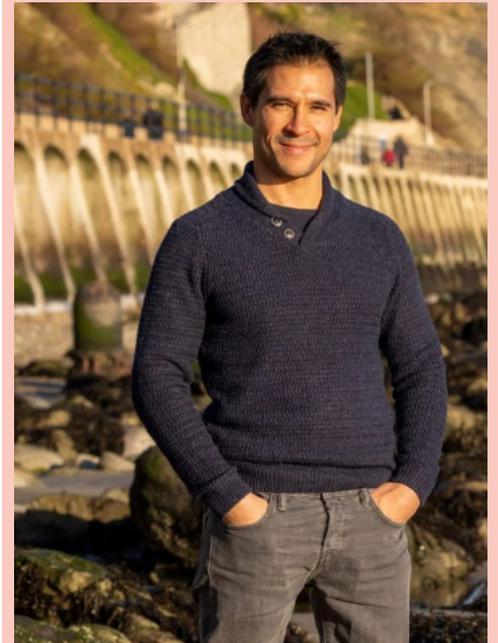
While nothing has yet been detected locally, residents are increasingly worried about the potential impact on wildlife and the wider marine environment. The small plastic beads, often mistaken for fish eggs, pose a serious risk to seabirds, seals, and fish who can ingest them – with fatal consequences.

Environmental groups say that even with clean-up operations continuing at Camber Sands, it is “impossible”

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Is our MP really in touch with his Constituents?

By Sam Reid



A storm has been brewing across the Romney Marsh and Folkestone & Hythe patch this week, as our local MP Tony Vaughan appeared to launch a very public broadside—not at the opposition, but at the very Government he was elected to support.

In a bold statement released on social media, Mr Vaughan questioned the Home Secretary’s plans to adopt elements of the Danish-style immigration system—a proposal broadly welcomed by many residents who feel the current asylum process is buckling under pressure. Yet instead of reflecting the tone of his constituency inbox, Vaughan’s message struck an altogether different note.

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to remove all of the pellets. Rother District Council has warned that further quantities are likely to wash up in the coming weeks and months.

Locals along the Kent coast say the prospect of these microplastics spreading is alarming. Lydd-on-Sea resident Tina Marsh said:

“We’re right next door to Camber – it’s only a matter of time before these beads end up here too. We already see plastic rubbish on the tide line, and now this could endanger our birds, our seals, and the whole ecosystem. It’s heartbreaking.”

Another resident, Mark Ellis, added: “Southern Water need to be hit hard in the pocket. Fines should be massive – not a slap on the wrist. They’ve had warning after warning about pollution and still it keeps happening. This is our coastline, not their dumping ground.”

Adding his concern, David Wimble, Cabinet Member for Environment at Kent County Council, said: “It is worrying how these beads have got into the sea. Something somewhere has clearly malfunctioned. The first priority is to ensure that this does not continue, and then we need to look very carefully at what is going to be done to make sure



it never happens again – and that those responsible pay the price for the clean-up.”

Dog owners are being urged to keep pets on leads and prevent them from eating or playing with the pellets. Volunteers from local groups, including environmental activists from across Romney Marsh, have pledged to help monitor beaches and report any sightings.

Southern Water says it is continuing clean-up efforts at Camber, with 50 staff on site. The company insists it is “unlikely” the spill will affect Kent beaches but has promised to respond immediately if the situation changes.

However, many in coastal communities remain unconvinced. As one local councillor put it:

“Every time we’re told not to worry, it ends up on our beaches anyway. The damage to wildlife can last for decades – these beads don’t just disappear.”

With winter tides and storms likely to stir up more debris, there are growing calls for tougher penalties and stricter oversight of the water industry – before another environmental disaster hits the Kent coast.

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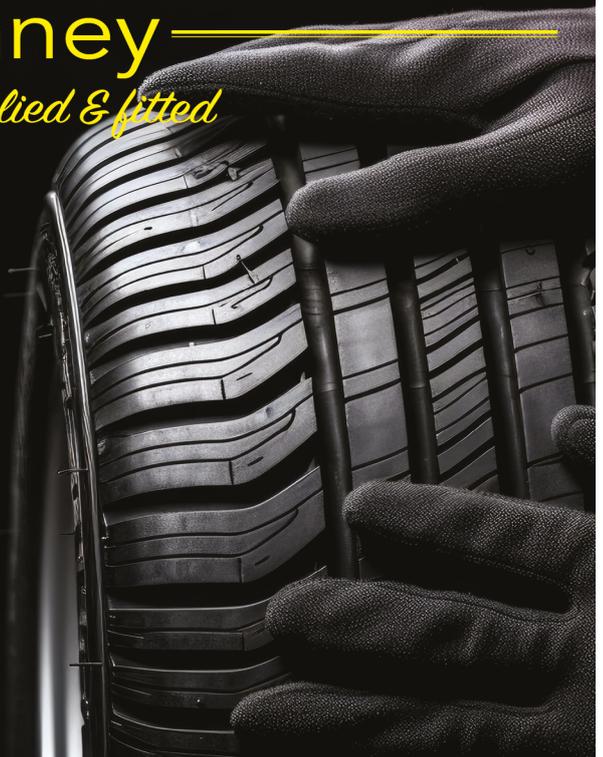
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MP appears to be on the side of legal migration over the views of the residents who elected him... is this what you voted for?

“The Prime Minister said in September that we are at a fork in the road. These asylum proposals suggest we have taken the wrong turning,” he wrote, before setting out his belief that deporting recognised refugees is “wrong”, warning that such policies create “perpetual limbo and alienation”.

He went further still, accusing the Government’s stance of fuelling “divisiveness” and contributing to “racism and abuse in our communities”.

Powerful words. But are they the words his constituents would choose?

This is where the controversy begins.

For a district that has consistently demanded stronger border controls, quicker removals, and firmer action on illegal migration, many are asking whether Mr Vaughan’s comments reflect the genuine mood on the ground—or the ideological leanings of Westminster’s echo chamber. To question the direction of his own Government is one thing; to imply that tougher policies may encourage racism is another entirely.

Local commentators have been quick to point out that asylum decisions currently take too long, accommodation sites are overstretched, and public frustration is increasing—not decreasing. Even Vaughan admits this, noting the Home Office backlog, the patchy UK-France cooperation, and the lack of removals for failed asylum claims.

Yet instead of backing reforms aimed at fixing these issues, the MP argues that revisiting the safety of a person’s home country every few years “would just move huge amounts of resource away from making our asylum system work”.

That may be true. But critics say that unless the country adopts a firmer, clearer framework—similar to Denmark’s—nothing will change.

So the question being asked across pubs, parish meetings, and social media threads this week is simple:

Is our MP in touch with the people he represents? Many believe Mr Vaughan has misjudged the mood, prioritising Westminster positioning over the lived realities of coastal communities bearing the brunt of migration pressures. Others, however, say he is showing courage by challenging Government policy when he believes it to be wrong.

Either way, his statement has shone a spotlight on a rift

between the national debate and local expectations. And unless Mr Vaughan re-engages directly with the concerns of his constituents, this may not be the last time he faces accusations of being out of step with the people who sent him to Parliament.

As one long-time Marsh resident put it bluntly: “He might want to ask himself which fork in the road he’s actually on—the Government’s, or the electorate’s.”

Local Voices Hit Back: “Our MP Is Drifting Further Away From Us”

If Tony Vaughan MP thought his statement attacking the Government’s proposed Danish-style immigration reforms would go down well locally, the reaction over the past 48 hours suggests quite the opposite. Across Romney Marsh, Hythe, Lydd, Dymchurch and the wider district, residents have been vocal—very vocal—about what they see as yet another example of a Westminster MP who simply doesn’t understand the realities of life on the ground.

The first to wade in was Peter Hulme from New Romney, who did not mince his words:

“I have seen some stupid comments in my time but this is the quickest way to a P45 I have ever seen. This is the trouble when you get a human rights lawyer as your MP—they are so out of touch with the reality of the problem. Either that or he can see the writing on the wall and has joined up with the ultra-left wing of the party.”

Peter’s sentiment is echoed widely. For many, the issue isn’t whether you lean left or right—it’s whether you understand what coastal communities like ours are dealing with. Residents here aren’t speaking from abstract theory; they’re talking about overstretched services, coastal hotels filled with asylum accommodation for years, and a sense that local concerns rarely reach the Westminster bubble.

Sarah Locke from Lydd described Vaughan’s statement as “ideological waffle”, adding:

“We voted for someone to sort the system out, not defend it. People are fed up with political grandstanding. Fix the backlog first—then lecture us.”

Meanwhile Jill Edwards from Hythe, who describes herself as a “lifelong moderate”, said the MP’s tone was the real problem.

“There’s a difference between compassion and naivety. Calling people racist because they want firm controls is insulting. Most of us simply want fairness, speed, and clarity in the system.”

Even among Labour-leaning voters, there is discomfort. One local party member—who asked not to be named—remarked:

“It feels like Tony’s angling for a front-bench job someday. But he needs to survive his own constituency first. This place is not North London.”

The thread running through all these remarks is unmistakable: residents feel overlooked, dismissed, or spoken down to. For a community that prides itself on straight talking, Tony Vaughan’s latest intervention has landed badly.

If this week has shown anything, it’s that the question being asked isn’t just whether our MP is in touch—it’s whether he even realises how far he’s drifted.

Whether he course-corrects now may decide far more than the next headline.

Future of Hythe Golf Club and Princes Parade Remains uncertain as £120m housing plan shelved

Plans for a £120 million redevelopment of Hythe Golf Club have been put on hold — but questions remain over the long-term future of the entire seafront strip, including neighbouring Princes Parade.

Developer GSE Group — which owns the golf club and the adjoining Hythe Imperial Hotel — had unveiled proposals for 291 new homes, a leisure complex with a public swimming pool, and a scaled-down nine-hole course. The scheme was billed as a replacement for a scrapped “Center Parc-style” resort of 220 chalets and boating lakes dropped last year after public backlash.

The latest plan included 48 three-bedroom homes and 243 one-, two- and three-bedroom flats, with around 25% classed as affordable. A new clubhouse, adventure golf attraction themed around the Napoleonic Wars, and major investment in the hotel — including a new west wing, spa, and outdoor pool — were also on the table.

However, amid ongoing uncertainty surrounding Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), sources close to the project have suggested the proposals have now been quietly shelved, with no planning application expected in the near future.

Local observers say this could reignite speculation that the entire coastal strip — from the golf club to Princes Parade — could eventually be earmarked for large-scale housing once reorganisation reshapes local planning powers.



Princes Parade itself has long been a flashpoint in Hythe. The 18-acre site between the Royal Military Canal and the seafront was originally lined up for a £29 million, 150-home development in 2017. But earlier this year Folkestone and Hythe District Council leader Cllr Jim Martin confirmed the land would be “left as it is” after more than a decade of fierce opposition. Despite that assurance, the land still holds outline planning permission — and with the council’s flagship Otterpool Park new town stalled and housing delivery targets being missed, campaigners fear that both Princes Parade and Hythe Golf Club could once again find themselves in the crosshairs of developers when the next tier of local government takes shape.

One long-term Hythe resident told The Looker: “They keep saying it’s all off, but nobody really believes it. With the way things are going, you can see the whole stretch from the Imperial to the canal ending up as one long housing estate.”

For now, the golf course remains open — but the fairways, like much of Hythe’s seafront, are sitting on uncertain ground.

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KCC opposition accused of spreading false claims as Reform-led Council hits back

Kent County Council's opposition groups have been accused of peddling false claims and feeding "politically motivated misinformation" to a willing press, after a turbulent three weeks in County Hall triggered a surge of sensational headlines.



The council has faced criticism following the expulsion of several elected members — but the reasons behind those decisions are now emerging. One councillor was removed after complaints from female KCC staff regarding inappropriate behaviour, followed by a refusal to cooperate with party whips. Others, including two former leadership hopefuls, were reportedly exposed by their own backbench colleagues who were keen to "head off a revolt".

While uncomfortable, senior figures say the expulsions show strong leadership rather than chaos, arguing that any decisive landslide victory inevitably brings individuals with "personal agendas" rather than a commitment to serving the county as a unified team.

Yet, according to Reform councillors, the storm has been worsened not by governance issues — but by what they describe as inaccurate and inflammatory reporting from parts of Kent's traditional media. Ironically, one of the titles that has been "going in hardest" on Reform UK is the Kent Messenger, which, according to a member of its own staff, has lost nearly 1,500 readers since Reform took office.

The flashpoint came last week when the Kent Messenger published a story claiming that household waste recycling centres were under threat and that the Cabinet Member for the Environment, Cllr David Wimble, had "gone to ground" amid rumours of his resignation from both his cabinet post and the Reform party.

The report ricocheted across national — and even international — media within hours, leaving the councillor fielding calls late into Friday evening.

Speaking to The Looker, Cllr Wimble said the suggestion that he had disappeared was "absolute rubbish".

"I am normally either the first or second person into the office at about 7.30 every morning, Monday to Friday," he said. "So I have no idea where they get this information from."

Fire & Rescue 'Danger' Claims Branded Nonsense

Another sensationalised claim involved Kent Fire & Rescue Service, with some reports alleging it was now operating under "highly dangerous conditions" because two expelled councillors had been members of the joint Kent Fire & Rescue and KCC committee.

Cllr Wimble dismissed this as yet another baseless attempt to stir public fear: "That is absolute rubbish. It's an advisory committee only — it does not make operational decisions of any kind. And the two members removed were replaced within just a few days."

One report even suggested Kent could be left vulnerable in the event of a major emergency. Cllr Wimble said such assertions showed a complete misunderstanding of how emergency governance works.

"If there was a major county emergency, it would go through the Kent Resilience Framework. Decisions are made by the Leader of the Council and the Kent Resilience Group — not a sub-committee that meets a handful of times a year. The scaremongering served no purpose whatsoever."

For the record, the committee in question does not meet again until January.

Waste Centre Rumours 'Politically Motivated'

Returning to the household waste site rumours, Cllr Wimble was unequivocal: "I can categorically state that I have built household waste sites into my £120 million budget. Not only are no sites being changed — we're planning to expand our reuse centres across Kent."

He added that the reuse centres were "a win-win for the county", reducing disposal costs — currently £165 per tonne — boosting the circular economy, and raising thousands of pounds every week for local charities.

"A few opposition councillors are being mischievous, feeding scraps to the press, and because Reform is a hot topic, it gets blown out of all proportion."

Rumours Over Library Sell-Offs 'Completely Wrong'

Another rumour doing the rounds suggests that libraries may be sold off. While the portfolio is not his, Cllr Wimble said the narrative was yet another distortion: "Libraries aren't being shut. But the way people use them has changed. I had a lady shout at me about closing libraries — but she hadn't borrowed a book in ten years."

The council is instead exploring turning some sites into modern community hubs offering IT access, support services and flexible book ordering.

Residents Speak Out

Local people acknowledged that their own library use has changed dramatically: Helen Jarvis from Folkestone: "I honestly haven't borrowed a book in at least 12 years. I read everything on my tablet now."

Mark Betts, from New Romney: "I used the library all the time when my kids were small. Now I can't remember the last time I walked through the door."

Sandra Day from Hythe: "I haven't borrowed a book since school. Updating libraries into hubs is the only way forward."

As Kent settles into its first months under a Reform-led administration, it appears the political battles are being fought as fiercely in the press as in the council chamber — and the war over "fake news" looks far from over.

Editor's Word

Deputy Editor
Peter Martin



I've been called back into the office for a few weeks as David has finally taken some well-earned time off for his honeymoon. And yes — before you ask — as I had the honour of being his best man, of course everything went without a hitch. As you read this, he is either exploring New York or has just stepped aboard the Queen Mary 2 for a bit of winter sunshine around the Caribbean. Not jealous at all... honest.

Before he left, David made sure a few bits were put in place for this edition, but I should mention that delivery to the shops may not be until Wednesday morning. We're still sorting out the last part of the delivery chain — apparently even newspapers get jet-lag when the editor goes abroad.

