The Looker Newspaper
Community newspaper for Romney Marsh | Hythe & Folkestone District
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28th October Issue 414

Sanctuary Vote Sparks Angry Backlash



Residents question council priorities as Wimble says critical post reaches more than 50,000 people

Folkestone and Hythe's decision to back a "District of Sanctuary" motion has prompted an angry response online, with critics questioning whether councillors are representing the priorities of local people.

Councillor David Wimble says his social media account of the debate has been read by more than 50,000 people, with only a small number of those responding expressing support for the decision.

According to Cllr Wimble, Green, Liberal Democrat and Labour councillors present voted unanimously within their groups to support the proposal at the council meeting on October 7.

He says he opposed it alongside Clive Goddard and Tony Hills. With Jenny Hollingsbee, Alan Martin and David Godfrey abstained, while the remaining councillors voted in favour.

The motion, proposed by Green councillor Anita Jones, and seconded by Bridget Chapman, calls for the council to pursue sanctuary recognition, join the City of Sanctuary local authority network and develop an action plan with community organisations and people who have escaped persecution. Its stated aims include greater inclusion and equality for people seeking sanctuary.

But opponents are demanding answers about costs, housing and the council's responsibilities towards residents already struggling to access support.In his account of the meeting, Cllr Wimble said he challenged the

Continued on page 2

Lydd Airport unveils future-flight vision with potential for 1,000 jobs



Proposed innovation centre could bring more than £75 million a year to Kent's economy

Plans for a major aviation innovation centre at Lydd Airport could support more than 1,000 jobs and generate over £75 million a year in additional economic value for Kent, according to research by The Good Growth Foundation.

The proposed Centre for Future Flight Innovation would use the airport's existing infrastructure and surrounding airspace to develop, test and demonstrate emerging aviation technologies.

Continued on page 3

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Continued from Page 1



Councillors who say they are speaking for the majority...

But locals say they were not consulted and they do not speak for them

proposal by asking: “What about our own pensioners, our veterans and local families desperately waiting for a home?”

He argued that compassion must extend to people already living in the district, particularly those facing insecure housing or financial hardship.

“It is easy to make speeches about humanity,” he wrote. “The harder task is helping the pensioner frightened to turn on the heating, the veteran needing support and the local family with no secure home.”

‘Who Are They Representing?’
Cllr Wimble says responses to his post reveal frustration among people who believe the council’s priorities do not reflect their own.

One commenter, according to his account, described the decision as standing up for “left-wing woke idealism”. Another questioned why councillors appeared more interested in prioritising people arriving illegally than local taxpayers waiting for housing.

These reactions raise a political challenge for supporters of the motion: explaining what their commitment will mean in practice and how it will benefit the wider community.

However, the reported reach of the post is not a district-wide opinion poll. It does not establish how many readers live locally or what the electorate as a whole thinks.

Housing Fears
Housing is central to the criticism, with concerns that further commitments could increase pressure on an already stretched supply of affordable homes.

The council’s published housing information says around 1,500 applicants are on its waiting list, while approximately 300 homes become available each year. It warns that applicants can face a lengthy wait and that some may never receive an offer.

Some critics fear waits could extend beyond ten years. But no evidence reviewed for this article establishes that the sanctuary motion would cause such a delay or give people arriving illegally priority over existing applicants.

The published motion contains no change to housing allocation rules. The council’s existing policy sets eligibility requirements, including restrictions concerning immigration status, and provides additional priority for qualifying armed forces applicants.

The question now is whether any future action plan would propose changes affecting housing or other services—and what safeguards would accompany them.

Costs Still to Be Assessed
Council officers have identified potential resource demands, including officer support, a review of policies and procedures, and support for a local sanctuary group.

Their report says the financial implications have not yet been fully assessed. Further proposals would require detailed consideration and the appropriate approvals. The motion itself does not authorise un-budgeted expenditure.

That leaves residents awaiting a clear explanation of what the scheme would cost, how it would be funded and what practical changes it would bring.

Cllr Wimble has called for those answers before further commitments are made, alongside assurances that existing housing applicants and services will not be disadvantaged.

He maintains that his objection concerns priorities and fairness, saying he welcomes people regardless of their skin colour, sexuality or religion.

Petition Call to Residents
Cllr Wimble says he has submitted an online e-petition to Folkestone & Hythe District Council, under the name William David Wimble, calling for the “District of Sanctuary” decision to be overturned. He is urging residents who feel strongly about the issue to sign the petition once it opens and share it with others, so their concerns can be formally put before the council. The petition will be available at the FHDC Website and search for ***E petition.***

With district elections expected next May, the debate could become a test of whether councillors’ decisions match the priorities of the communities they represent.



Continued from Page 1

Representatives from aviation, technology, industry and government gathered at the airport on Thursday, October 15, to hear about the proposals and see live demonstrations of future-flight technology.

The plans include opportunities for uncrewed aircraft, autonomous systems, advanced air mobility and green propulsion, with potential applications across commercial aviation, civilian services and defence.

David Wimble, Kent County Council’s Cabinet Member for Economic Development, attended the event and welcomed the prospect of investment and skilled employment on Romney Marsh.

“The meeting at Lydd Airport offered an exciting insight into what could become a major new industry for Romney Marsh and the wider Kent economy,” he said.

“For local people, the prospect of highly skilled jobs, new investment and opportunities for young people to build careers in an emerging industry is particularly exciting.”

Addressing claims circulating on social media, Cllr Wimble said: “These proposals are for a centre dedicated to aviation innovation. They do not include using the site as a data centre or covering huge swathes of land with solar farms to power it. I appreciate that residents will have questions, but it is important that discussion is based on what is actually being proposed.”

Central to the proposals is securing a commercial Special Use Airspace designation, which would provide greater flexibility for testing and operating new aviation technologies. The Good Growth Foundation estimates the proposed changes could support 535 direct jobs, within the wider projection of more than 1,000 jobs.

Those figures describe the potential economic impact rather than jobs already secured. The centre remains a proposal, with regulatory changes needed to unlock its full potential.

The project’s focus extends beyond flying drones. Developing autonomous aircraft requires engineering, software, communications, maintenance and rigorous testing. A centre bringing those activities together could create opportunities across several disciplines, although the eventual mix of employment would depend on the businesses and projects attracted to Lydd.

Commercial and civilian drone applications can include inspecting infrastructure, surveying land and moving goods. Defence applications can include reconnaissance and surveillance. These illustrate the breadth of the sector rather than a confirmed list of activities planned for the airport.

The proposals also encompass advanced air mobility and green propulsion, giving the centre a wider remit than conventional drone operations. The intention is to provide an environment where emerging systems can be tested and demonstrated as developers work towards practical, reliable use.

For Romney Marsh, the economic opportunity could reach beyond the airport boundary. New aviation businesses could generate demand for local suppliers and services, while a concentration of specialist employers could encourage links with education and training providers. Such benefits would depend on the centre progressing and securing sustained commercial activity.

Lydd Airport chief executive Sam O’Dwyer said the ambition was to establish a national centre for future flight while creating a model other regional airports could follow.

He described the project as an opportunity to adapt regional aviation infrastructure for a new era, attracting investment and strengthening the UK’s capabilities in emerging aviation technology.

The airport’s case is that demand already exists to design, test and build new air systems at scale in Britain. Its proposals seek to bring that demand together with an operational aviation setting, subject to the necessary regulatory changes.

Industry partner Eagle Eye Innovations has worked with the airport on the centre’s roadmap and strategic vision, supporting plans to bring infrastructure, technical expertise and operational testing environments together.

The company’s involvement underlines another central theme of the proposals: establishing confidence in new technology through testing and demonstration. Alongside developing aircraft, the centre’s vision is to help show that emerging systems can operate reliably in practical conditions.

Folkestone and Hythe MP Tony Vaughan also attended and backed the airport’s ambition, highlighting the potential for skilled employment and new opportunities for local people. He pledged to continue making the case for the changes needed to move the project forward.

The October event followed the parliamentary launch of The Good Growth Foundation’s report on September 8, marking the next stage in the airport’s efforts to develop the centre.

Cllr Wimble said he wanted to help turn the proposals into practical opportunities for Kent.

“As Kent County Council’s Cabinet Member for Economic Development, I look forward to working with Lydd Airport and its partners to help make this vision a reality,” he said.

“I want to help bring the right people together, encourage investment and support the practical steps needed to move these proposals forward.

“Lydd has an opportunity to strengthen its long-term future while bringing skilled employment and lasting economic benefits to our communities.”

Cinemarsh

Shaun the Sheep- The Beast of Mossy Bottom U

Wednesday 28th October 11:00am 2:30pm
Thursday 29th October 11:00am

Ghosts- The Possession of Button House PG

Wednesday 28th October 7:00pm
Thursday 29th October 2:30pm
Friday 30th October 11:00am
Saturday 31st October 11:00am
Sunday 1st November 11:00am

Wicker 15

Friday 30th October 2:30pm 7:15pm
Saturday 31st October 2:30pm 7:15pm
Sunday 1st November 2:30pm
Monday 2nd November 2:30pm
Tuesday 3rd November 11:00am 7:15pm
Wednesday 4th November 11:00am 7:15pm
Thursday 5th November 11:00am 2:30pm

National Theatre Live- Golden Boy 15

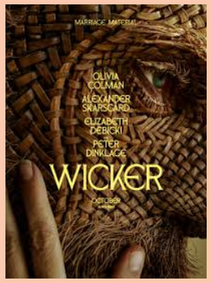
Thursday 5th November 7:00pm

Giant 15

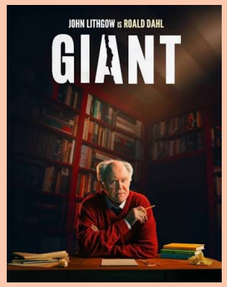
Thursday 19th November 7:00pm
Sunday 22nd November 2:30pm













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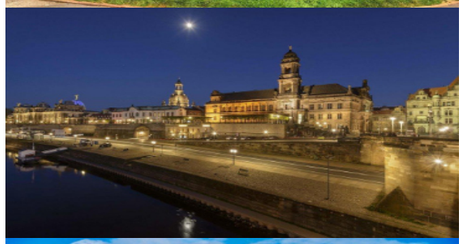
KENT, UK As the United Kingdom approaches Remembrance Day, a time when our nation pauses to reflect on the immense sacrifices made for our freedom, travellers from across Kent are being invited to undertake a deeply reflective and moving journey through the heart of Europe.

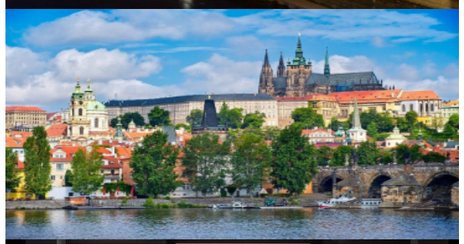
The newly announced 13-day tour, **'Echoes of Central Europe, Germany, Poland & Czechia, '** departing on Monday July 12, 2027, offers far more than a standard holiday. Alongside the majestic beauty of Dresden, the vibrant streets of Prague, and the architectural wonders of Wroclaw, this carefully curated itinerary takes pilgrims and history enthusiasts alike into the profound historical depths of Poland.

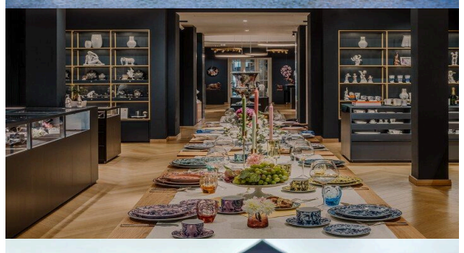
For travellers guided by a conscience shaped by remembrance, the tour holds a special resonance. Excursions to Oskar Schindler's Factory and the solemn grounds of Auschwitz invite quiet reflection on humanity's darkest hours and the enduring strength of the human spirit. Connecting these sites of memory with the spirit of Remembrance Day reminds us of the vital importance of bearing witness to history, ensuring that the lessons of the past are never forgotten.

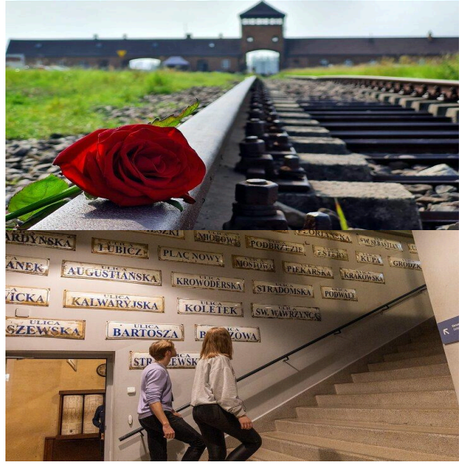
Alan Johnson, Managing Director at Crosskeys comments *"I see journeys like this as powerful opportunities to walk in remembrance, bearing witness to history while reflecting on the peace our world needs. This 12 night pilgrimage through Central Europe offers our travellers not only a window into the past, but the opportunity to rest and enjoy the cultural treasures and spectacular landscapes of Central Europe."*











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Editor's Word



David Wimble

I did predict in the last edition that the weather was about to turn colder, and it certainly has! Although, having made that prediction, we promptly escaped to the Isle of Wight for a short weekend break and found ourselves enjoying what felt more like early July.