It's hard to believe Christmas is just around the corner. The team is already looking forward to the festive parties, and with two more editions to come before the big day, we're gearing up for a busy run-in. After that, we're likely to take a three-week break over Christmas before we step into our 19th year. David has always pledged to keep the paper free for as long as possible, but as many of you will appreciate, that gets harder every year.

This is why we want to say a heartfelt thank you to those who have given donations — especially the many readers who slip a pound into the pot when picking up their copy. It really does make a difference, and we are genuinely grateful.

Stepping in to help David and the team these past few weeks has opened my eyes to the sheer pace of it all. As soon as one edition goes to print, the mild panic of "what on earth are we putting in the next one?" begins. We always strive to lead with local stories, but when it's a genuine no-news week, I can now see exactly how David has aged 20 years in the last 10. With three other jobs on the go as well, it's a punishing schedule. People often say they don't know how he does it — and a few have said they don't know why he does it — but the answer is simple: because he believes in this community. And that belief is what has made The Looker the biggest free newspaper in the South East.

But none of that would matter without you — the readers. If you didn't pick it up, share it, or demand it, there'd be no point printing it. So from all of us: thank you.

Enjoy the edition — and spare a thought for David, sunning himself while the rest of us keep the press rolling.

Peter Martin

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Lydd Town Council is delighted to announce that their Band Concert will be performed by the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas for the second year running and take place at 7pm on Saturday 16th December in All Saints' Church, High Street Lydd. Tickets are available during opening hours Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 9am until 12.30pm from Lydd Town Council at the Guild Hall, 13 High Street Lydd. We are requesting donations for the tickets and raffle prizes and the proceeds will be donated by Lydd Town Council to the Gurkha Welfare Trust.

This year (2019) marks fifty years of The Gurkha Welfare Trust in Nepal. In the late 1960's it became apparent that a great number of Gurkha veterans and their dependants in Nepal were facing destitution. Many had served in WW2, but not completed the minimum 15 years to qualify for a British Army Pension. A public appeal was launched and today, 50 years on with the incredible support of the British Public the Trust continues to support Gurkha veterans and their communities in Nepal.

Thousands of Gurkha veterans and their families now receive a guaranteed monthly income, have a roof over their head, have medical assistance and live in communities who have vital access to clean water and education.

Last year the Lydd Town Christmas Concert raised a brilliant £2000 towards the work of the Trust in 2018. To put this into perspective £1,350 is the average annual cost of a motorbike, allowing the Trust's teams to reach the homes of their beneficiaries to provide vital care. In addition, the average cost of fuel for these bikes is £232 month so the concert last year could have paid for nearly 9 months fuel.

They also continue to provide a Welfare Pension, currently £984 year that is distributed to impoverished Gurkha veterans or veterans who are not eligible for the standard Army pension. This is for some their only income.

Please help Lydd Town Council beat the target of £2,000 by attending the Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas Concert on 16th November and giving generously when you collect your tickets from the Guild Hall.

The band was first raised in 1859 as part of an Indian Army Gurkha Regiment called the Sirmoor Rifle Regiment but when India was partitioned in 1947 and the 2nd Gurkha Regiment chose to affiliate with Britain the band members all stayed in India. In 1949 sanction was given to raise the Band again and 56 recruits were given musical instruction. In May 1951 Captain JPC Bailey MBE was appointed as the first Director of Music. From that day forward they have delighted crowds with their fast and slick marching displays, lively concert music, ethnic Nepali folk tunes and colourful traditional dances.

The band has travelled extensively throughout the world. Australia, Brunei, Canada, South Korea and Malaya were visited in the 70's and more recently the Solomon Islands, Falkland Islands, France, Canada, Korea, Germany,



Cyprus, Belgium and Australia. Today, musicians are recruited into the Band after their basic military training. Initial music instruction then commences, first under the supervision of the Director of Music then after approximately four years at the Royal Military School of Music, Kneller Hall in London.

Operational tours include Op Palatine (Bosnia) in 2000 –1 and Op Fingal (Afghanistan) in 2002.

More recently the Band has toured Nepal, Germany and also includes the 46th International Pilgrimage to Lourdes, QBPs at the Ambassador's residences in Luxembourg, Brussels and Dusseldorf, the 23rd NATO Festival of Music, service at the Battle of Somme memorial, Thiepval France, the Nijmegen Marches, Berlin, Nice, the USA for the International Military Tattoo, Cyprus, India and now the Lydd Town Council band concert for the second year running. Lydd Town Council would like to thank Major Rick Beven for all his assistance.

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With the summer of colourful floral displays behind us, Hythe in Bloom is delighted to provide new colourful planting for the winter all along the High Street.

Thanks to the generosity of sponsors – Lawrence Estate Agents, Charlier Construction and Hythe Town Council - all the High Street planters have been stripped out and a wonderful selection of plants including crocuses, pansies and polyanthus have been planted. Special thanks this year also goes to the The Chocolate Deli, Beck Mobiles and The Boathouse for contributions in kind.

The work was carried out by a team of local volunteers keen to ensure that Hythe looks its colourful best throughout the year.

Sally Chesters, organiser of HIB said: 'Once again, the brilliant team of Hythe in Bloom volunteers has made a great job of planting-up the High Street. Without their continuing input and that of our sponsors, all year-round floral displays would not be possible. We look forward to seeing the High Street once again filled with colour for local residents and visitors to Hythe to enjoy.'



Photograph shows Tony and Daria Keeler planting the troughs in the High Street



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Rumours over migrant centre dismissed as dangerous scaremongering



Scaremongering is not helpful

Reports circulating on social media that adult male migrants are being housed at Peacock House in Lydd have been dismissed as false and potentially dangerous.

Claims suggesting that up to 15 asylum seekers with “beards” were currently staying at the site have been flatly denied by Kent County Council (KCC), which owns the property.

Peacock House was purchased earlier this year by KCC — under instruction from the Home Office — to serve as a temporary reception centre for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children under the age of 16. The property is currently being refurbished to meet safeguarding and welfare standards ahead of opening next year.

However, rumours began to spread online in recent days suggesting that the property was already being used to accommodate adult men. Some posts even hinted that local vigilantes might attempt to damage the building.

KCC Romney Marsh councillor David Wimble has urged residents to ignore the speculation, calling it “completely unfounded” and warning that spreading such claims could have serious consequences.

“It is no secret that KCC have purchased the building — this was agreed under the last administration, and the sale went through in May,” said Cllr Wimble.

“At the moment, I understand that work is underway to make it fit for use, and that reports of asylum seekers with beards staying there are simply not true. The people seen at the site are workmen.”

He added: “It really is dangerous to spread such inflammatory rumours, particularly when some appear to be coming from a local councillor. This sort of misinformation is not helpful to anyone.”

Under UK law, local authorities have a statutory duty under the Children Act 1989 to provide care and protection for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children who arrive in their area. Once a child is assessed as being under 18 and without a responsible adult, the council becomes their corporate parent, responsible for providing safe accommodation, education, healthcare, and emotional support until they are placed in foster care or supported lodgings.

Kent County Council has long been on the frontline of this national issue, receiving some of the highest numbers of unaccompanied minors in the country due to its proximity to the Channel. The council operates several reception and assessment centres across the county, working in partnership with the Home Office and local agencies to ensure the welfare of these young people.

Peacock House will be one of these dedicated facilities — designed to provide a safe and temporary environment where children can be properly assessed and supported before being transferred to foster homes across the UK.

Cllr Wimble concluded by reminding residents that: “Whatever anyone’s political views, these are children — and Kent has a legal and moral duty to care for them safely. Turning this into a social media witch-hunt helps no one and risks putting both staff and the wider community at risk.”

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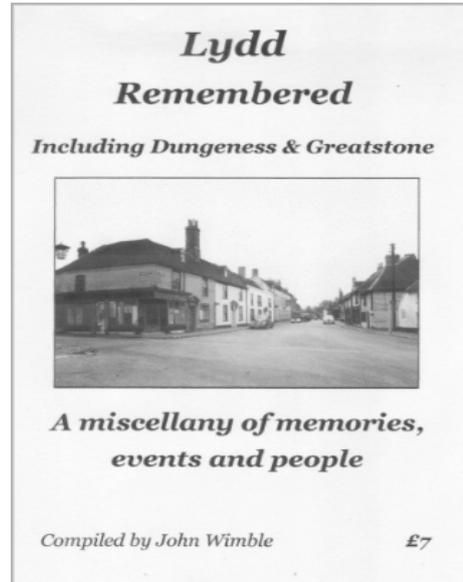
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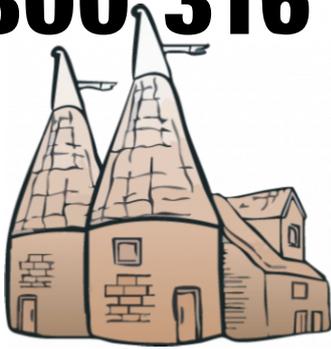
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Illegal worker crackdown: KCC vows to hit rogue traders hard after string of immigration raids



Kent County Council has reinforced its pledge to protect residents and legitimate businesses after a series of dramatic immigration raids resulted in 13 arrests across Turkish restaurant chain Aspendos.

Home Office enforcement teams, backed by Kent Police, swooped on restaurants in Ashford, Margate and Folkestone on November 7, detaining staff suspected of working illegally in the UK. The raids form part of a national push that has seen enforcement action reach the highest levels since records began.

Four arrests were made at the Margate restaurant in Cecil Square, three at the Ashford branch in Bank Street, and five across two separate premises in Folkestone – three from Cheriton High Street and two from West Terrace. The Dymchurch Kebab House disputes any link to Aspendos and denies that anyone was detained there.

The Aspendos chain also operates restaurants in Deal, Dover and Sturry, but the Home Office has not confirmed whether these sites are subject to further investigation.

A Home Office spokesperson was unequivocal:

“Illegal working undermines honest employers, undercuts local wages, and fuels the criminal industry of immigration crime. This government is determined to clamp down on that illegal activity in every sector where it occurs, including restaurants.”

Figures released alongside the raids show a heavy escalation in enforcement. More than 8,000 illegal migrants were arrested between October 2024 and September 2025, following over 11,000 visits by Immigration Enforcement – a 63% rise in arrests and a 51% rise in operational activity. More than 1,050 foreign nationals encountered during these operations have already been removed from the UK.

“WE WILL NOT TOLERATE ILLEGAL TRADING IN KENT”



Kent County Council’s Trading Standards team says local people can expect an uncompromising approach when it comes to clamping down on illegal business practices – especially those that exploit workers, evade tax, or undermine law-abiding traders.

A KCC spokesperson said the council is working “hand-in-glove” with national enforcement teams:

“Kent residents deserve safe, legal and honest businesses operating in their communities. Illegal trading – whether through unlawful workers, unsafe goods, or criminal business models – hurts everyone.

Our Trading Standards officers are committed to doing everything in their power to protect the public and ensure a level playing field for legitimate Kent businesses.”

The spokesperson added that KCC stands fully behind the surge in enforcement and will continue to support joint operations.

COMMUNITY DEMANDS ACTION

Residents across the affected towns have voiced concerns that illegal trading has become increasingly brazen. Local business owners – many facing rising costs and tight margins – say they welcome a tougher stance, arguing that rogue operators “drag the whole industry down.”

KCC emphasised that anyone with concerns about illegal trading, unsafe premises, or suspected immigration abuses should report them immediately, with assurances that all information will be acted upon swiftly.

As the investigation into Aspendos continues, the message from both the Home Office and Kent County Council is clear: illegal trading will not be tolerated, and enforcement is only getting tougher.

End of the rails for Ghost Train

By The Looker News Team



It's the end of the line for one of Dymchurch's most recognisable seaside attractions – the much-loved ghost train at Dymchurch Amusement Park has been demolished to make way for exciting new developments.

For decades, the rickety old ride has been thrilling – and occasionally terrifying – generations of visitors with its spooky scenes, flashing lights, and jump scares. But this week, workmen moved in to begin dismantling the



familiar structure, signalling the end of an era for the popular family park.

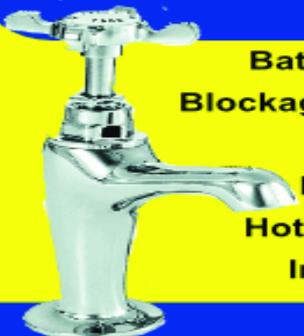
A spokesperson for the independent, award-winning amusement park confirmed that the decision was part of a wider investment plan to modernise the seafront site and introduce new, family-friendly rides for the 2026 season.

Local resident Paul Simmons, who has lived in Dymchurch all his life, said: "It's sad to see it go. That old ghost train has given good service for years, scaring children of all ages – and quite a few adults too! It was part of the charm of coming down to the seafront. But it's good to see the park investing for the future."

Another passer-by, Jane Foster, who was walking her dog along the beach as the diggers moved in, added: "It felt strange seeing it being taken down – that ghost train has been part of the Dymchurch skyline for as long as I can remember. But I suppose everything has its time, and it will be exciting to see what comes next."

Park owners say the replacement attraction will continue the tradition of fun and nostalgia that Dymchurch Amusement Park is famous for – ensuring that while the ghost train may be gone, the spirit of seaside entertainment will live on.

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Gladiators Star Matt Morsia unveils ambitious vision to revive Folkestone Sports Centre Gym



Folkestone's long-dormant sports centre has been handed a powerful boost – courtesy of a familiar face who began his fitness journey within its very walls.

Matt Morsia, the hugely popular YouTuber and BBC Gladiators star known as “Legend”, has announced bold plans to help transform the Folkestone Sports Centre gym as part of a major redevelopment led by The Sports Trust.

Speaking to his 2.36 million subscribers on his MattDoesFitness channel, the Hythe-based athlete revealed he has officially joined forces with the Trust to overhaul the tired gym space and breathe new life into a site that has sat largely unused since last year.

For Morsia, the project is far more than a professional venture – it's deeply personal.

“When I started my YouTube channel nearly 13 years ago, I used to train in my local sports centre gym,” he said. “This was literally the gym that my channel was built on. It was a bit rough around the edges, but I loved it – I’ve got so many awesome memories in this place.”

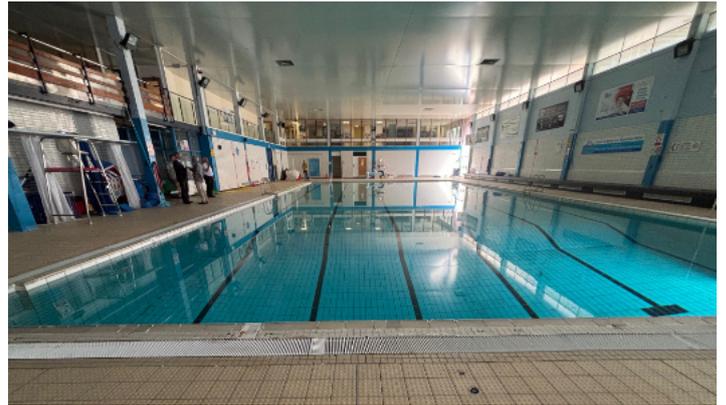
His nostalgia, combined with his passion for supporting the local fitness community, made the decision to get involved an easy one.

“Building a gym of this scale is something I’ve always wanted to do, particularly in my local area,” he added.

A Vision for a Gym That Serves Everyone

In the video, Morsia is seen touring the derelict building with Dan Hulme, CEO of The Sports Trust – the organisation credited by Matt as having “literally saved it from extinction”.

Together they walk through the boarded-up entrance, the old golf clubhouse, and the abandoned upstairs gym area, pointing out the sections earmarked for major transformation.



Walls are set to come down, floors will be extended, and dedicated zones will be created for a wide variety of workouts. Crucially, Morsia says the aim is to build a space accessible to beginners, seasoned athletes, and everyone in between.

“The end goal is that it’s a gym for anyone, but it’s also a serious gym,” he said. “I want it to be used by athletes as well as the general population.”

Though he has already opened three Morsia gyms across the UK, he admitted this project dwarfs everything he’s done before. “This is bigger – a lot bigger,” he said.