For a couple of days, it was lovely. Then, almost as though someone had spotted us heading for the ferry and turned on a tap, the heavens opened. The rain came down and seemed quite happy to carry on all night. Welcome back to autumn!

By Sunday, I was in my office at County Hall, where the heating can best be described as temperamental. It reminds me of the sea: it takes weeks to warm up, and by the time it finally does, you are wondering whether you should have brought your swimming shorts.

There must be a comfortable temperature somewhere between a fridge and a tropical greenhouse, but finding it appears to be an ongoing project.

The idea behind our two nights away was simple: switch off the phones, relax and enjoy a little time without the usual worries of work. That sounds straightforward enough, although switching off my brain takes rather more effort than switching off my phone.

Most weeks, I spend a full working week in Maidstone. On Saturdays, you will usually find me in our warehouse shop or at a trade show. Around that comes the radio work and, of course, putting together The Looker.

Writing the paper tends to happen first thing in the morning or during the evenings. There is always another article to finish, a photograph to find or something that needs checking before we go to print. My brain rarely gets the message that the working day is supposed to have ended.

A friend recently said to me: "You're always on holiday!"

Now, I would suggest that two nights on the Isle of Wight hardly qualify as a lengthy escape from working life. Yes, we did have a week away earlier in the year, but even when I am on holiday, The Looker still needs writing. The view from the window might change, but the deadline certainly doesn't.

That is no complaint about the paper. I still enjoy it enormously. There is something very satisfying about taking a collection of local stories, photographs, letters and adverts and turning them into a newspaper that people pick up, read and talk about.

But it has made me think about the longer term.

At some point, I would like to find someone interested in taking over The Looker and carrying it forward. Someone with an interest in local people, a bit of curiosity and the enthusiasm to get involved in everything that makes our area tick.

Could that person be you?

It is great fun. You meet all sorts of people, get invited to functions and events, and discover stories you would otherwise never hear. There is work involved, naturally, but there is a great deal of enjoyment too.

If you have ever picked up this paper and thought, "I'd love to have a go at that," come and have a chat with me. You don't need to arrive with all the answers; an interest in the opportunity is a good place to start.

In the meantime, I had better get back to this edition and see whether the heating has warmed up yet.

David

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Spotlight on Beaver Scouts

Porchlight Sleepover – Romney Marsh Scouts Unite





Scouts and Kent homelessness charity Porchlight partnered for the Big Cardboard Sleepout 2026, with the main event centred on World Homeless Day on Saturday, 10 October 2026. Scouts from across Kent came together for one powerful night to raise vital funds and awareness. Romney Marsh Scouts gathered at 1st Dymchurch HQ to build cardboard shelters and spend a night outside in support of people facing homelessness and/or mental ill health. The event gave Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers an opportunity to work together, strengthen their bonds and gain a clearer understanding of the challenges faced each day by people who live and sleep on the streets.

A Message to Scouts from Porchlight…Hi Scouts!

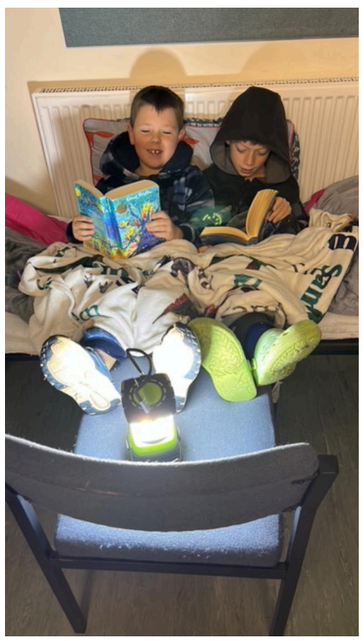




We're so excited that you're joining us for the Kent Scout Cardboard Sleepout! By sleeping outside for one night, you're helping people who do not have a safe place to sleep and showing that you care. This is your chance to make a real difference: every pound you raise helps someone in Kent begin a new chapter in their life.

Thank you for helping Porchlight continue its vital work.
Learning Through Experience

Supported by Leaders and other adults, younger members learned practical skills as they built their shelters. They also considered the challenges faced by people without permanent homes and how they could help. Kindness and teamwork were central to the experience – Scouts learn by doing. . . . . helping and caring. . . . .



The core event: Thousands of Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers across Kent built makeshift cardboard shelters and spent one night sleeping outside.

The mission: The initiative aimed to raise vital funds and increase ongoing community awareness of rough sleeping, homelessness and related mental health challenges in Kent.

Campaign goals: Organisers aimed to stage their biggest county-wide sleepout yet, building on successful campaigns in 2018 and 2022. The 2022 event alone raised more than £44,000. Funds provide people with a safe place to sleep, food and support. Before the 2026 event, Kent Scouts had already raised more than £10,000 in sponsorship.



Award recognition: The partnership was recognised at the Charity Event Awards, where the Kent Scouts Big Cardboard Sleep Out was runner-up for "Best Outdoor Fundraising Event" because of its powerful educational impact on young people.

Reflections from Participants

The initial challenge the youngsters faced was to build their shelters – families joined in to help build and a makes shift cardboard city took shape. The youngsters decided they needed to keep warm, dry and organise food which is hard to do, when you are homeless. Based on their experience the youngsters decided:-







'Sleeping out overnight was a challenge – it got really cold, damp and uncomfortable – It would be really hard to do this over a long period of time; Hygiene is hard too – having access to be able to wash – for us it didn't matter for one night but I wouldn't like to do it all the time. We were lucky and could go inside for hot food which makes you feel better – we can see why it is important to have hot food available when you have to sleep outside. It was a cold night but I wouldn't like to be out in the rain and snow – that would be really miserable – All agreed it was an interesting and thought provoking experience and learned by experience we do need to support the homeless and valuable charities like Porchlight.

Group spokesperson Maurice added that all the adults were really proud of the youngsters who took part – ranging in age from 6 – 18 - and the valuable life lessons they had gained. In addition the group raised over £200 for Porchlight which was a great result. Huge Well Done Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers.

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Call for higher parking fines to tackle congestion at coastal hotspots



A Folkestone and Hythe councillor is calling for parking penalties to be more than doubled, arguing that some motorists find it cheaper to risk a ticket than pay for a day's parking.

Cllr Polly Blakemore, the district council's Green cabinet member for transport, wants the government to review charges amid concerns about illegal parking around popular visitor destinations.

The roads near Folkestone Harbour and Lower Leas Coastal Park are among the areas causing greatest concern, with summer visitors adding to pressure on spaces across Folkestone, Hythe and Romney Marsh.For lower-level contraventions, including overstaying and parking outside marked bays, motorists currently face a £50 penalty, reduced to £25 when paid within 14 days.

Cllr Blakemore argues that the discounted amount offers insufficient deterrent where daily parking charges can reach a similar level or exceed it.

Speaking to KentOnline, she said: "Given £25 a day is in many places what people pay for parking, it's common sense that some take the logical choice to risk a fine."

She is seeking discussions with Folkestone and Hythe Labour MP Tony Vaughan about raising the issue with ministers. Any change would require government action.

The proposal follows a Department for Transport trial on Bournemouth seafront, where higher penalties were introduced to discourage parking offences. During the trial, lower-level penalties increased from £50 to £110, with the early-payment amount rising from £25 to £55.

More serious contraventions, including parking on double yellow lines, attracted penalties of £160 instead of £70, reduced to £80 for prompt payment. Vehicle release charges also increased.

According to the report, the trial recorded a substantial reduction in obstructive parking along coastal routes, helping maintain access for emergency vehicles and buses.

Cllr Blakemore supports increases broadly in line with those tested in Bournemouth. However, the suggestion has drawn criticism from a motorists' campaign group.



Brian Macdowell, of the Alliance of British Drivers, described the proposal as a "money-grabbing exercise" and warned it could pave the way for further rises.

He argued that drivers struggling to find available spaces were increasingly taking chances, and questioned the prospect of imposing substantially higher penalties.

Cllr Blakemore maintains that the purpose is to improve access and traffic flow, help residents reach their homes and encourage spaces near businesses to become available more regularly. She also said any surplus from the council's on-street parking operation must be reserved for permitted highway-related purposes, including parking provision and road improvements.

Meanwhile, the district council has introduced a discounted residents' parking permit costing £20 per quarter.

The permit allows holders to park for up to two hours in council short-stay car parks and three hours in long-stay car parks. It also covers The Leas in Folkestone and Princes Parade in Hythe when seasonal charges apply.

For now, the higher penalties remain a proposal, with the debate centred on whether tougher enforcement would ease congestion or place another financial burden on motorists.



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Concrete Sheep Bring Art to Eight Romney Marsh Locations

The Romney Flock and Tide Tales project has concluded.

A flock of concrete sheep is finding its place across Romney Marsh, with eight sculptures made by Teach Me set to be seen at locations around the area. The project was sponsored by the Arts Council of Great Britain. You may have read about the project's inception in a previous edition of *The Looker*.









The completed sculptures were unveiled at an event held at the Romney Marsh Hub in New Romney on Saturday 17 October, at which locals got their first chance to respond to the magnificent creatures. Yolanda Houston, one of the lead artists, described how the sheep came about and how they were made. She highlighted how much the community had been involved in the project.

The project, that also included making 500 mosaics bricks to go around the band stand in Hythe's Oaklands Park, engaged with the community. Some 500 people, including local schools, cubs and brownies, made the bricks. Other parts of the project included the public making small woollen sheep using wool kindly provided by Romney Marsh Wools. Some members of the public also made adornments for the sculpted sheep, so the project really was a public engagement exercise.

Inspired by the sheep that have long been part of the Marsh's landscape, the sculptures offer a lasting, welcoming presence in each setting. Their solid material gives them a striking contrast with the open countryside, while their familiar shape connects the artwork to the region's rural character.

Placed across eight locations, the sheep invite people to encounter art as part of their everyday surroundings. Each sculpture has its own setting, giving visitors a reason to pause, look around and see the Marsh from a new angle.

Together, the concrete flock celebrates Romney Marsh's distinctive landscape and brings a shared piece of art to communities across the area. A sheep trail guide will be available soon.

The sheep, which have all been named, are located at the following venues:



Howey, the railway cheep is at the Romney Hythe and Dymchurch railway station in New Romney.



Nestie, the nature sheep, is located at the Nest at the Romney Marsh Visitor Centre.

Sarah, the school sheep, is at the Old School in New Romney.

Hubert, the beach sheep, is at the Hub on the Beach in Littlestone.



Baabara, the smuggler sheep, can be found at the Ship Inn in Dymchurch.

Madam Eglantine is the pilgrim sheep and is placed at the Hope All Saints sculpture site on the old Ashford Road in New Romney.

Scout, the cubs and scouts sheep, is at the scout HQ in New Romney's Church Lane.

Alfresia, is a fishing sheep that is found at the Pilot Inn in Lydd on Sea.



The 500 bricks - the Tide Tales initiative - that encircle the Oaklands Park bandstand were made at various workshops hosted at different venues across the Marsh. They were unveiled at a ceremony in the park with the public in attendance. A terrific school rock band played to entertain the visitors.

New Romney Reuse Shop expands after successful first year



An expanded reuse shop has officially opened at New Romney Household Waste Recycling Centre, following a successful first year that saw 31 tonnes of reusable items diverted from disposal and more than 2,100 items find new homes.

The shop, which first opened in 2025 as Kent County Council's first reuse shop, gives unwanted but good-quality items a second life rather than seeing them thrown away.

Following its success, the facility has been enlarged to include additional retail space, three shipping containers and a covered canopy area, allowing more items to be sold and creating a better shopping experience for customers.

The official opening was marked by a ribbon-cutting ceremony led by Jamie Henderson, Kent County Council's Cabinet Member for Environment and Coastal Regeneration, who said: "The success of the Reuse Shop



at New Romney has exceeded our expectations. In just one year, residents have helped divert 31 tonnes of reusable items from disposal and given thousands of items a new lease of life.

'This expanded facility will allow us to build on that success, saving even more valuable resources from becoming waste while making quality, affordable items available to local people.

'Reuse sits at the heart of the waste hierarchy. Before we think about recycling, we should always ask whether an item can be used again. Every item sold through this shop helps reduce waste, conserve resources and support a more sustainable future for Kent.