A Centre with new life on the horizon

The video also captured other key areas of the sprawling complex, including both swimming pools – one drained, the other still full – the indoor climbing wall, and the once-proud dry ski slope now slowly being reclaimed by nature.

Earlier this month, The Sports Trust confirmed its aim to reopen the main swimming pool by July 2026, marking the first major milestone in a phased return to full operation.

Dan Hulme said their top priorities are crystal clear: “For us, the crucial parts are going to be the pool, the gym and the sports hall. Everything else is really important to us, but the guys who ran this beforehand did an amazing job keeping it open for the community for 50 years, and we need to make sure it’s got another 50 years ahead.”

With excitement building, Morsia’s involvement is being seen as a major morale boost for the project – and for local residents eager to see the centre flourish again.

For a venue that shaped one of the UK’s most recognisable fitness personalities, its next chapter now looks stronger than ever.

Scouts on Parade – Spotlight on Squirrels



On Remembrance Sunday, the Romney Marsh Scout Groups demonstrated a powerful sense of respect and togetherness. Youngsters from 1st Lydd, 1st Dymchurch, and 1st New Romney took part alongside leaders and volunteers in the services and parades that commemorated the occasion. This year, the event was especially meaningful as the 1st Lydd group formally welcomed their youngest members—the Squirrels—who stood out in their vibrant red sweatshirts, signifying an important new chapter for Scouting in the area.

Despite facing the demands of a lengthy day and a considerable walk, the Squirrels, who are just 4 to 6 years old, participated with their older peers to pay tribute to those who have sacrificed for their country. Their energy and determination were evident and deeply appreciated. Special thanks were expressed to the leaders who volunteered their time, as well as to the Royal British Legion and other volunteers who ensured the smooth and safe running of the events for everyone involved.

Welcoming the Squirrels: A New Adventure Begins

In recent weeks, the 1st Lydd group has established the first Squirrel Drey on Romney Marsh, creating new opportunities for



the area's youngest Scouts to experience adventure and friendship. The group recently celebrated their inaugural Squirrel Investiture, marking the official beginning of the Scouting journey for these children. At a meeting before the ceremony, the Squirrels engaged in the spirit of Remembrance by making their own Poppy pin wheels, combining creativity with important lessons about the past and the value of community.

Looking to the Future: Expanding Opportunities Encouraged by the success of the Squirrels at 1st Lydd, there are now plans to introduce Squirrel Dreys to other local groups, with the aim of offering even more young children the chance to take part. The Scout Groups are appealing to the wider community to get involved, emphasising that every child should have the opportunity to feel included and valued. Their message is clear: sometimes, change starts with the action we choose to take ourselves.



Get Involved: Shaping the Next Generation

The Romney Marsh Scout Groups continue to lead by example, not only in their commemorations on Remembrance Sunday but also in their commitment to building an inclusive and adventurous environment for the next generation. Community members who are interested in supporting this growing movement are encouraged to reach out and help shape the future of Scouting in the area. The groups are seeking youngsters aged 16 and over, as well as adults from all walks of life, to get involved and make a difference.

You can be the change our young people deserve—find out more by contacting your local Group, visiting their Facebook page, searching for them online, or calling 01797 363657 for an informal chat and further details.

LYDD IN LIGHTS 2025

Lydd Town Council will be sponsoring the Lydd in Lights competition again this year and are hoping that residents of the Parish will participate in decorating the exterior of their properties as in previous years with outdoor festive lighting and decorations which bring joy and a smile to people's faces at Christmas time in Lydd.

Judging will take place week commencing December 8th this year so please have your decorations on display by that date to be in with a chance of winning the star prize of a hamper filled with lots of Christmas festive food and drink.

Councillor Goddard said "I am hoping that Lydd in Lights displays will be bigger and better this year to bring Christmas cheer and I hope that the festive lights will brighten up the Parish of Lydd!"

If you would like to nominate a property that you feel has done a great job of decorating in the festive spirit then please email your nominations to the Town Clerk, Angela, by email townclerk@lyddtowncouncil.gov.uk or phone (you can leave a message) 01797 320999 by 7th December

As in previous years there will be winning displays chosen from both Lydd Town and Coast.

The Lydd in Lights competition will support the local economy as the hamper prizes awarded will all be made up of products purchased from local businesses.

LYDD in LIGHTS!



COMPETITION TO FIND THE BEST DISPLAY OF CHRISTMAS LIGHTS IN THE PARISH

PRIZE WINNERS
WILL RECEIVE CHRISTMAS HAMPERS

Judging will take place week commencing December 8th 2025
To nominate a property contact the Town Clerk on 01797 320999 or townclerk@lyddtowncouncil.gov.uk by 12 noon on 7th December

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Camden Market- 8th November, £20.00

Ypres on Armistice Day – 11th November, £86.00

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Hever Castle Christmas Lunch – Various Dates £68.00

Bruges at Christmas Time – Various Dates from £80.00

Rochester Dickensian Christmas Festival – 7th December, £29.50

ABBA Christmas Party Night with Two-Course Meal – 22nd November, £69.00

Bubbles & Bubl  with Afternoon Tea – 20th December, £69.00



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Departing Monday 1st December 2025, 3 Nights from £485.00 per person

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Departing Tuesday 23rd December 2025, 4 Nights from £605.00 per person

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Dates for your Diary

Email your Dates for your Diary to: john@thelooker.co.uk

Thursday 27th November

Lydd Meeting Point, Hardy Hall, 10 a.m.
Dance Moves with Chris, St. Mary's Bay Village Hall, 10.15 a.m.
Pebbles Dementia Café, St. Peter's Hall, Greatstone, 10.30 a.m. (2nd & 4th Thurs)
Craft "N" Laughs, St. Peter's Hall, Greatstone, 2 p.m.
Dymchurch Short Mat Bowls, Village Hall, 6 p.m.

Friday 28th November

Pilates, Dymchurch Village Hall, 10 a.m.
Friday Art Group, St Mary's Bay Village Hall, 1 p.m.
Brookland Meeting Point, Village Hall, 1.30 p.m. (4th Fri)

Saturday 29th November

Christmas Fayre, Lydd Church, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Christmas Fair, Community Hub, New Romney, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Quiz Night, Lydd Community Hall, 6.30 p.m.

Monday 1st December

Dymchurch Meeting Point, Village Hall, 10 a.m.
Dance Moves, Burton Hall off Stade Street, Hythe, 11 a.m.
The Games Club, St. Peter's Hall, Greatstone, 2 p.m.

Tuesday 2nd December

Pilates, St. Mary's Bay Village Hall, 10 a.m.
Greatstone Meeting Point, St. Peter's Hall, 10 a.m. (1st & 3rd Tue)

Dance Moves, Burton Hall off Stade Street, Hythe, 10.30 a.m.
Dymchurch Art Society, Village Hall, 1 p.m.
Short Mat Bowling, St. Mary's Bay Village Hall, 2 p.m.
Foodbank, New Romney Community Church, 4 p.m.
Dymchurch Short Mat Bowls, Village Hall, 6 p.m.

Wednesday 3rd December

Computer Club, Village Hall, St. Mary's Bay, 9.30 a.m.
Woman's Wednesday Club, St. Peter's Hall, Greatstone, 2 p.m.
Christmas Market, George Hotel, Lydd, 6 p.m.
Needlecraft Club, Old School, New Romney, 7 p.m.
Short Mat Bowling, St. Mary's Bay Village Hall, 7 p.m.

Thursday 4th December

Middlemarsh WI, St. Mary's Bay Village Hall, 9.45 a.m. (1st Thur)
Lydd Meeting Point, Hardy Hall, 10 a.m.
Dance Moves with Chris, St. Mary's Bay Village Hall, 10.15 a.m.
Craft "N" Laughs, St. Peter's Hall, Greatstone, 2 p.m.
Dymchurch Short Mat Bowls, Village Hall, 6 p.m.

Friday 5th December

Pilates, Dymchurch Village Hall, 10 a.m.
Friday Art Group, St Mary's Bay Village Hall, 1 p.m.

Saturday 6th December

Old School Trust Open Morning, New Romney, 10 a.m. (1st & 3rd Sat)
Christmas Market, Dymchurch Village Hall, 10.30 a.m. – 2.30 p.m.
Christmas Remembrance Service + Carols, New Romney Church, 3 p.m.
Christmas Concert, St. Mary's Bay Church, 4.30 p.m.



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Hole Park Owner honoured with prestigious Christmas Tree Industry Award



Christmas has arrived early at Hole Park, where owner Edward Barham has been recognised with a rare and distinguished award from the British Christmas tree industry.

Mr Barham – the fourth generation of his family to manage the historic Hole Park estate, and the second to oversee its extensive Christmas tree plantations – was taken completely by surprise during the British Christmas Tree Growers Association (BCTGA) competition day meeting in Newport Pagnell, Milton Keynes. It was there that he was presented with a special industry award, handed to him by BCTGA Vice President Oliver Combe.

The accolade is given only occasionally, reserved for individuals who have provided exceptional service to



the Christmas tree growing community. Mr Barham's long-standing commitment to the industry, including his valued role as a BCTGA committee member, earned him the honour.

BCTGA Chair Russell Parkin praised his contribution, saying: "Edward has given so much support and assistance to the Association. His insight and industry knowledge, and thoughtful contributions have enriched our discussions and strengthened the BCTGA. This award is a small recognition of the lasting impact Edward has made on both the committee and the wider Christmas tree industry."

In response, a delighted Mr Barham said: "I am extremely honoured to have received this award. My goal has always been to not only grow the best trees but to also create best practice that I can share with my colleagues in the Christmas tree industry. With the dedication of our excellent forestry team, who nurture and care for the trees 365 days a year, I'm proud that our trees are renowned for their quality, not just locally but around the country."

Hole Park's Christmas tree plantations stretch across approximately 100 acres of the estate near Rolvenden. Each year, around 20,000 saplings are planted, taking roughly seven years to reach the average festive height of seven to eight feet. The estate harvests about 16,000 trees annually.

Hole Park remains one of the few Christmas tree growers in Kent offering trees direct to the public and is the only producer of its kind listed by Produced in Kent.



To mark the start of the festive season, the Leader of Kent County Council, Linden Kemkaran, and KCC Cabinet Member for the Environment, David Wimble, paid a visit to the Hole Park estate, joining staff and growers to commemorate the official launch of this year's Christmas tree season.

Local Honours: Eric Brown receives BEM in East Sussex ceremony

Respected community figure Eric Brown has been officially presented with the British Empire Medal (BEM) during a special investiture ceremony held at The Inglenook, Hailsham, on Thursday 30th October 2025.



The award was presented on behalf of His Majesty the King by the Lord-Lieutenant of East Sussex, Mr Andrew



Blackman, who praised Mr Brown's longstanding commitment to the community and his years of voluntary service within the litter picking community

Surrounded by family, friends and local dignitaries, Eric was commended for his tireless work, dedication, and willingness to go the extra mile for others. The BEM recognises individuals who have made a significant impact within their local area – something many in the community agree Eric has done consistently and without seeking reward.

Photographs from the occasion show a proud moment for both Eric and his family, marking a well-deserved honour for a man highly regarded across the region.

Further celebrations are planned locally to recognise his achievements.

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A LOCAL STORY FROM BUSESSES TO BIRDS



Born in Lyminge in 1957, with most of my childhood in Rhodes Minnis, an undistinguished school career took me to the Dormobile factory in Folkestone in 1972, I was 15. I had shopped for some basic tools in Folkestone High Street. 6'4" tall, skinny as a rake, I stuck out like a sore thumb. At the time the factory employed 300 people.

Dormobile made Busses, Parcel vans, Ambulances and Motor caravans, I was in the "Smiths" department (a term that encompassed all things metal). That first day would change my life! I was introduced to my workmate and supervisor. "What's your name son" I was asked, "Richard" I stated meekly. "You will get called Dick here" he said. His name was Dicky Line, known throughout the factory as "Lino". That was the way then, my mother was mortified, although had no problem in taking £2 of my first £5 pay packet! That's how it began, I have been Dick or Dicky Woods ever since.

I made a nuisance of myself with factory management, regularly transferring from one project to another learning different skills along the way. Later negotiating a day a week off unpaid in order to go to Canterbury Tech and pick up some essential formal qualifications.

I plan to skip forty years now, but within that time, I moved to Folkestone, bought my first house in Black Bull Road, got married and later moved to Shorncliffe Road. My Daughter



Kerrie and My Son Andrew joined us. When we moved, Kerrie had a favourite teacher (I never had one of those). The teacher was Kay Payne, we left Kerrie in the school opposite our Blackbull Road house for a year after we moved, she thrived. A great teacher is a wonderful gift for those fortunate to have them.

Next came fostering, divorce and a determination to achieve something in life. I had stayed in the world of commercial vehicles, designing and innovating as I went. By my mid 50s I had my own business and with my then business partner employed 75. I had Married Tina, originally from Elham and a paediatric nurse at William Harvey for most of her working life until moving to Buckland and then Demelza house.

For the last thirteen years we have lived in Wingham, in a converted barn. Through that period, five Grandchildren



have arrived three for me, two for Tina. I was fortunate in that my business had gone well and that I could sell my shares and relax a bit, or that was the thinking at the time, however there is a twist! We had fed the birds in our garden and had built a population of Green Finches, possibly as many as 100. We had three of the largest bird feeders we could find. But then something strange happened, they started to die. Over the period of a month or so, they all died. We had no idea of the cause. Little did I know, that we were responsible.

At this point, I was still working and still travelling. My work took me all over the world, South America, Africa, Middle East and Europe. Travelling time has been really useful to me, driving or flying, I couldn't get the Greenfinches out of my mind. I began to learn, I began to imagine solutions, the issue that would shape the rest of my life was emerging, although I didn't understand that at the time.

I had stumbled into something that shames both Charities and Big business to this day. It would be the battle of my life.

With huge thanks to Alan for the photos

The Rotary Club of Romney Marsh is thinking of Christmas (already)...

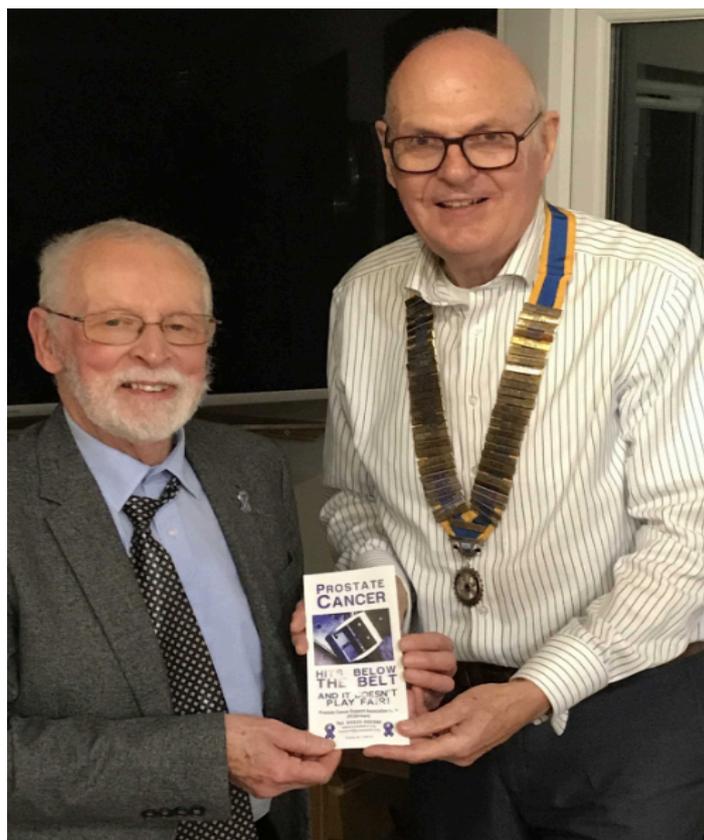
Hopefully by the time you read this there will still be a chance to see our Santa sleigh on one of its trips across the Marsh. If you missed it we are sorry but Santa is very busy around this time of year so we are limited as to when he can come out and visit us. Anyway, just in case...below is a list of the dates for the various routes for our sleigh runs this year (all subject to change depending on the weather).