'I'd like to thank our partners at FCC Environment, KCC officers, site staff and residents whose support and dedication have made this project such a success."

Rory Brien, Head of Municipal Treatment at FCC Environment, said: "It's important that we continue to offer these shops for reuse and provide spaces for reuse to become a daily habit. Our partnership with Kent County Council to expand this reuse shop is a direct response to its success since opening and that is something to be very proud of."

Income generated through the shop supports local charities and helps fund future reuse initiatives across the county, extending the benefits of reuse to more communities.

The New Romney shop was the first Reuse Shop to open at a Kent Household Waste Recycling Centre and was later followed by a second shop at Allington. Together, the facilities are helping Kent residents reduce waste, reuse valuable items and support the county's ambitions to move towards a more circular economy.





Dear Looker,
I read the about the new GSE development in the looker with interest.
I am not sure you have all the facts correct…

The proposed pool will not be a ‘public’ pool in the true sense of the word, unlike the existing PUBLIC pool in Hythe, (scheduled for major refurbishment once Folkestone pool is open). It might allow the public to ‘pay and swim’ but presumably it will have to manage that access with the needs of hotel guests? To call it a ‘public’ swimming pool is therefore misleading.

I note that both Sport England and one of the local swimming clubs have already expressed concerns re the ‘public’ accessibility of the pool and its usefulness for serious swim training.

According to the planning application, the developer proposes to raise the ground level beneath the proposed housing by some distance, to lift it above the flood plain, this will be a massive, disruptive enterprise, right on the coast road, lasting months, if not years, in an area where traffic flow is already problematic.

Kind regards
M C Batho

Dear Looker,
Good or bad? Let us look.
More jobs? With developments all over Kent the construction industry is maxed out. So will this be built by UK taxpayers or by foreign nationals? Have a guess.

Homes for those needing homes? Luxury flats on seafront are hardly what is needed, or suitable for first time buyers or young families. And affordable simply means10% off market price. So not truly affordable. Will these end up as 2nd homes or air b n b? Have a guess.

Increased tourism? In what way? No additional cafes or bars. And have the 500 new properties in Hythe built in the last year boosted the High Street? Judging by the increased empty shops, no.

The new ‘golf course’ is actually a small ‘pitch and putt’. The current Golf course attracts thousands of visitors. Individuals, those on holiday, societies etc. Tourism may actually reduce once it is destroyed. And do the owners of the Imperial promote the Golf Club using social media, leaflets etc to help tourism? The cynic might think they are less interested in tourism and solely interested in pushing their planning application through. And the golf club IS open to the public, it is NOT a private club. Funny that isn’t mentioned by the owners.

Also worth noting is that the Golf club has a rapidly increasing membership and a thriving family/junior section.

As for the small swimming pool, is it free? Or will you be required to pay and/or become a member of the Hythe Imperial? Have a guess.

And of course 4-6 years of lorries bringing soil to increase the height to avoid flooding. Can our roads cope?

As for the additional strain on our dentists and Dr’s lets not go there.

And finally our wonderful military panel. You currently have magnificent views. If the development goes ahead the views will be dirt and lorries for 4-6 years and thereafter? The land needs to be raised by 6 foot so dirt and concrete tower blocks. Great.

It is not needed and will not benefit Hythe in any way.

Rob Kingdon
Hythe

Dear Editor,
As someone who has lived in Hythe for 62 years, I would like to express my support for GSE’s proposals for the Hythe Imperial, including a new swimming pool and what I consider stunning designs for part of the golf course.

We have heard similar objections before. When the flats behind the hotel were proposed, there was considerable opposition. Now they are finished, I believe the attractive buildings and beautiful gardens have shown how well a development can complement its surroundings.

That experience should encourage people to look at these latest proposals with an open mind.

Reading comments on the Hythe residents’ group, I cannot help wondering whether some opponents are viewing this entirely through the comfort of their own circumstances. Those fortunate enough to enjoy retirement in expensive homes on the hill should also consider what investment could mean for people who need to earn a living here.

Is there a touch of “I’m all right, Jack, pull up the ladder” about some of the objections?

Everyone has a right to raise concerns, wherever they live and however long they have been here. But opposition should be based on the merits of the plans, alongside a fair assessment of the benefits.

Hythe needs visitors, thriving businesses and reasons for people to spend their money locally. Investment in the Imperial could help support that economy, benefiting shops, restaurants, suppliers and those seeking work.

We can cherish Hythe’s character while welcoming thoughtful development. In my view, these proposals deserve support and offer an opportunity to strengthen the town’s future.

Mark Bartlett
Hythe resident for 62 years

Dear Editor,
What gives the Green-led administration at Folkestone and Hythe District Council the right to speak for the entire district on an issue as contentious as declaring it a “district of sanctuary”, without first seeking residents’ views?

Councillors have the authority to debate and adopt motions. That does not mean they should mistake a council vote for the wholehearted consent of the communities they represent.

Before making declarations on our behalf, the administration should explain precisely what this designation means, what commitments accompany it and whether there are any implications for council spending, housing or local services. Residents deserve clear answers and a meaningful opportunity to express their views.

After three years of this administration, I remain deeply dissatisfied with its priorities. The Green, Liberal Democrat and Labour councillors supporting it should concentrate on demonstrating competent management, protecting services and accounting for public money. Political declarations will do little to reassure residents who already feel their concerns are being overlooked.

I was also disappointed by what I regarded as Councillor Nicola Keen’s dismissive manner towards Councillor David Wimble, the editor of this newspaper, at the recent meeting. Her facial expressions and the way she addressed him struck me as falling below the standard residents should expect in a council chamber.

Councillors are entitled to disagree strongly. They should nevertheless answer an opposing argument with courtesy and substance. Those watching proceedings should be able to see their concerns debated seriously, whatever their political allegiance.

My objection is to the council’s decision and the way it has approached the issue. People seeking sanctuary should be treated with dignity, and residents questioning council policy deserve the same respect.

If members believe this designation is right for our district, they should be willing to explain it, defend it and listen to those who disagree.

The conduct I witnessed has strengthened my determination to vote Reform UK at the next local election. Councillor Keen and her colleagues should consider how their treatment of opposing voices affects people who are already losing confidence in this administration.

Respect for voters must extend beyond those who agree with you.

Yours faithfully,

Sharon Roots,
Folkestone









Romney Marsh Flower Arrangers

October meeting 2026

You may have seen, on the Romney Marsh, advertisements to make a Christmas wreath.

Today our workshop was entitled making an “Autumn Wreath” for display. Or a “Halloween wreath”, if members were more daring

Eighteen members attended the workshop, and the room was filled with red and yellow leaves, trailing ivy or clematis, small handmade pumpkins coloured berries, fir cones, large, dried leaves and acorns. Some members had painted their curled hazel stalks black to make the material look spookier.



There was a lot of fun and laughter especially when members were winding the tape and padding round the circular wire wreath. The wreaths were styled to the individual. A fir cone shaped to look like a witch, another one lit up with orange pumpkin lights. A large black spider was disappearing into the foliage. Some members had made a more peaceful autumn display with herb and coloured leaves from their garden. The results were extremely good, and members were satisfied with their hard work.





Our November meeting is on Wednesday 11th November, The Demonstrator is: Helen Hare

And you are invited to celebrate with her and admire her beautiful flower arrangements.

Please do join us and bring a friend, Tickets are £8.00 Raffle and refreshments available.

Contact Sharon for further information on: 07754 053783

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Volunteers collect more than 1,000 sacks of rubbish in two months



Volunteers have collected 1,068 sacks of rubbish across the district in just two months, with most of the waste removed from Romney Marsh.

The August and September total came despite the team having to miss a monthly litter pick on the Ministry of Defence ranges at Lydd while shingle was bulldozed back into place following last winter’s storms.

Volunteers also turned out over the August bank holiday weekend to support Veolia’s teams during Dymchurch’s Day of Syn festival, helping leave the village tidy after the crowds departed. At Greatstone, regular beach cleans continue to attract both established volunteers and new family groups. The next event takes place on Saturday, October 24, during half term.

The team expects larger items of debris associated with winter weather may have begun washing ashore by then, adding to the work needed to keep the coastline clean. Alongside its practical work, the group is continuing to take its message into classrooms. Following a short summer holiday break, its youth outreach team has already visited a local school this month and has further bookings in the diary.

Funds raised through aluminium can recycling help support the volunteers’ activities. Recent contributions from councillors Clive Goddard and Tony Hills, through their ward grant funds, have also enabled the purchase of more litter-picking equipment for children and adults.

Among the new items are hoops designed to hold rubbish bags open, manufactured from recycled fishing nets.In his update, Paul said the equipment was “helping to close the loop”, turning discarded material into tools that support further clean-up efforts.

The group has also thanked Lydd Town Council for providing a garage to store some of its equipment. Volunteers are helping service the town’s litter bins while the council seeks a new member of staff. They have previously provided similar assistance to several Romney Marsh parish councils when their own staff were unavailable. Thanking supporters, Paul highlighted the contribution of volunteers, councillors and local councils in keeping the work going, from clearing festival litter to tackling rubbish along the Marsh’s beaches.

Christmas FAIR
Saturday 7th November 2026
10 am – 2 pm
In aid of
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Dates for your Diary

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

Wednesday 28th October
Computer Club, Village Hall, St. Mary's Bay, 9.30 a.m.
Bridge Meeting Point, New Romney Scouts Hut, 10 a.m. (2nd & 4th Wed)
Woman's Wednesday Club, St. Peter's Hall, Greatstone, 2 p.m.
Needlecraft Club, Old School, New Romney, 7 p.m.
Short Mat Bowling, St. Mary's Bay Village Hall, 7 p.m.

Thursday 29th October
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 30th October
Friday Art Group, St Mary's Bay Village Hall, 1 p.m.
Halloween Bash, Lydd Scouts Hut, 6.30 p.m.
Social Ballroom Sequence Dancing, St. Mary's Bay Village Hall, 7 p.m.

Monday 2nd November
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 3rd November
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 4th November
Computer Club, Village Hall, St. Mary's Bay, 9.30 a.m.
Woman's Wednesday Club, St. Peter's Hall, Greatstone, 2 p.m.
Needlecraft Club, Old School, New Romney, 7 p.m.
Short Mat Bowling, St. Mary's Bay Village Hall, 7 p.m.

Thursday 5th November
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 6th November
Shepway U3A Swing Band Concert, St. Nicholas Church, New Romney, 11 a.m.
Remembrance Day Lunch, RM Community Hub, 12 noon (01797-363888)
Friday Art Group, St Mary's Bay Village Hall, 1 p.m.
Social Ballroom Sequence Dancing, St. Mary's Bay Village Hall, 7 p.m.
Quiz Night, Ivychurch Village Hall, 7 p.m. (01797-344144)

Saturday 7th November
Christmas Fair, Old School Trust & Scout HQ, New Romney, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Coffee Morning + Seaside Singers, Dymchurch Church, 10 a.m.

Sunday 8th November
Royal British Legion Service of Remembrance, St. Nicholas Church, New Romney, 10.30 a.m.



Families Invited to Step into Christmas Magic at Pilgrims Hospices Festive Fair

Pilgrims Hospices is set to sprinkle festive cheer across Ashford with its much-loved Christmas Fair, taking place at PGL Beyond, Grosvenor Hall, Kennington, on Saturday 21 November 2026, from 11am–4pm.

With seasonal stalls, unique gifts, children's crafts and festive games, the Fair promises fun for all ages – and every penny raised will help Pilgrims continue providing vital end-of-life care for local families.

Meet Santa and make memories

No Christmas Fair would be complete without a visit to Santa Claus, who will be flying in from the North Pole with his elves to greet children. Little ones can also decorate gingerbread, paint festive plates, and try their hand at traditional favourites such as Snowballs in a Bucket, Pick a Candy Cane and Snowman Hoopla.

New for 2026, met our Frozen Princess

Win big in the Christmas Grand Draw

The Pilgrims Christmas Grand Draw will be back with some fabulous prizes to be won, including:

1st prize – Luxury Christmas Hamper

2nd prize – A two-night stay at Nook's Retreat (Airbnb)

3rd prize – Air Fryer and Cookbook

... plus many more. Tickets cost just £1 and can be purchased in advance at Pilgrims Hospices in Ashford or on the day. Winners will be announced at the Fair.

Festive community spirit

Visitors can also enjoy delicious refreshments served throughout the day, while browsing craft and gift stalls brimming with Christmas sparkle.

Lou Newman, Pilgrims Community Fundraising Manager, said:

"The Christmas Fair is a highlight in our calendar. It's a chance for families to come together, celebrate the season and support hospice care at the same time. Every ticket, every mince pie and every game played helps us care for local people living with incurable illness."

Kindly sponsored by Ultima Care.