- 28th November LYDD ON SEA (Lade Car Pk, Williamson Rd, Toby Rd, Leonard Rd)
- 1st December DYMCHURCH (Fire Station, Seabourne Way, Orgarswick Ave, Lyndhurst Rd)
- 2nd December NEW ROMNEY (The Plough, Broadlands, Richmond Dr, new estate, Rolfe Lane)
- 3rd December VILLAGES (Old Romney, Brenzett, Brookland, St. Mary In The Marsh)
- 4th December GREATSTONE (Coast Drive, Meehan, Adie, Hardy & Alfred Rds, Dunes Rd)
- 5th December DYMCHURCH (Wraightsfield Ave, Tudor Ave, Burmarsh Rd, Green Meadows)
- 6th December N ROMNEY HIGH ST (Outside Rolfe's Hardware Shop)
- 8th December LYDD (Morrisons, Vinelands, Derings, Green Way, Skinner Rd, Park St)
- 9th December ST. MARY'S BAY (Trees Estate, Laurel Ave, Jefferstone Lane, Village Hall)
- 10th December GREATSTONE (Jolly Fisherman, Merritt Rd, Roberts Rd, Seaview Rd)
- 11th December LITTLESTONE (Capt Howey, Queens Rd, St. Andrews Rd, St. Nicholas Rd)
- 12th December NEW ROMNEY LANTERN PARADE
- 15th December VILLAGES (Ivychurch, Newchurch, Burmarsh)
- 16th December ST. MARY'S BAY (Fairways Estate, Grassmere Estate, Taylors Lane)
- 17th December CHURCHLANDS (Churchland's Estate, Church Rd)

- 19th December LYDD (Poplar Lane, Harden Rd, Eastern Rd, Coronation Square)
- 20th December NEW ROMNEY SAINSBURY'S

Further details and any changes will be published nearer the time.

We recently welcomed Brian Murphy on behalf of Prostate Cancer Support Association (PCSA) Kent to one of our weekly meetings. Brian gave a very interesting and pertinent talk to our members. Brian explained that there has been a significant increase in the number of men reporting prostate concerns to their GPs following the attention given to this aspect of men's health by the King and other high-profile personalities. This in turn has resulted in more men having to be clinically tested and treated. This is clearly a welcome development, but it has placed additional demand on hospital resources. The support PCSA Kent can offer Kent hospitals in this regard has, therefore, become more important than ever. With the support of other donors, the PCSA aims to help the Kent and Canterbury Hospital acquire an aquablation machine - a piece of leading-edge technology which promises to greatly improve the treatment of benign prostatic hyperplasia and early stage prostate cancer.



During his presidential year in 2024/2025, Past President Syed Rahman identified PCSA as one of his nominated charities. The Rotary Club was therefore very pleased to make a donation of £2,000 towards the PCSA's latest project.

If you are interested in joining the Rotary Club of Romney Marsh, please contact Stephen Hagues (07900 736018) for more details.

Shingle to be moved to protect coastal communities

Vital work to protect more than 3,000 homes and businesses along a five-mile stretch of the Kent coast is now under way, as engineers begin redistributing more than 100,000 tonnes of shingle to bolster sea defences.

The annual programme – which runs in both spring and autumn – aims to maintain the large shingle embankments between Fisherman’s Beach, Hythe, and Folkestone Harbour, a frontage historically vulnerable to coastal erosion and storm-driven flooding. The tonnage being shifted is equivalent to the weight of around 33,000 family cars.

Folkestone & Hythe District Council says the eight-week operation is essential to preserving the district’s flood defences and is the most cost-effective and

environmentally proportionate method of coastal protection available. No work will take place between Christmas and New Year to avoid disruption.

How it works

Contractors are currently moving shingle from east to west, countering the natural movement of material caused by longshore drift — a powerful coastal process that transports shingle along the shore and can gradually weaken defences if left unmanaged. By repositioning the beach material, the ridge is rebuilt to buffer the coastline and reduce the risk of overtopping during winter storms.

The shingle bank forms one of the district’s primary flood defence structures, shielding low-lying communities including Seabrook, Fisherman’s Beach, the Hythe Ranges and areas approaching Folkestone Harbour.

Millions secured for future protection

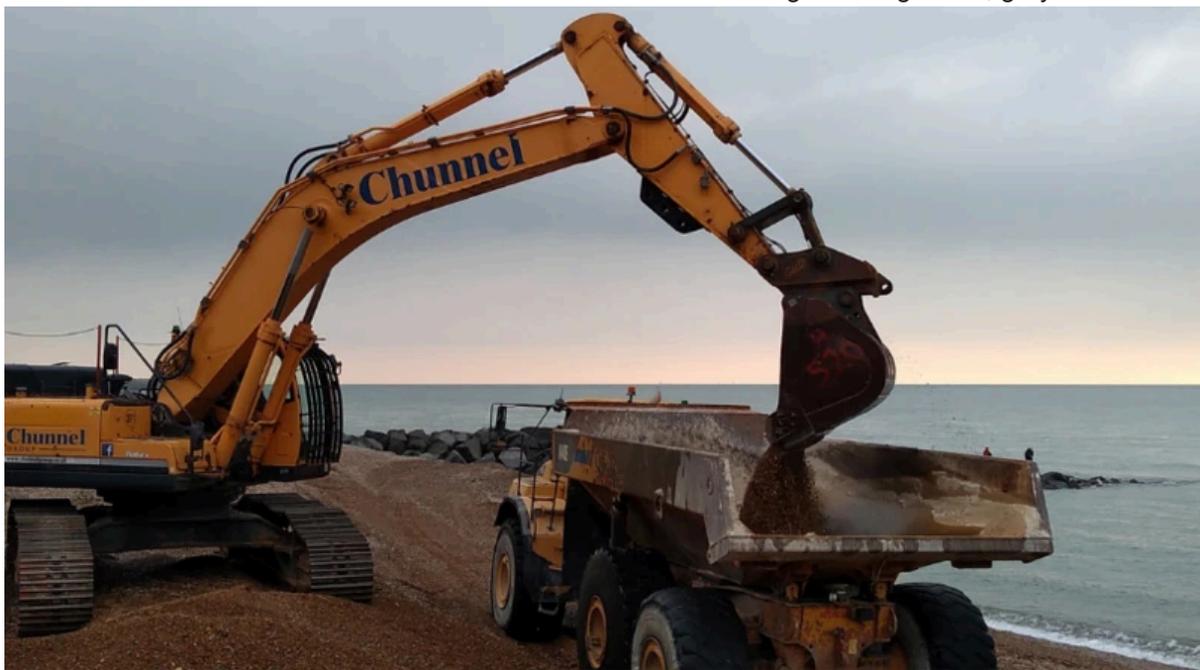
Cllr Stephen Scoffham, Cabinet Member for Climate, Environment and Biodiversity, said:

“We secured £2.35 million of Environment Agency funding earlier this year to ensure this important programme can continue for the next five years. Maintaining this coastline is essential not only for flood protection, but for the long-term resilience of our local communities.”

The district’s coastline is recognised as one of the most heavily engineered in Kent, with decades of investment in shingle management, groynes and sea walls helping to

prevent major flood incidents. Without regular redistribution, the shingle bank would steadily diminish in high-energy areas, exposing thousands of residents and key infrastructure to significantly increased flood risk.

The council is advising residents and beach users to take extra care around plant machinery while the works are ongoing.



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Marsh Memories

Compiled by John Wimble

More memories of the 1930s

New Romney Junior School was in Church Lane and Mr. Fletcher was the Headmaster. Other teachers included Mrs. Chaplin, Miss Massie, Miss Sparrowhawk, Mrs. Woodwards, Mr. Wilcox, Mr. Wood and Mrs. James. The Canteen Cook was Miss Wraight and the Caretaker was Mr. Edwards. The number of pupils at the school was 260. The main room was normally divided by folding screens to make three classrooms housing the top classes. On certain occasions, the screens were folded back and in the resulting large room the whole school assembled. Among the pupils over the years were Joan Barlow, Eileen Hartop, Grace Holdham, Mary Marshall, Doreen Reynolds, Mildred Wimble and Charles Flisher. Scholarships to Southlands Grammar School were awarded to Joan Blacklocks, Marguerite Ellis, Alfred Barman, Mollie Ealden and Betty Judge. Several sports were played including goal running, cricket, stoolball and netball. Amongst those excelling for cricket were Frank Stevens, Jack Souten, Ron Jones and Sid Flisher. Some of the old boys and girls included Edith Ralph who worked as an under-parlour maid for the Lord Mayor of London, Jack Polhill who was a Leading Aircraft Apprentice in the RAF and Mabel Newman who was a children's nurse in Meopham. The school had been informed that Alfred Hutchens had sadly died from consumption after serving in the Royal Navy and his brother John, was serving on HMS 'Royal Sovereign' in the Mediterranean Sea. George Summers was an Officer's Servant in the 7th Hussars. Annie Brown was in service in Windsor, Kathleen Wimble was an under-nurse in Hyde Park Square and Mary Wimble was working at Chilham Castle. If a pupil didn't get a scholarship to Southlands Grammar School, they stayed on until the the age of 14.

The Duke of Kent visited New Romney in 1938 (see photo). He was greeted by the Mayor of the town, Major Teichman-Derville and the Mayor of Lydd, Councillor Gordon Paine. Amongst his duties was to inspect the Lydd, New Romney & District St. John's Ambulance Brigade and their ambulance in New Romney High Street. He also met and talked to some Guides and Brownies outside the Assembly Rooms in Church Approach.

Harry Maddieson opened his holiday camp at Greatstone although it was generally known as Maddiesons Littlestone Holiday Camp. His son Ray took over the running of it and at first, it catered mainly for Londoners and the majority of them used to travel down by train. The camp covered about 12 acres and in the early years, accommodation was mainly in chalets and there was a large swimming pool, ballroom, dining room and a pub etc.

The Romney Marsh Rural District Council meetings were held at the Town Hall in the High Street, New Romney and also at the Memorial Hall at Dymchurch. They covered the parishes of Brenzett, Brookland, Burmarsh, Dymchurch, Ivychurch, Newchurch, Old Romney, St. Mary-in-the-Marsh, St. Mary's Bay and Snargate. The population of this area was approx. 3,500. Electricity supplies to most of the Marsh didn't arrive until the 1930s.

A new concrete road from Lydd to Dungeness was completed in 1938 by builders G. Bates, which made access to Dungeness a lot easier. Before the road there was a well-used track on the shingle to the Coastguard Houses, the RNSSS Cottages and the School. This was regularly built up with ashes etc. and it was used for delivering fruit and vegetables to the houses and for deliveries to the Britannia Inn, the latter involving the special wide-wheeled carts. The miniature railway was also used as a line of easy access. Otherwise, people used backstays (short wooden "skis") to cross the shingle to the houses and "sledges" (boxes on wooden runners) to haul goods including fish over the shingle.



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Dear Looker,

May I thank you for your marvellous " Looker Newspaper " which I always avidly read and enjoy! I always read Looker Letters and make it my first page when I pick up your magazine from my local Newsagent in Hythe

I was immediately drawn to comments made by one Peter Tennant, obviously a miserable person who shows his love of hatred by writing total rubbish, which includes, amongst other ramblings, hatred for free magazines, foul language, and unnecessary insults.

The man obviously has a problem, which I respectfully suggest he sees a Medical Practitioner ASAP. I firmly believe in Nuclear Power rather than covering thousands of acres of beautiful countryside with metal and glass contraptions.

He is showing his true Character when he announces His " Love Affair " with the worst Government this country has had to endure in my 81 years. Starmer, in my view, is a closet Communist, and he will not rest until he drags this country down into the gutter, commonly known as The Labour Party Dustbin!

Please keep printing your amazing Looker Mr Wimble

Very best wishes,
Tony Thorn.

Dear Looker,

Whilst walking our Greatstone beach on Sunday 9th November I came across remains of a fireworks party. Total disregard for anyone else using the beach this brings about making a bye-law against fireworks being set off on our coastline, these people probably don't live near the beach. (photo enclosed)

Regards,
Stephen Wilson.



Dear David,
'No Money – Just Food'!

Since Barclay's decided to shut its branch in Folkestone, we have the 'pleasure' of having another food outlet, no less than another Greggs. Is this not the ultimate come down to an important seaside town?

I hear no concern for the important banking facilities that we have lost. What have we got? Quick take-aways. A poor end to a fine old building in a prominent place.

Regards,
George Potter.

Dear Looker,

I read with interest Peter Tennant's letter in the last edition of The Looker. However, I do feel that if someone knows they are picking up a magazine with a pro-Reform or Conservative slant, then the answer is simple: don't pick it up. Nobody is forcing anyone to read it.

For my part, I find The Looker very informative. I especially enjoy the Marsh Memories features and even David's rants — they add a bit of colour and character to each edition.

That said, I do think it's a shame that he so often takes aim at our formidable MP, Tony Vaughan. It would be far more constructive if Tony wrote for the paper in the same way that Damian Collins and, before him, Michael Howard used to. At least then he could keep your readers informed about the work he is attempting to do on our behalf.

All the very best,
Stephen Tait,
Folkestone.

Editors Note: Thank you for your email Stephen. We have always said we were happy to print our MP's update and when he was first elected he did send a few, but this proved to be unreliable as quite often we were late going to print as he did not send copy when promised. As you pointed out other MPs do this and have a slot in their diary to get one of their team to send something over. It appears that Tony is obviously too busy along with his office team and 4 parliamentary assistants to put down 500 words for us once a fortnight.

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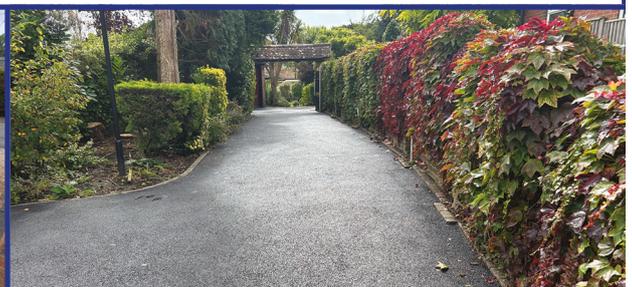
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Then & Now



Lydd High Street, c.1920.

This was probably one of the earliest businesses in the town, established at the end of the 19th century. Looks like a posed photograph as Mr. Blacklocks and Mr. Wellstead were both well-known local gentlemen. Dave Elderkin had his shop there for many years from the 1960s. What a change from a garage to a kebab!



PEOPLE FROM THE PAST

George Elvy

George Elvy was believed to be the last surviving 'Looker' on the Marsh. He was born in Medway in 1916 and moved to the Marsh at an early age. As soon as he was old enough, he helped his father with the sheep on the farm and when he left school, he started work as a Looker for Harold Body at Snargate. He then moved to Lydd and worked for 24 years for Claude Paine and 20 years for Gordon Paine.

He worked with sheep all his life and he trained all his own sheep dogs and many other Collie sheep dogs as well. He was an excellent teacher, passing on his expert knowledge to the younger generation. He did all his own shearing and lambing and was a master of his trade.

At the beginning of the Second World War, he wasn't called up because he worked on the land and he joined the Home Guard at Snargate. He was living at Brookland at the time and was invited by local farmer Dick Body to join one of the Marsh Auxiliary Units on the Marsh, commonly known as 'The Secret Army'. He subsequently joined the 'Mushroom Patrol' at Snargate, and had to leave the Home Guard and also sign the Official Secrets Act. The bunker at Snargate was built after the unit was formed and several times they had to sleep in it overnight. They occasionally trained with the regular army and learned how to use explosives. Even the Army didn't know of the existence of the units, or patrols as they were known, on the Marsh.

He met his future wife Grace, who was a land girl during the war, when she went to work on Mr. Newton's farm at Brookland. They married in September 1948 and had a long and happy life together. They first lived at Baynam Farm and then at 'Moschatel', Dennes Lane, Lydd. He was a keen gardener and loved his roses and chrysanthemums. He also liked a drink at weekends and with his wife Grace, they could often be seen at The Woolpack or The Alliance at Brookland and also the Rose and Crown at Old Romney.