Event details

📍 Venue: PGL Beyond, Grosvenor Hall, Kennington, Ashford, Kent TN25 4AJ

📅 Date: Saturday 21 November 2026

🕛 Time: 11am–4pm

🎟️ Entry: Adults £3, children under 16 free. Visit Santa: £5 per child. Visit our Frozen Princess £3

🚗 Parking: Free on-site (car sharing and walking encouraged).

Together we can make this Christmas special for Pilgrims families.





Promote your Christmas event

Planning a Christmas fair, festive show or seasonal celebration? Advertise in The Looker and reach local readers across Folkestone, Hythe and Romney Marsh. Contact Louise@thelooker.co.uk for details.

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Still Hitting The HEIGHTS



Singer-songwriter Kate Bush on creativity, privacy and doing things her own way.

Few artists have cultivated mystique quite like Kate Bush. In a pop world culture that thrives on almost constant visibility, the iconic singer has built a career defined as much by absence as presence.

Since her breakthrough with *Wuthering Heights* in 1978, Kate has remained one of Britain's most distinctive musical voices, yet her impact is as much about invisibility, with long periods away from the spotlight.

"I've always needed a certain amount of space to create, and I don't think that's ever really changed," she says. "It's not something you can rush or force into a particular timeframe, and because of that I have a good deal of time away from things.

"I also don't much go for the fame game, so it's a relief to not have to endure all of that."

As for creative spark – she has released just 10 studio albums across almost five decades – Kate says it can take many forms. "Sometimes ideas come very quickly, and other times they take much longer to develop, but you have to allow that process to unfold naturally rather than trying to impose structure on it."

Ultimately, independence has defined her career. While others have followed industry cycles, Kate has worked at her own pace, releasing music only when it feels fully realised.

"You can feel when something is ready, and equally when it isn't. I've always trusted that instinct, even if it means taking longer or stepping away."

Despite her relative distance from the spotlight, her influence has remained constant, with new generations continuing to discover her work.

"I think people respond to honesty more than anything else," she says. "If something feels genuine, it tends to connect, regardless of when it was made or how it's presented. That's always been the most important thing for me. And yes, it's lovely that people are finding my work in different ways."

That sense of protection extends to her personal life, which she has deliberately kept out of public view. She lives a quiet life in Devon with husband Dan McIntosh. The couple have one son together, born in 1998.

"I've never felt the need to follow a particular path," she says. "You find your own way, and you trust it, even when it takes you somewhere unexpected."

In doing so, she has created not just a body of work, but a lasting definition of artistic independence.

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Five homes approved for Hythe garage site despite residents' objections

A row of 22 garages in Hythe is to be demolished and replaced with five homes after planners approved a scheme that drew objections over traffic, parking and the character of the neighbourhood.

Folkestone and Hythe District Council has granted permission for the redevelopment in Albert Lane, where a contemporary terrace of one-bedroom houses will replace the run-down garage buildings.

Each property will have one off-street parking space beneath a sheltered section of the building, known as an undercroft carport.

The application attracted 28 letters of objection, with residents raising concerns about introducing more vehicles into an area where narrow roads already make access difficult.

Opponents questioned whether Albert Lane and surrounding streets could comfortably accommodate additional traffic. Some also feared the properties might become holiday accommodation, with visitors potentially bringing more than one vehicle.

However, planning officers concluded that the development was acceptable and would improve the appearance of the site.

Their assessment found that the existing garages offered little architectural value, while the proposed houses would introduce a consistent contemporary design.

Although the new buildings would differ from the traditional properties opposite and behind the site, officers considered that the contrasting styles could sit comfortably together without harming the area's character.

Parking was another central issue in the assessment. Despite the number of garages being removed, the council said most were used for storage rather than keeping vehicles.

Officers therefore concluded that their demolition would not result in an unacceptable loss of recognised parking provision.

The size of the proposed homes also influenced the decision. With just one bedroom in each property, planners considered them unlikely to accommodate large households or produce substantial levels of traffic.

The approval clears the way for a significant change to this small site, replacing the garages with housing while providing a parking space for each home.

For residents who opposed the application, concerns about congestion and the effect on their neighbourhood remain. The council's decision, however, accepts the principle of residential development and the design proposed for Albert Lane.

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The Rotary Club of Romney Marsh wants your help…Are you a local charity looking for funding?

As the year draws on, the Rotary Club of Romney Marsh has started our preparations for the annual Santa Sleigh runs across the Marsh. Thanks to the generosity of our volunteers and the people of Romney Marsh we are usually able to raise a significant amount of money which the Club can then distribute to deserving local charities and causes.

This year, the Club is seeking suggestions from local charities and other causes across Romney Marsh as to who might benefit when we are deciding how to share out the money raised. What we are looking for are opportunities to provide support to worthwhile charities and other local organisations.

The decisions on how we use our funds are made during the following year (starting in the early part of 2027) so any suggestions could be for short or long term plans.

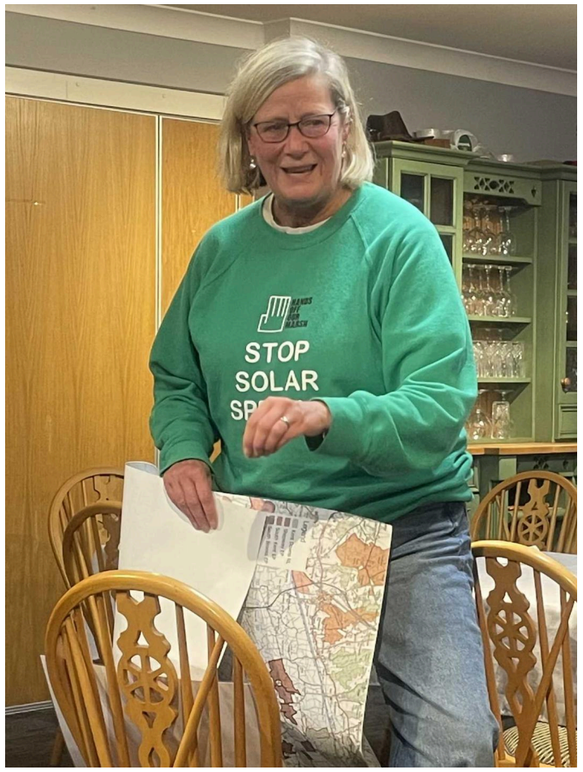
If you know of any organisation which might benefit from financial support, no matter how small the amount, please let us know.