When the film, 'The Loves of Joanna Godden' was filmed on the Marsh just after the war, the Director



needed a specialist shearer to be part of the film. George fitted that part and used hand shears, not the electric ones used today. His dogs were used in the film rounding up the sheep with George working them behind the cameras. Grace died in 2003 and George then lived on his own at 'Moschatel' until he was taken ill in 2011 and he spent his last years in Balgowan Nursing Home, where he was cared for and looked after as if he was part of the family. He died in 2014.

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We've had our first cold spell, and I imagine the last of the bedding plants and dahlias are keeling over. We have been away, and just returned so and I haven't had time to check. The jobs at the moment are very much the same as before. Tidying, weeding, and pruning. If the weather has cooled down, it doesn't seem to stop the grass or weeds growing. We have covered pruning of various sorts in previous articles, you can refer back if you wish. Pruning shrubs is an everlasting job! I have said before that my criteria for shrubs are being able to do it standing on the ground, and not messing about with ladders. It is worth changing your plans if we have a nice day for gardening; ideal gardening days will be getting scarce now.

If you wish to collect seeds from the last of the flowers, do so now. Put the whole seed head in a small paper bag or envelope, and label and store in a dry place.

With the first frosts, it is important to look after the birds to keep the feeders and birdbath topped up, our Bird bath had ice on it this morning. The experts tell us that sparrows are decreasing. I don't think they have checked our garden; it is full of sparrows! It is lovely to see the birds, and our total variety list is good.

Now might be a good day to tidy your potting shed, especially if it fine. You can put everything on the lawn, and really decide which of the items you have saved 'to come in useful sometime' can be thrown out. Especially plastic items, they perish and get weak and brittle. While in the potting shed, clean and oil your tools. We are often so busy in the summer, that cleaning and oiling our tools gets put off! Check you garden gloves, wash them out and mend if necessary, or replace (not leather of course.) That is easier said than done in the middle of winter, the shops are so busy with Christmas, if you can find gardening gloves, they are usually the expensive sort! Ask someone to buy them as a Christmas present!

If the weather defeats your ambitions to clear out the potting shed, you can plan your garden for next year. What you wish to grow, or change, or experiment with! If you are newcomer to gardening in a new house or recently moved to a new garden, it is a good time to take stock. If you inherited a mature garden, I would always suggest waiting a year before doing anything drastic, waiting to see 'what comes up.'

The majority of the leaves have come down now, so you can start clearing them away, especially from paths, patios and decks, where they are a fall hazard, especially when wet. As previously mentioned, some can go on the compost heap, but not too many. The surplus can be put into compost bags, to about half full, with holes for drainage. Leave the top open, to catch the rain, and it will make natural leaf mould,

which can be used as a mulch or mixed with your natural compost.

AND NOW FOR THE VEG

The leeks had a good frosting overnight (18/11) which apparently helps to bring out the flavour. Fortunately they were easy to lift as the ground hasn't had time to harden. In severe weather, ensure you can access your leeks by keeping one step ahead before the frosts really take hold by loosening the soil around the ones you want to lift without removing them completely from the soil. The same is true with parsnips whose flavour improves with very cold weather.

One advantage of the colder weather is that it will kill off any remaining bugs which are afflicting brassica crops. With this in mind, you should have nicely frosted and healthy brussels and cabbage ready for Christmas! Support any top-heavy plants with stakes or canes.

Our autumn sown broad beans have started to produce shoots about two inches high, after being sown a couple of weeks ago. This must be down to the mild weather we've been having this month, as usually they don't begin to show signs of growth until at least mid-December. It's amazing how hardy the Aquadulce variety are, as however hard the frost, and however bowed down they seem, a quick recovery and a good early summer crop are always guaranteed. Extra protection can be given by covering them with a mulch of grass, leaves or compost. This treatment will also protect them from the ravages of hungry birds who seem to eat anything in very cold weather.

If you have already raised brassicas from seed, and have plants large enough to plant out, such as broccoli, cabbage and cauliflower, these can go into well-prepared soil, but make sure plant them firmly in the ground to prevent the wind from loosening the soil around the roots. Alternatively, you can buy plants from a local garden centre. Leafy greens such as kale, spinach and certain hardy lettuces can be sown outdoors ready for spring transplanting and would benefit from being covered with cloches or sown in a cold frame. Where possible, sow all these in a sunny position and before the soil is frozen.

If you like onions and/or shallots, buy these as soon as available and spread out in trays in a cool place such as a potting shed or greenhouse. I find that this gives them time to show signs of sprouting, and time to discard any that start to shrivel up, as these will not develop into healthy bulbs.

As always, happy gardening!

.

Small issues and big business.

For many generations, life has fallen into a pattern. I think they call it the 7 ages of man. (or woman) You start as a baby, enjoy a childhood where you learn about life, followed by adolescence, when you become an adult physically and emotionally, then early adulthood. You looked around for a life partner, were married and had children. The children grew and flew the nest, and you were middle aged, and then an old person. Along the way, life had a lot of ups and downs, joys and heartaches, but you learnt to cope with them and “get up and go on.”

Depending on your situation in life, you had widely differing levels of prosperity, but wherever you found yourself, you made the most of what you had, and passed onto the next stage of life. This, of course, is a gross over simplification, but it does remind us that people have lived on this earth for many millenniums, before modern society turned life into a neurotic round of spending, consumerism, must have advertising and self-indulgence!

My mother made it to 95. She wouldn't have heard of the beauty, diet and wellness industries, supplements, 'me time' or any of the million things advertised in the media today. She just lived an ordinary life, kept active, went to bed early, and ate 3 simple meals a day. Masses of people on this planet are living in squalor and absolute grinding poverty, or in hopeless despair in refugee camps. Can we really look around and justify spending on trivia, just because it is advertised as the latest 'must have'?

Big business seems to have hijacked all aspects of life. You can't draw breath without it turning into a spending spree. People have always celebrated milestones in life, birthdays, anniversaries and national holidays. But nowadays we are bullied into extravagant spending, and made to feel mean if we don't get involved. We buy something for the food bank every week, but I don't like the idea of sweets, chocolate and biscuits on the list. People tell me I am being mean. But, if I was relying on charity to feed my children, I certainly wouldn't expect others to provide them with non-essentials. I do buy chocolate for the FB at Christmas and Easter. Somehow we are persuaded that we are entitled to spend like millionaires. No, we haven't a right to anything that we can't afford. Martin Lewis always asked 3 questions of every purchase. Do I need it? Can I afford it? Can I get it cheaper somewhere else?

Don't let yourself get carried away, with advertising and the media. Remember every penny you borrow or spend on credit, has to be repaid back. So, unless you pay the balance on your credit card in full every month, you will be paying back huge interest rates on your loan. Recently, someone in government suggested adding financial planning to the curriculum in schools. My first reaction was incredulity that it wasn't already taught! Apparently, kids have no idea about interest, or how finance or interest rates work, and just see credit as an open wallet, without any seriousness about paying it back.

So, to stop big business having us by the throat, have the courage to take hold of your spending, budgeting and saving. Think SMALL. School teachers may have encouraged us to dream big, but with money, the secret is always to think small. However little you have, when you first have your money, save some. In a separate account, or if you haven't got a savings account, in sellotaped up jam jars with a hole in the top, in your kitchen. Think small and simple when you shop. Yes, it is worth the bus fare to save money at a discount supermarket. Buy your Christmas food gradually.

As often advised, always shop with a list, and don't deviate from your list of essentials. Don't be tempted by offers: they are only a bargain if you would have bought it anyway. In deciding which are essentials, try sitting down with a list and working through the day, starting with tea and coffee, cereals and milk etc for breakfast. We did that when going on a self-catering holiday. We have a computer list nowadays, and just print it out. If you work through the day, you will remember most of the essentials and important trivia, like seasoning and sauces.

Most working couples share the housework nowadays, but one person must be the 'quartermaster' managing the shopping list, and checking what you already have in the house! There is nothing so wasteful as several people in a household shopping at random. Try and plan your meals, even if it just vaguely in your head, willing to change if a good offer comes up on yellow labels!

Christmas is on the horizon, and this is a good exercise in thinking small, and defying big business, if ever there was one. Set out a defined budget for everything. Food, drink, presents, deccys, etc. Try not to exceed the budget in any area. Try to keep debt to a minimum. The national domestic debt goes through the roof at Christmas. What for? To feel depressed and anxious in January, when the credit card statement comes in, and you start rowing with your partner, and blaming everyone for the financial chaos that is overwhelming you! Please don't go there.

Enjoy the best Christmas you can afford, without going into debt. Make cards, buy home made gifts at craft markets. Don't be afraid to keep presents and events modest. If you are having friends around, keep it low key, with traditional sausage rolls, sandwiches, mince pies etc. Label it a retro event, so people aren't expecting this impossibly fully laden tables full of manufactured way out treats, as seen on adverts. 99% of which are ultra processed foods, not good for anyone at any time.

So, have fun with your Christmas preparation, keeping life simple and fighting off big business. Your holiday time can be happy, without spending a fortune you can't afford. If friends judge you, don't worry, you might be giving them a push to shop wisely as well!

In Conversation with David Wimble

Peter Bird sits down with Kent County Councillor and Cabinet Member for the Environment, David Wimble, to talk about life six months into Reform UK's surprise leadership of Kent County Council.

PB: You were elected with the largest majority of any councillor. How have the first six months in power been for you?

DW: It's been a bit of a whirlwind! It all became very real, very quickly. The opposition were licking their wounds and came out swinging, accusing us of cancelling meetings and being disorganised. The truth is, those meetings were scheduled long before anyone even knew there'd be an election.

When a new administration takes over, members can't just jump into committees — everyone needs the relevant officer training first. We weren't cancelling meetings for fun; we were making sure the right people had the right skills. With a gross budget of over £2 billion, that's essential.

PB: Any big shocks once you got behind the curtain?

DW: Absolutely. We don't like to moan about what we've inherited, but the reality was that KCC was £730 million in the red. We were expected to walk in and fix it overnight — totally unrealistic. But with a clear medium and long-term strategy, we're already turning things around.

PB: Tell us about this "Department of Local Government Efficiency" everyone keeps joking about.

DW: (Laughs) Yes, it's quite a title, isn't it? Every new administration needs to see where the money's going. We modelled our internal audit on the one Elon Musk introduced in the US. My first priority was to reassure our superb officers that we weren't here to wield the axe — we're here to work with them to give Kent taxpayers the best possible service.

PB: You stood for leader. Were you disappointed when you didn't get it?

DW: Of course, I put myself forward because I had the biggest majority and 18 years of local government experience. But when Linden Kemkaran was chosen, I accepted it completely. She's an exceptional communicator, a grafter, and the right person for the job. It's been full-on — 18-hour days, seven days a week in those early weeks — but she's led from the front.

PB: Linden's had some criticism. Fair or unfair?

DW: Totally unfair. We started from ground zero — Reform had just one councillor before the election! We had to build a cabinet, get to know one another, and set a direction of travel in record time. It's been intense, but she's handled it brilliantly.

PB: Let's tackle the elephant in the room — "Suck It Up-gate"

and the expelled members.

DW: (Smiles) I doubt even Nigel Farage expected us to win the council outright. Suddenly we had 57 councillors in a brand-new party — that's a lot of personalities to balance!

One member, given a senior highways brief, talked a good game but quickly proved out of his depth and went AWOL when the pressure hit. When demoted, he didn't take it well and tried to stage a back-bench rebellion.

You'll always get the odd bad apple. Linden acted decisively and removed them before they could cause more disruption. That's leadership.

PB: And the infamous video?

DW: Totally blown out of proportion. It wasn't a council meeting; it was an informal online catch-up. One councillor interrupted more than 30 times. After several polite warnings, Linden told him she'd mute him if he couldn't respect the group — and that he'd have to "suck it up". She did use a colourful phrase, but honestly, I've heard far worse in the Commons! It was like banter in a pub. The clip was taken completely out of context.

PB: Are there more shocks to come — any more expulsions?

DW: No, that's behind us. The media love a bit of drama — especially certain ex-editors with axes to grind — but the truth is, Kent is not in the same mess as Medway or ten other councils currently in special measures. We've inherited a huge problem and we're fixing it responsibly.

PB: Tell us about your portfolio — Environment is a big brief.

DW: It's huge — about £120 million a year. That covers all of Kent's household waste, our eight award-winning country parks, and even historic assets like windmills.

I'm developing a strategy to return Kent's windmills to community ownership, ahead of local government reorganisation.

I'm also spearheading Kent's new energy policy — backing new nuclear at Dungeness and opposing vast solar farms that threaten food security and flood management.

And I'm pushing for an environmental tax on foreign lorries and cars — so overseas hauliers pay the same as ours do abroad. That could raise millions for highways and green investment. It won't happen overnight, but it's a real game-changer.

PB: That's a big workload. What does a typical day look like?

DW: Mondays start early — out by 6.45 a.m., in Maidstone by 7.30. I usually have around 100 emails waiting from the weekend.

After a cabinet briefing at 9 a.m. and leadership meeting at

10, I spend the afternoon with officers or out on site. I'm usually home by 7 p.m., then I switch to district and town council work.

I attend each parish or town council in my division at least once every three months. So yes — around 60-plus hours a week, easy!

PB: You've had a few public run-ins with Labour MP Tony Vaughan — what's the story there?

DW: (Laughs) I don't want to give him too much airtime. I met him in Westminster to suggest we work together — after all, we both represent the same residents. We shook hands, and a week later he's attacking me again.

As an old Lancaster bomber pilot once said to Nigel Farage: "The closer you get to the target, the more flak you take." He knows I'm getting close — and he's worried!

PB: So... is Parliament the ultimate goal?

DW: I've never hidden that ambition. It would be an honour to represent Romney Marsh, Folkestone, and Hythe — the area where I've lived, worked, and built my businesses.

I've told both the party and the branch I'm putting myself forward. I always say, judge me on results. I'm proud of what I've achieved in 18 years — from supporting local causes to keeping The Looker going, which I do entirely voluntarily because I love this community.

PB: You've been spending a lot of time in Westminster recently. What's happening behind the scenes there?

DW: Quite a lot, actually. I'm working with cross-party MPs and Lords on Kent's new energy policy — particularly on Dungeness and national grid upgrades.

It's vital that rural areas like ours aren't just seen as blank space for giant solar farms. Sadly, I don't see Tony Vaughan at any of these meetings, even though they directly affect his constituents. It's disappointing, because we could achieve much more by working together instead of firing shots from the sidelines.

PB: Finally, what's your message to residents on the Marsh about the solar farm proposals?

DW: Simple — I'll fight tooth and nail to protect our landscape and our food security.

I'm not anti-renewables, far from it, but what's being proposed for Romney Marsh is on a massive industrial scale. We're talking thousands of acres of prime farmland and a grid upgrade that could cost billions.

I've met with ministers and energy companies to say: enough is enough. Let's have renewable energy, yes — but not at the expense of our countryside or our communities.

PB: Well, good luck with everything — and congratulations on your upcoming wedding to Sarah.

DW: Thank you, Peter! Yes, it's been nearly eight years in the making — but like politics, the best things take time. It's not about the easy option; it's about doing the right thing.

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Seals at Rye Harbour – Beauty and a hidden battle

Just a short drive from Dungeness, Rye Harbour is one of those places that never disappoints — wide skies, whispering reeds, and, if you're lucky, a glint of movement on the mudflats. A few weekends ago, camera in hand, I headed out for a walk. That day, luck was on my side. Dozens of grey and harbour seals were stretched out in the sun, flippers in the air, looking every bit the picture of seaside calm.

But later that evening, a BBC report stopped me in my tracks. Up north, researchers at the Sea Mammal Research Unit have been studying a devastating disease known as “mouth rot.” In some colonies, every single seal pup has died this year. The illness begins with painful sores that make feeding difficult, often with fatal consequences.

Now, scientists believe they may be closing in on the cause: bacteria, pollution, or perhaps shifts in the marine environment. More importantly, they're exploring how it might be treated—that's the ray of hope shining through an otherwise heartbreaking story.

For those of us living along the Kent and East Sussex coast, the news hits close to home. The seals I photographed at Rye are part of a growing local colony,



and it's reassuring to know that people are working to protect them.

So if you fancy a family outing this winter, take that short drive to Rye Harbour. Time your visit for low tide and you'll likely spot the seals basking on the flats; there are even boat trips available — a magical sight for young and old alike. If you do go, keep a respectful distance and avoid disturbing them. Their peace is precious.

Let's enjoy their beauty, but remember too how fragile their world can be. Because saving the seals starts with simply caring enough to look.

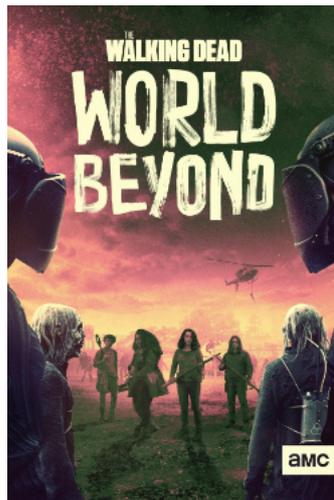
Pictures show the Harbour & Common Seals basking on the sands at low tide.





Welcome Lookerites to another batch of reviews from the big and small screen. In this issue we will be looking at the latest outing for the apocalyptic couple Daryl and Carol as they continue their travels across Europe, the latest addition to the Walking Dead world, the small screen debut of Stephen King's IT - Welcome to Derry, we revisit the final episodes of Sky's Brassic and there's a cracking true story film on Prime.

The latest addition to the **Walking Dead World** comes in the shape of the third instalment of The Walking Dead: Daryl Dixon - Sky/Now TV. If you recall in season one Daryl was kidnapped and taken, by boat, to France, after a series of zombie related adventures he was reunited with Carol (season 2 The Book of Carol) and the pair set about returning to the USA together. With the zombie apocalypse in full force finding a way back to the USA is no mean feat and the prospect of hopping on a plane is totally out of the question.



The latest series sees the pair make their way via France to London, thankfully border patrol have managed to keep the channel tunnel a zombie free zone. A chance encounter with a lone survivor Julian (Stephen Merchant) sees the trio escape the cockney zombie hordes after Julian uses Big Ben to create a diversion. Julian leads the pair to a boat and hopefully a means of making their journey. Julian, believing he is the only living person in London, joins the pair but a storm leaves them stranded in Spain and Julian a zombie.

Like in France they find a quiet community and while Daryl sets about his mission Carol finds links in the community and just as in France the pair are soon embroiled in disputes between warring communities. Daryl is soon using his cunning and guile while Carol as ever is the voice of reason. The question is will Daryl ever get home or will Carol lay down new roots.

Daryl and Carol have become firm favourites in the Walking Dead world and like Negan and Maggie worthy of their own show. While this series as played out like a post-apocalyptic travel show it still retains the nihilistic mood of its predecessors. It does beggar belief that in a world where the transport system has gone to pot that Daryl and Carol (or should that be Darol or Caryl) have managed to go from America to halfway across Europe, If only they still did Air miles in Zombie World.

The ending leaves it, well, open for a new series and I still remain intrigued if they will get back to the good old USA. Spoiler Alert they remain in Spain because there is no plane and the vessel of their dreams lies in ruins. Daryl

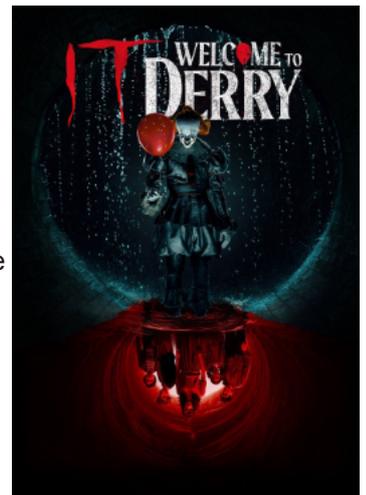
Dixon remains one of my favourite TWD characters and his path has been a difficult one that has seen him lose many friends and family. One thing is for certain you sincerely hope that they give the Redneck with a heart a happy ending.

The next addition to The Walking Dead World is Tales of the Walking Dead - Sky/Now TV. A series of six standalone episodes that show various survivors of the zombie apocalypse and the trials and tribulations of staying alive.

In episode one we find Joe (Terry Crews) and his elderly dog/companion living in an isolated bunker. Crews has been in contact online with an unidentified female. When tragedy strikes and Joe's dog is killed in a zombie attack, he decides to leave the safety of his bunker and embark on a 700-mile journey to find his online soulmate. With his belongings attached to his motorbike Joe sets off. On his quest he meets Evie who is also on the search for loved ones. After Evie holds Joe captive taking Joe and his motorbike hostage, the pair slowly bond until a stranger swops a goat for Joe's motorbike. Evie continues to look for her ex-husband Steven while Joe locates Sandra who is leaving in a similar bunker. But all is not what it seems.

Tales of the Walking Dead is a sanitised exploration of the Walking Dead world. You would expect humour if Terry Crews is in it and this is provided by the relationship between Joe and Evie. The zombies definitely play second fiddle to the humans. Is this a serious addition to the Walking Dead World, probably not but as a standalone series it has its place.

Pennywise the Clown the shapeshifting being that devours humans is a genuinely creepy being, especially if you have a fear of clowns. New to Sky/Now TV is IT - **Welcome To Derry**. Whereas the previous two films looked at Pennywise the clown in full form this 8-part series looks at the start of Pennywise's campaign of terror on the townsfolk of Derry that precedes the two films.



Welcome to Derry follows a group of teens, all of whom are affected by Pennywise in a variety of shapes and forms. The action jumps backwards and forwards as we see the teens in traumatised adult form and still trying to get to the bottom of what they experienced in their younger years. Bill Skarsgard is back in the clown suit as Pennywise and Dexter's Dad (James Remar) plays General Shaw.

Whereas the films hit the ground running the tv series has more time to develop the storylines and we get a more detailed look into the legend of Pennywise, at times the pace is so slow as storytelling takes priority over shocks

and scares. The tv series still manages to recreate the terror of Pennywise and although I'm only into the second episode I'm hoping that Pennywise takes centre stage as the series develops.

And now the end is near and so I face my final curtain. Yes **Brassic** - Sky/Now TV has ended its final episode. No more Vinnie, Tommo or Farmer Jim as the characters go their own ways. The last series did this comedy justice as the group were thrown into another set of calamitous situations.



In series seven the eccentric deviant gangster Davey Donagh is determined to wipe out the opposition with the reluctant help of Vinnie & Co. While Vinnie is overly reliant on the support of the unreliable Dr Chris, whose behaviour is spiralling out of control. Dead bodies, hostage situations the group are going to have to keep their wits about themselves to stay one step ahead.

I'll be sad to see the back of this excellent comedy, and I really hope that Joe Gilgun brings everyone back for a Christmas special at some point.

Did you know that one of the most dangerous jobs in the world is a saturation diver. These hardy souls maintain the undersea gas pipes in the North Sea. Living in pressurised chambers on board a ship they are transported to the pipes 300 feet below sea level by a diving bell. This allows them to complete a four-week rotation.

The job comes with dangers and it's these dangers that form the true story of Chris Lemons in **Last Breath** - on Amazon Prime. During a deployment Lemons is working with the elusive David Yuasa and Duncan Allcock (Woody Harrelson) while Lemons and Yuasa are transported to work on the pipes, Allcock remains on the bell, but when the ships DPS (Dynamic Positioning System) malfunctions the ship begins to drift, and the bell is dragged along leaving Lemons and Yuasa scrambling to reach the bell. Yuasa successfully boards the bell, but Lemon's umbilical cord becomes entangled leaving him stranded.



With Lemon's oxygen running out so begins a rescue mission against the clock with Allcock and Yuasa vowing not to leave Lemon's body (they already fear the worse) behind. With the ship's crew racing to fix the DPS and locate Lemons stranded body Allcock and Yuasa begin their own rescue mission.

This is a tense affair as everyone pulls together to rescue the diver. Without giving too much what follows proved to be a medical miracle as everyone's courage and determination shone through. It's well acted and an excellent story that needed to be told and must be seen to be believed.

That's your lot for this issue I was hoping to give a review of The Running Man but that will have to wait until next issue. Until then happy viewing

Christmas Opening Times

The Main Hub will be closed
 12:30pm 24th Dec to 8:30am 29th Dec
 12:30pm 31st Dec to 8:30am 2nd Jan '26

Hub On The Beach will be closed
 2:00pm 24th Dec to 8:00am 27th Dec
 2:00pm 31st Dec to 10:00am 1st Jan '26

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Rotary Club of Folkestone announces 2025 Christmas Collection routes



The Rotary Club of Folkestone has released the full schedule and street routes for its annual Christmas Collection, which will take place across the town throughout December 2025. As in previous years, volunteers – accompanied by Santa and his festive sleigh – will tour neighbourhoods to raise funds for local charities and community projects.

The collections will run across eight evenings, with each night covering a designated route. Some areas will be “walk only” where access for the sleigh is limited, and volunteers remind residents that all dates are subject to weather conditions and operational changes.

Route A – Monday 1 December 2025

Meet at Harvey Street
St Michaels Street, Margaret Street, Harvey Street, Charlotte Street, Dover Road, Harbour Way, Radnor Bridge Road, East Cliff, Dudley Road, Southbourne Road, Wear Bay Crescent, Segrave Road, Segrave Crescent, Foreland Avenue, Warren Way, Thanet Gardens, Penfold Road, Burrow Road, Warren Road, Folly Road, Morrison Road, Rossendale Road, Rossendale Gardens, Martello Road, Lennard Road.

Route B – Tuesday 2 December 2025

Meet at corner of Shaftesbury Avenue and Ashley Avenue
Shaftesbury Avenue, Somerset Road, Baker Road, Stanley Road, Shaftesbury Avenue, Appledore Crescent, Shaftesbury Avenue, Weymouth Road, Richmond Street, Hawkins Road, Langdon Road, Firs Close, Langdon Road, Weymouth Road (no collection), Biggins Wood Road, Charles Crescent (some volunteers continue down Biggins Wood Road), Biggins Wood Road, Dennis Way (walk only), Elventon Close (walk only), Fosters Close (walk only), Biggins Wood Road, Ashley Avenue, Shaftesbury Avenue.

Route C – Thursday 4 December 2025

Meet at corner of Roman Way and Horn Street
Roman Way, Samian Crescent, Tiber Close, Tolsford Close, Canada Close, Ghale Way, Wheeler Drive, Allmand Drive, Blaker Close, Church Road, Broadview, Gordon Road, Whitby Road (walk only), St Martins Road, Kings Road, Royal Military Avenue, Risborough Lines, Burgoyne Way, The Lancers, The Rangers, The Guards, The Rifles, Kunwar Avenue, Dragoon Place, Colonel Drive, Kunwar Avenue.

Route D – Monday 8 December 2025

Meet at corner of Cherry Garden Lane and Cherry Garden Avenue
Cherry Garden Lane, Harcourt Road, Surrenden Road, Chart Road, Trimworth Road, Morehall Avenue, Surrenden Road, Cheriton Road, St Georges Road*, St Francis Road*, St Winifred Road*, St Hilda Road*, Quedsted Road*, Marler Road*, Geraldine Road, Dunnett Road, Broomfield Road, Ashley Avenue, Phillip Road, Bowen Road, Darlington Road, Stoddard Road, Wells Road, Surrenden Road, Cherry Garden Lane.

*Due to parking issues, only a short section will be walked from Geraldine Road.

Route E – Tuesday 9 December 2025

Meet at corner of Kings Way (new estate) and Park Farm Road

Kings Way, Eaton Walk, Trinity Drive, Park Farm Road, Alder Road, Lynwood, Grasmere Gardens, Buttermere Close (walk only), Coniston Road, Cornwallis Avenue, William Avenue, Lucy Avenue, Milestone Close, William Avenue.

Walk-only side roads (Santa remains on the main road):

Dean Mead, Harriott Close, Thompson Close, Middlemead, Pike Close, Old Mead, Chalk Close, Norrington Mead, Littlemead, Upton Close, Shireway Close, Stiles Close, Stablemead, Martha Close.

Route F – Thursday 11 December 2025

Meet at Park Farm Road, opposite the Fire Station
Watkin Road, Russell Road, Albert Road, Mead Road, Garden Road, Jesmond Street, Blackbull Road, Walton Road, Blackbull Road, Fern Bank Crescent, Albion Road, Linden Crescent, Canterbury Road, Archer Road, Baldwin Terrace, Bolton Road, Eastfields, Brambledown, Dawson Road, Linden Crescent, Blackbull Road, Ship Street, Bournemouth Road, Victoria Road, Broadmead Road, Radnor Park Crescent.



Route G – Monday 15 December 2025

Meet at corner of Downs Road and Black Bull Road
Note: The Black Bull/Hungry Horse car park is now chargeable.

Downs Road, Dolphins Road, Downs Road, Walton Gardens, Wingate Road, Joyes Road, Dover Road, Alexandra Street, Princess Street, Sidney Street, Joyes Road, Greenfield Road, Invicta Road, Marshall Street, Athelstan Road, Ethelbert Road, Invicta Road.

Route H – Wednesday 17 December 2025

Meet at corner of Shorncliffe Crescent and Shorncliffe Road (Cheriton end)

Shorncliffe Crescent, Shorncliffe Road, Ferne Way (walk only), Enbrook Valley, Freemantle Road, Bramley Crescent, Enbrook Valley, Romney Avenue, Hythe Close (walk only), Sandwich Close (walk only), Cooling Lane, Paddock Close, Croft Lane, Baldric Road, Welson Road (walk only), Bathurst Road, Ravenlea Road, Broadfield Road, Westbrook Drive, Curzon Avenue, Welfield Road, Herdson Road.

The Rotary Club encourages residents to listen out for the sleigh, come to their door if they feel able, and support the charitable work carried out across the community throughout the year.

Romney Marsh Flower Arrangers



Our November meeting was attended by 36 members. A celebration in itself "Our 65th Anniversary" A beautiful cake had been prepared, and non-alcoholic bubbly was served to all in the interval. Anne Lockett, our President, cut the cake and we welcomed our two visitors from Kent Floral Art's Committee Rosina Horton and Cecelia Sleep.



Our Demonstrator was introduced by our Chairman Sharon Bryant. Sue Tausig had not visited us previously, but had travelled down from Croydon and was enabling us to view her flower Demonstration entitled "Scrumptiously Christmas"



Some may say her flowers and foliage were not of the Christmas colours. However, she had prepared flowers and dried foliage to match the celebration. We observed, Christmas wreaths with dried foliage. Small Christmas trees made with preserved leaves, reindeer woven into shape and lighted candle

Her floral arrangements were well presented, arrangements of a winter scene with pale pink Fresias as the main feature. A purple circular bowl was lit up and the arrangement of matching colours featured at the top. A final arrangement to celebrate our 65th Anniversary was arranged in blue and white flowers, with sparkling white baubles. Added to this was the number 65 highlighting the Anniversary. At the end of the Demonstration, the stage

was arranged with an array of unique styles representing the Christmas theme.

Dates for the Diary

- 10th December Christmas Lunch and AGM 12. For 12.30.
- Looking forward to the January Meeting 14th 2026. A new Demonstrator is being introduced – "Veneta Forstmane" The title of her Demonstration being is the The Land of the Midnight Sun

All meetings 2pm. For 2.30pm start on the second Wednesday of each month

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Red Squirrels sighted on the Marsh!

The newest addition to the Scouting family has finally arrived on the Marsh. 1st Lydd Scout Group is excited to present their Squirrel Drey.



Squirrels is the latest group of young people to join the scouting family in 2021.

Squirrel Scouts began to provide a foundation for children aged 4-6, teaching them essential life skills and reaching communities most impacted by the pandemic. The program was designed to help young children develop vital life skills, including teamwork, communication, and creativity, during a critical stage of their development.



Since September 2025, 1st Lydd Scouts has been running Squirrels every other Friday, and on 7th November, invested in their first four Squirrels, with more to follow over the coming weeks. They made their promises and also created pinwheel poppies, as just two days later, they took part in their first official public engagement, participating in the Remembrance parade in Lydd on Sunday, 9th November.

If you would like to learn more about Squirrels or any of the other sections of Scouting, don't hesitate to get in touch with us via the website: www.romneymarshscouts.org.uk





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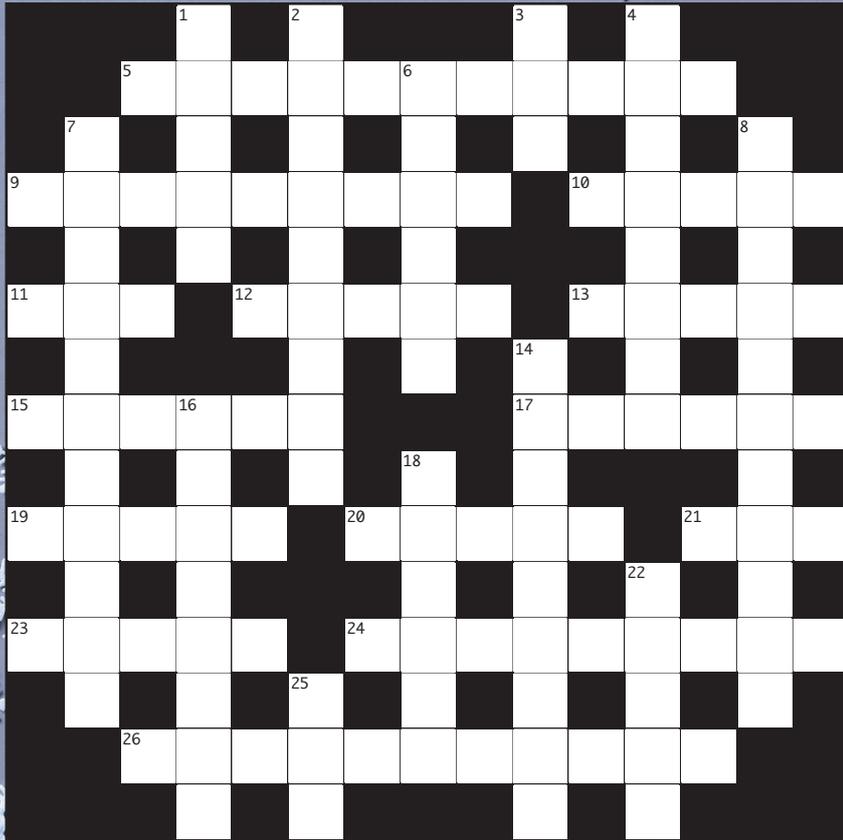
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General Knowledge Crossword

#059



Across Clues:

- 5. Official notices (11)
- 9. Those who spread out lazily (9)
- 10. Upper atmosphere (5)
- 11. One or some, regardless of which (3)
- 12. In conflict (5)
- 13. Silly (5)
- 15. Dance energetically (6)
- 17. Whole or complete (6)
- 19. Rail used in ballet practice (5)
- 20. Relating to sound (5)
- 21. Flying mammal (3)
- 23. Having a net-like texture (5)
- 24. Industry of flight and space travel (9)
- 26. One who constructs vessels (11)

Down Clues:

- 1. Perfect (5)
- 2. Transported by aircraft (9)
- 3. Piece of furniture for sleeping (3)
- 4. Police surveillance operation (8)
- 6. Small headphone worn in the ear (6)
- 7. Holding strong personal views (11)
- 8. Act of presenting (11)
- 14. Underworld or marginal social group (9)
- 16. Period of being a young female (8)
- 18. Office (6)
- 22. Lengthy or persuasive speech (5)
- 25. Consumed food (3)

Answers: Across: 5. Advertisements, 9. Sprawlers, 10. Skies, 11. Any, 12. Atout, 13. Gooey, 15. Boogie, 17. Entree, 19. Ballet, 20. Audio, 21. Bat, 23. Meshy, 24. Aerospace, 26. Boatbuilder.
Down: 1. Ideal, 2. Airtight, 3. Bed, 4. Stakeout, 6. Earbud, 7. Opinionated, 8. Performance, 14. Demworld, 16. Girlhood, 18. Bureau, 22. Spiel, 25. Ale.

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				5				
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Sudoku Challenge

Hidden Message Wordsearch

A N D B Y N O S M I R C A P B
 C L L R P R E B M A T H S I E
 H T L O O I V E S W E I R E V
 I H E N N F O G G Y R C R L Y
 L G I Z A V E D L C H A N V E
 L I D E C A L L E O N T I H Z
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 A C O S I G S B R A M B L E F
 K L S T S U R N R O C A L E H
 D O A V T F R O S T W E D E S
 M D R I Z Z L E T E L R A C S

Autumn Days

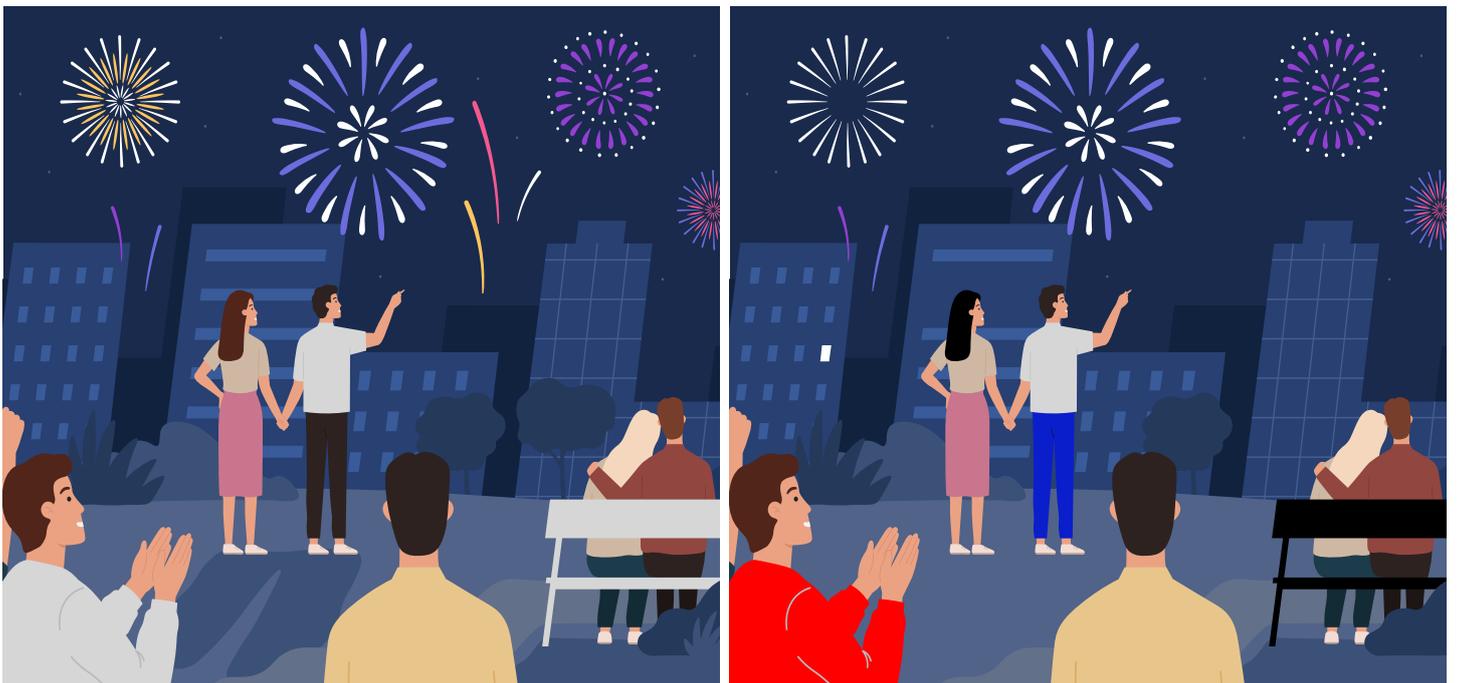
Once you find all the words. Copy the unused letters starting in the top left corner into the blanks to reveal the hidden message.

- | | | |
|---------|---------|----------|
| Acorn | Crimson | Ivy |
| Amber | Crisp | Leaves |
| Birch | Dew | Maple |
| Bramble | Drizzle | Mist |
| Breeze | Foggy | Moss |
| Bronze | Foliage | Oak |
| Brown | Frost | Pine |
| Canopy | Gloom | Rust |
| Chill | Gold | Scarlet |
| Conker | Hedge | Twilight |

Write the hidden message here:

Spot the Difference!

There are 10 differences between the two images below. How many can you spot?



The Widow of Mulberry Place

By Julie D.

It was a new estate, shiny and proud; the buildings were a mixture of different brickwork and window frames, creating an aesthetic illusion of individuality. The main arterial road leads down to a pond full of life, where Marsh Frogs croak, loud happy mating calls, watched by a Heron with its beady eyes.

These desirable houses soon became occupied with a mix of locals and Londoners, who regard this area with fond nostalgia. They share their stories of family holidays in caravans, rides on the steam train and the teacups at Dymchurch fairground. The estate contained a mix of people, old and young, everyone keen to make new friends and soon networks of gossip pulsed around the Cul-de-sacs. There are the typical types, as always, dog walkers who patrol the area on a regular basis and a few who brazenly peer into people's windows and any open gate. Also, young parents dragging children to school, or pushing prams with crying babies, hoping they will soon fall asleep. Retired couples now living their best life, slowly shedding the stresses of work and fully embracing the coffee meetings and clubs.

Then there are the competitors, a friendly rivalry of Christmas lights and Halloween scenes, all for passersby to marvel and enjoy.

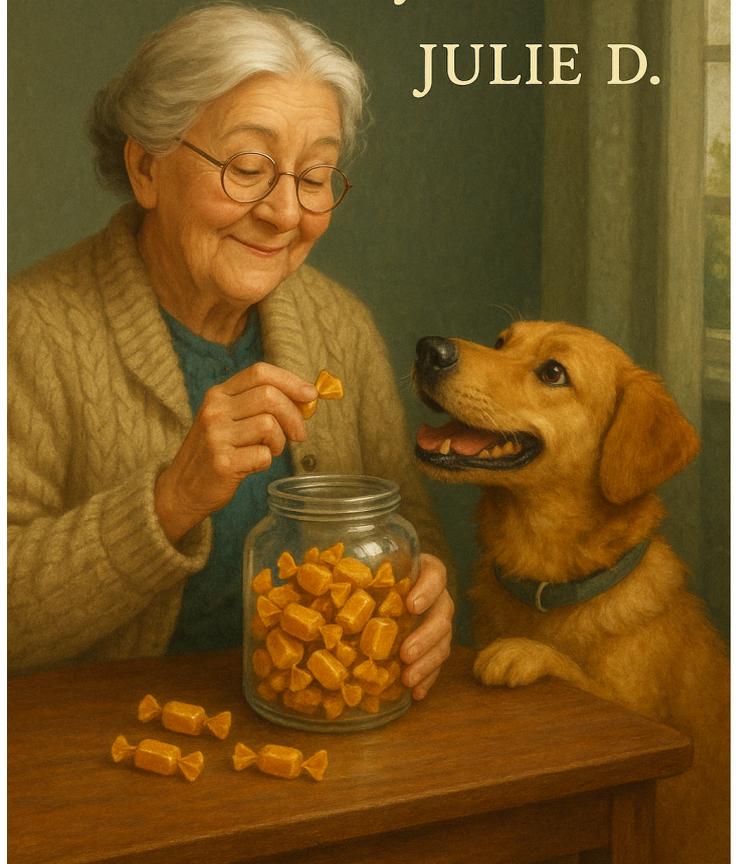
Brenda moved here as a widow. She was rather vague about her past, just Dartford area, and that she wanted a new start after her husband had died. Sprightly, plump and with a kind face, she would smile at neighbours when passing, remarking on the weather; always positive, "What a beautiful day".

She liked to sit in her armchair by the window, watching passersby or keeping an eye on delivery men. She would often accept parcels for neighbours if they were not at home, "doing her bit" as she calls it.

It was on such a day when a large removal van appeared outside the house opposite. This was the last plot to be filled and today the new owners

The Widow of Mulberry Place

JULIE D.



were moving in. She watched with interest as the contents of the van unloaded, noting the quality of the furniture and the tasteful, expensive sofas. All items met with her approval and she was just about to make a fresh pot of tea, when a black range rover appeared and the new owners got out. He was a very tall, good looking man in his 30's, she judged his wife to be of similar age. Glamorous, tall, slim and blonde and with an authoritative voice, that left Brenda in no doubt as to who was in charge.

After the couple had briefly inspected the interior and redirected a few items to the garage, they returned to their car, opened the rear door and let out an explosion of barking dog and excited child.

Brenda froze on the spot, her peaceful home ruined. She looked at the small terrier dog, jumping and barking, its sharp teeth snapping at the ankles of the removal men. Unchecked, the dog continued growling, weaving in between the legs of the dining table and the men who were trying to carry it.

"This will not do" thought Brenda, "this will not do at all" and so she began to plan.

A few months passed, the new neighbours had settled in, Brenda had even baked a cake to welcome them. Everyone went about their business, the seasons changed from budding daffodils in spring, to lazy hot summer evenings and then rainy autumn mists. Brenda was now an accepted helper to the new neighbours, she learnt their names were Sam and Kate and the daughter was called Cody. The mongrel mutt, as Brenda called him, was called Pickles; it was the only charming attribute it had. Constantly yapping, they never told the dog to be quiet, and it was left in the garden to bark for hours. It didn't take to anyone passing, baring its teeth and front legs bent ready to pounce. Brenda resorted to buying a walking stick and would wave it in the dog's direction. She pretended to be afraid whilst all the time sending out vibrations of "I'm coming to get you mutt".

Her time came just before Christmas when the neighbours asked Brenda if she would look in on the dog at lunchtime, as they were going to a Christmas Fayre in London and would be gone all day. "Of course" she said, as she accepted the keys for the front and back door and waved them on their way. This was her chance. She did not have any particular plan in mind, but she knew she could not waste this opportunity.

At 12 midday she sauntered over, keys in one hand and stick in the other. Pickles was asleep on the sofa, he was warm and cosy and opened a lazy eye when Brenda walked in.

"There you are dear" she said in her best Grandma's voice "I am just checking to see if you are okay, I will open the back door so you can go wee-wees, what a good boy you are"

At the sound of the back door opening the dog rushed up and went into the garden, cocking its leg up in various places and marking its territory. He then patrolled his area, checking it was all secure. Brenda meanwhile had gone back inside. She had seen a large bowl of chewy toffees on the kitchen table and it didn't take long to unwrap a few and throw them on the floor. She ripped the wrappers into rough pieces and scattered them around.

Leaving the toffee bowl upturned, she called the dog in and locked the kitchen door. As she made her way out, she was pleased to see that Pickles had already started eating the toffees. She smiled to herself thinking "That will keep him quiet for a bit", and quickly returned home.

It was late when the family came home and Brenda had gone to bed, so it wasn't until the next day when she heard the news. Pickles had eaten all the toffees and because of this his jaw had stuck together and he was unable to pant or breathe. It was Cody's father who found him, eyes bulging, almost popping out of his head, like a grotesque gorgon, silent as stone.

Tearfully, they shared the news with a shocked Brenda, who commiserated fully with the family and offered any help she could.

That night, behind closed doors, she treated herself to a sherry and sat in front of the fire, cosy and warm. Brenda's mind drifted back to her late husband Stan.

When he had passed, neighbours were so kind and she graciously accepted their gifts. "If only they knew", she thought. She had been slowly poisoning him for years, a little bit of this, a little bit of that. Her garden was full of possibilities and she mixed it up so that no poison was too dominant. Everyone knew he had been ill for years, so there was no autopsy, just a devoted grieving widow. "Not my first rodeo" She said and took herself off to bed for a nice, quiet, sleep.

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THE RANT!!!



Remember When Parents Were in Charge? Good Times.

So, the other day I met a lady who told me—very proudly, I might add—that she now receives £2,200 of public money to “home educate” her daughter. Naturally, I assumed there must be a medical issue. Severe anxiety? A learning disability? Some kind of traumatic experience?

Nope.
The girl just “doesn’t like school.”
That’s it. That’s the diagnosis.

Apparently the trauma began in NURSERY. According to Mum, the poor thing screamed non-stop, kicked, punched, and generally behaved like an angry inflatable tube-man outside Halfords. And after three noble attempts at dropping her off, Mum “just couldn’t put her through it” anymore, so she gave up. The nation, in a fit of generous insanity, now pays her to “home educate.”

She is now eight years old, which means she has completed almost an entire PHD in tantrum-based negotiation. At this rate, she’ll finish compulsory education without ever encountering another child, a timetable, or a single person telling her “No.” She’s going to get the shock of her life when she enters the real world and discovers that Tesco managers do not accept “I DON’T LIKE IT!” as an excuse for not stacking the milk.

Now, I’m dyslexic. School was not my favourite hobby either. In fact, I’d rather have eaten a pencil case than sit through double maths. But if I’d tried the screaming, kicking, punching routine, I’m fairly sure the response would have been something along the lines of:

“Get in the classroom, or you’ll be getting a motivational tap on the backside and a conversation with your father.”

Now before the pearl-clutching begins—I am NOT advocating corporal punishment. But let’s be honest: the threat alone worked wonders. Half the discipline was psychological. Just the phrase “Wait until your father gets home” could freeze time, silence siblings, and make even the family dog look worried.

But nowadays? Oh no. We live in the age of “negotiation parenting.”

A child throws mashed potato at Grandma?
“Sweetheart, can we express our feelings using indoor voices and non-projectile carbohydrates?”

Little Pickle bites the cat?
“It’s OK, darling, you were exploring your emotions with your teeth.”

Screaming in Tesco?
“Would you like a gluten-free snack and a colouring book to help soothe your journey?”

Meanwhile, every other customer in the supermarket is fantasising about diving head-first into the frozen peas just to escape the shrieking.

Which brings me to my restaurant experience.

There I am, enjoying a meal—actual food, on an actual plate, that I didn’t have to cook—until the table next to me begins to vibrate with the frequency of a small earthquake. A child—let’s call her Piccalilli, because these names are getting out of hand—starts screaming like she’s being exorcised.

Mum, serene as a yoga instructor on sedatives, gently coos:
“Piccalilli, please don’t do that, sweetheart. Mummy’s trying to eat her quinoa.”

This whisper-soft request apparently translates directly into toddler language as:
“Please escalate into a Category 5 hurricane and throw food at strangers.”

Spoonfuls of chips began flying. One narrowly missed Diablo—the father, naturally. He sat in silence like a hostage who knows negotiating is pointless. Garlic bread was launched skyward like a carbohydrate missile. Other diners ducked behind menus.

Finally, a waitress approaches:
“Would you like some help, Madam? Maybe calming her down?”

Mum responds with language usually reserved for drunken football fans. The waitress retreats. Enter the restaurant owner, appearing like Mr Benn: “As if by magic,” there he is, politely explaining that if the family cannot control Junior Weaponised Howler Monkey, they may prefer their meal as a takeaway.

Outrage! How dare society expect parents to parent! They stormed out, child still screaming, trailing breadsticks like confetti.

And I sat there thinking: When did everything go wrong?

Because I remember a time when:

- If you misbehaved in a shop, you were removed from the shop.

- If you acted up in a restaurant, you were taken home.
- And if you screamed in public, you were reminded—firmly—that the world does not revolve around your personal tantrum schedule.

Nowadays if a child begins a full-scale meltdown in Costa, the parent simply puts a tablet in front of them. Because nothing teaches discipline and social behaviour better than training someone to shut up only when presented with cartoons and chicken nuggets.

Even worse: we've somehow developed a generation of parents who are terrified of upsetting their own children. Terrified!

“We don't use the word 'no' in our house—it's too negative.”
Oh brilliant. So when little Chardonnay demands a pony at 3am, what happens? Do you just reason with her? Offer a therapy llama? Perform interpretive dance?

Then there's “gentle parenting,” which from what I can see involves:

Never raising your voice

Never saying no

Negotiating with a four-year-old like they're a union rep during a rail strike

Yes, I know kids today have different challenges. Yes, I know the world has changed. Yes, I know some children genuinely struggle with school and need support.

But “doesn't like it” is not a condition. It's a preference. And children, historically, have not been known for excellent life choices. If toddlers ran the world we'd all be naked, covered in jam, and living inside Peppa Pig-themed cardboard forts.

We also didn't have this weird idea that children are equals in decision-making. They are not. They are tiny, irrational, sticky dictators who cannot be trusted to choose their own socks, let alone decide whether or not they require education.

And spare a thought for teachers, who now spend 60% of their day trying to convince one child to sit in a chair without screaming, and 40% filling out paperwork so no parent ever feels their “little star” has been held accountable for anything.

Bring back consequence. Bring back expectation. Bring back the idea that children are part of society, not exempt from it.

If we keep handing out money to parents for avoiding school, if we keep allowing restaurants to be toddler warzones, if we keep treating discipline like a human rights violation, then don't come crying in ten years when these same kids try to scream their way out of paying taxes, following rules, or getting a job.

Because sooner or later reality arrives. And reality does not care if you “don't like it.”

NEW BOOK ANNOUNCEMENT – AND YES, HE'S STILL RANTING!

Warning: May cause uncontrollable nodding, eye-rolling, and laughing out loud in public.

For years, Kent's very own grump-in-chief, David Wimble, has been ranting about everything from potholes and politicians to seagulls who steal chips with military precision.

About two years ago, we started publishing his rants... and, let's be honest, you lot LOVED it.

Apparently nothing makes people happier than watching someone else lose their temper in print.

Well, brace yourselves – because in the New Year we're releasing:

🤔 “The Best of The Rant” – The Book! 🤔

- ✓ Over 100 of his published rants
- ✓ PLUS around 50 we didn't dare publish (until now...)
- ✓ Often near the knuckle
- ✓ Always what most of you are secretly thinking

From local madness to national nonsense, no target is safe. It's sharp, it's funny, it's occasionally outrageous – and it's guaranteed to make you say: “He's not wrong, though...”

More details to come soon – so keep an eye out.

Because Kent's grumpiest man is about to hit the bookshelves...

...and he's only just getting started. 🤔🤔

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Church Update

By June Gooch

Food Bank. The main food bank for the area, continues in Romney Marsh Community Church on Tuesdays from 4-5.30pm. If you are struggling to feed yourself or your family, ring for a voucher to the Citizens Advice Bureau on 08082 082138. This will enable you to have 3 days' worth of dried and tinned food adapted for the size of your family. Fresh food is also now being made available.

The food bank relies on donations, which can be left in the foyer of the church on North Street during the morning. Most supermarkets have food bank bins.

The demand, unfortunately is not slowing down, and the following items are in short supply. Cooking oil, female deodorant, ketchup, razors, veggie meals in a tin, and washing up liquid. Fresh food is now being distributed, but depends on availability.

At present they have plenty of tinned soup and potatoes, tinned tuna, pasta and rice.

The mobile pantry van calls at All Saints Church in Lydd, on Mondays from 10-11am. You can register as a member by calling 07913 573403 (the Rainbow centre) or CAB, number above. After that you can buy a bag of basics for between £5 and £7 depending on the size of your family.

The Mobile pantry van is also calling at the Sunflower Community Hub on Rolfe Lane, New Romney, on Fridays between 10.30-11.30am. The conditions are the same, as for the Lydd van.

Special Christmas services and events. Most churches are publishing their dates and times for these, so keep a look out for information, which will be particular to your church.

Brookland, St Augustine.

In December there will be no formal evensong, but on Friday, December 12th there will be carols around the tree at 6pm. Outdoors if fine, indoors if raining. In January and February, there will not be a Sung evensong on the 2nd Sunday, just a short service without the choir in the small room. The choir have been invited to join an informal Christmas sing song at the Woolpack on December 19th. There will be a crib service in the church at 4pm on Christmas Eve.

Don't forget the pantry table in the church porch, both for donations and those in need.

Dymchurch, St Peter and Paul.

The church is still in need of help with prayers and intercessions, and an organist to play for the Sunday services. A bible Study group meets at the church on Tuesdays at 10.30am for refreshments and the study starts at 11am and finishes about noon.

Sacristan training (helping with communion) is being offered, so anyone who is interested can let Chris Clark know and your name can be added to the list.

Dymchurch Catholic church, St Monica's on Chapel Road, is open for worship. There will be a regular Sunday mass at 9am.

Greatstone, St Peter.

The church hall, attached to the church, is very well used for midweek events. There are clubs and societies of all sorts, which include a Wednesday morning drop in, which welcomes pre-school children and their carers. There is wide variety of toys and chances for chats and refreshments.

The next Craft Fair will be on Saturday, December 20th from 10am-2pm, with a seasonal flavour. Last chance to buy some unique presents before Christmas, and have some seasonal cheer! There are many stalls, featuring all sorts of crafts.

Ivychurch, St George.

If you have spare garden produce, the "Produce in the Porch" shelf would be delighted to receive it, and the proceeds go towards the church funds.

As most locals will have seen, there are building works going on at the church, repairing and restoring. As often happens, reno creep has reared its head, and further works have to be undertaken urgently. Once again, the RM Historic Churches Trust has come to the churches aid by funding most of the work. The turret clock has been dismantled, and is being sent to specialist repairers in Penrith. It is hoped it will be back in position by Easter.

Jessie Bennett, a long time and much respected resident of Ivychurch celebrated her 90th birthday earlier in the year, and told someone she had never flown. So, friends from Ivychurch organised a trip in a small plane from Headcorn Aerodrome. Jessie was allowed to take the controls, and was absolutely delighted with her experience.

Lydd. All Saints.

The Christmas Bazaar will be on Saturday, November 29th from 10am to 1pm. It does, unfortunately clash with the school Christmas Fair, who are having a Santa, so it has been decided not to have one this year, as the children will already have seen a Santa! As usual there will be many craft stalls with ideas for hom -made unique Christmas presents, as well as all the usual stalls and delicious refreshments. **New for this year is a small mobile petting farm**, so that children can see and handle the small animals. This is be present from 10.30am to midday.

The church hall for all Saints is the Hardy Hall on the Rype. It is, happily, very much used, with events happening nearly day. See the notice board for details. To hire, for one off events, or regular events, ring Maggie Clifton on 07905 433302.

Known as the Cathedral of the Marsh, the church is a very large building, which needs a lot of looking after. The maintenance team always welcome new helpers, even if

it only an hour a month. Even if you don't go to church, but feel for the history of the building, contact warden Pat Carter on 01797 320108 or Chris Aubrey on 01797 320890.

A group of people in Lydd, collect items to help in Ukraine. They accept practically everything, in good condition, that would be useful to people in need. Big items like bikes and sewing machines, medical supplies, toiletries, household equipment etc. They don't want general clothing, but hoodies, jog bottoms, T shirts, thick socks, hats and scarves. They buy and convert 4 * 4s as ambulances. If interested in helping or donating, ring Gina on 07874 399422.

New Romney, St Nicholas.

The church is in a similar situation to Lydd church, with a reducing band of people to clean a very large church. Any help would be appreciated, even if you don't normally worship, but just feel for such a historical place.

The book sale and coffee morning was wrongly advertised in the last issue, and will in fact be on November 29th and will feature a Christmas Fair as well. So, an opportunity to buy some Christmas bits and pieces and have a morning of festive cheer and chat.

New Romney Methodist Church.

There is a service at 10.30am on alternative Sundays, see notices for exact dates. There is also a Meeting Point on Thursday mornings, from 10am to midday. All welcome, for anyone who would like coffee and chat. A coffee morning takes place on Saturday mornings, from 10am. All welcome.

Newchurch. St Peter and Paul.

The next coffee morning, which is a special Christmas Craft Fair will be on December 6th. If you like to have a stall, please ring Diana on 01303 311779. All welcome to come along and enjoy some seasonal cheer and chat.

Romney Marsh Community Church.

There is a Sunday service every week at 10.30am, followed by refreshments and fellowship. Youth and Children's teaching available during the service. Come and visit this time of vibrant worship and say hello, you will be very welcome. For any help or advice ring the church office on 01797 366855 during the morning.

The Youth Space and the Toddler Group meet on Thursdays. The toddler group is on Thursday mornings from 8.45 – 11am. The last toddler group for the year will be November 27th, which will be the Christmas party. The Youth space meets after school, from 4-5.30pm. For children in years 5,6 and 7.

Christmas Restaurant. This popular event, will be held on December 2nd, 3rd and 4th in the church building with home-made soup and puddings served between 12md

and 2pm. The produce is all donated by members of the church, and the donations go to various charities, one Christian and one secular. All welcome.

Snargate, St Dunstons.

There is a Holy Communion service every 2nd and 4th Sunday at 9am, followed by refreshments and fellowship. On December 14th this will be replaced by a traditional service of 9 lessons and carols, at 6pm. All welcome to this traditional candlelight service, which is very moving and atmospheric, with everything taking place lit by candles only.

St Mary's Bay. All Saints.

Monday mornings at 10am, "Café Church" informal worship with a difference. All welcome to this informal approach to "church." A housegroup meets on Mondays at 7pm and morning prayer is at 9.30am on Wednesdays, and the "Get together" on Wednesdays at 10.15 to 11.30am.

The Christmas Fair will be on Saturday, November 29th from 10am-noon. Volunteers and donations for the raffle, cake stall etc will be very welcome. Speak to Jeanette if you can help. All welcome to come along and share some festive chat and refreshments.

St Mary in the Marsh.

The Haywardians Choir practices every Friday evening in the church at 7.30pm. They raise large amounts for Charity and have regular local concerts, and the next event will be a concert in All Saints, St Mary's Bay, for the Mount Kenya tree nursery on December 6th at 4.30pm. The Haywardians will accompany the service of 9 lessons and carols on December 19th at 7.30pm. They will also be holding a Christmas concert in Lyminge Methodist Church on December 20th at 3pm.

Church Chuckle

At a theological college in Canada, students were sent out to placements for several weeks. One young man, whose surname was Joy, was having a good time with the friendly little church, that he was late reporting back to the college. The secretary of the college sent him a stiff telegram. The student's reply read, "Psalm 30 v 4"

The secretary looked it up. It read "Sorrow may endure for a night, but Joy cometh in the morning!"

Wit and Wisdom.

"Meet every man as you find him, for we are all the same under habit or robes or rags." Cadfael, from Ellis Peter's "Morbid Taste for Bones," stories about a mediaeval monk turned detective.

Or as Yorkshiremen put it "Speak as you find." Don't let others form YOUR opinions.

Contact :THE LOOKER

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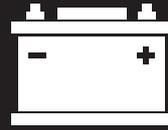
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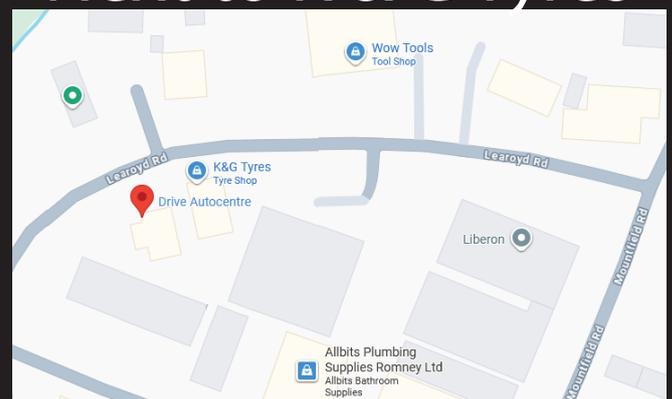
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