Any suggestions can be sent to info@romneymarshrotary.co.uk and should include details of the charity or organisation, what the funding is needed for and how it will benefit the local community.

As ever thank you for your support with our Santa Sleigh runs. Further details of dates and times for the particular routes will be published as we approach the Christmas festivities.

Our recent visitor - The Rotary Club of Romney Marsh was pleased to welcome Kim Gowing from Hands off our Marsh (HOOM) to a recent meeting. HOOM is a local, non-political organisation which is working to raise awareness of the proposed solar developments in the local area. Kim also believed that although the current situation presents a threat to the local area, it also offers an opportunity to increase community cohesion and spirit.

Kim stressed that HOOM is not concerned about people's political affiliations, whether people support solar power or not and their views on climate change. HOOM is happy to work with local politicians from all parties to challenge the proposals for extensive solar 'farm' developments across the Romney Marsh. Kim noted that up to 10% of the Marsh is earmarked for development and this includes the best quality farmland.



Club members recognised the potential impact of the proposed developments. Several members thanked Kim for her presentation as it had raised their awareness of what is proposed for the local area. The Club was impressed by Kim's passion and the large amounts of work being done by HOOM on behalf of the whole Romney Marsh community.



ROMNEY MARSH COMMUNITY HUB
Supporting health and wellbeing for over 50s

What's On In November 2026.

HUB ON THE BEACH

Romney Marsh Community Hub – Rolfe Lane, New Romney

Date	Event	Time	Cost
Mondays	Games and Crafty Club	1:30 – 3:30 pm	£3.75 each
	Dance Fit	9:30 am – 10:30 am	£7.50
	Seated exercise	11:00 am – 12:00 pm	£7.50
Tuesdays	Walking Group	10:00 am – 12:00 pm	FREE
	Yoga	11:00 am – 12:00 pm	£7.50
	Pilates	3:00 pm – 4:00 pm	£7.50
Wednesdays	Seated Exercise	9:30 am – 10:30 am	£7.50
	(for those with Arthritis, Stroke or Parkinsons)		
	Seated Exercise	11:00 am – 12:00 pm	£7.50
Thursdays	Tai Chi	9:30 am – 11:00 am	£7.50
	Art Club	10:30 am – 12:00 pm	£3.75
	Seated Exercise	11:00 am – 12:00 pm	£7.50
	Line Dancing	4:00 pm – 5:30 pm	£7.50
	Yoga	4:00 pm – 5:00 pm	£7.50
	Totally Shredded	6:00 pm – 7:00 pm	£7.50
Fridays	Legs, Bums & Tums	9:30 am – 10:30 am	£7.50
	Seated exercise	11:00 am – 12:00 pm	£7.50
Friday 6th	Cancer Peer Support Group	2:00 pm – 3:30 pm	FREE
Friday 6th	Remembrance Day Lunch	12:00 pm – 3:00 pm	£25.00 pp
Friday 13th	Ex Armed Forces Drop In	10:00 am – 12:00 pm	FREE
Friday 13th	Race Night	7:00 pm – 10:00 pm	£5.00 pp
Wednesday 18th	Hallett & Co Solicitors Legal Advice	10:00 am – 1:00 pm	FREE
Wednesday 25th	Digital Support Sessions Drop In	9:30 am – 12:30 pm	FREE
Wednesday 25th	Diabetes Peer Support Group	1:30 pm – 2:30 pm	FREE
Friday 27th	Ex Armed Forces Breakfast Club	9:00 am – 11:00 am	
Saturday 28th	Christmas Fayre	10:00 am – 2:00 pm	£8.00 pp Grotto

Hub on the Beach – 103 Coast Dr, Greatstone

Mondays	Dance Fit	6:00 pm – 7:00 pm	£7.50
	Yoga	7:30 pm – 8:30 pm	£7.50
Tuesdays	**NEW** Parent & Toddler, Move & Groove	9:30 am – 10:30 am	£7.50
	Seated Exercise	3:00 pm – 4:00 pm	£7.50
	Salsa	6:00 pm – 7:00 pm	£7.50
Wednesdays	Legs, Bums & Tums	9:30 am – 10:30 am	£7.50
	Fitness Pilates	11:00 am – 12:00 pm	£7.50
	Seated Tai Chi	3:00 pm – 4:00 pm	£7.50
	Zumba	6:30 pm – 7:30 pm	£7.50
Thursdays	Yoga	9:30 am – 10:30 am	£7.50
Saturdays	Washinkai Karate	10:30 am – 12:00 pm	£7.50 / £5.50 < 16
Wednesday 4th	Stroke Peer Support Group	1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	FREE
Wednesday 4th	Coffee & Catch Up	1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	FREE
Wednesday 11th	Arthritis Peer Support Group	1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	FREE
Wednesday 18th	Bereavement Support Group	1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	FREE
Tuesday 24th	Hearing Loss Support Group	1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	FREE

SAVE THE DATE! Friday 4th December – Quiz Night. Friday 18th December – Public Christmas Lunch.

For more info, please contact us at 01797 363888 (Rolfe Lane) or 01797 458876 for Hub on the Beach.



Marsh Memories

Compiled by John Wimble

Memories from 100 years ago

By the mid-1920s, Littlestone had not fulfilled the hopes of its purchasers and investors but there were signs that Littlestone in the future would have a renewed chance of prosperity. The Littlestone-on-Sea Estate was put up for sale and comprised nearly 1,000 acres of building plots, houses and cottages, arable and grazing land and also the Greatstone Golf Links. It included St. Nicholas Road, Blenheim Road, Marine Parade, Littlestone Road, St. Andrew's Road, Warren Road, Park Road, Queen's Road and it also included the Grand Hotel.
The Grand Hotel (see photo), had been built some years previously and was the largest hotel on the Marsh. It provided accommodation for wealthy golfers and tourists and comprised four floors with over 25 bedrooms. There was also a basement with a billiard room, kitchen, larder, serving lift and staff quarters. There were timber garages outside and the lighting was by gas.

Under the auspices of a skilled adviser from the Ministry of Agriculture, the Local Commissioners were able to strengthen the coast defences and considerably decrease the cost for coast defence. This would encourage the owners to build the right sort of houses, especially as there were plenty of the right sort of people eager to inhabit them! Never had so many well-to-do professional men wanted to come to Littlestone as during that era.

The Lydd branch of the British Legion was formed in 1921 by the amalgamation of four ex-serviceman's organisations. It was granted a Royal Charter in 1925 and had its first premises in Park Street in 1932.

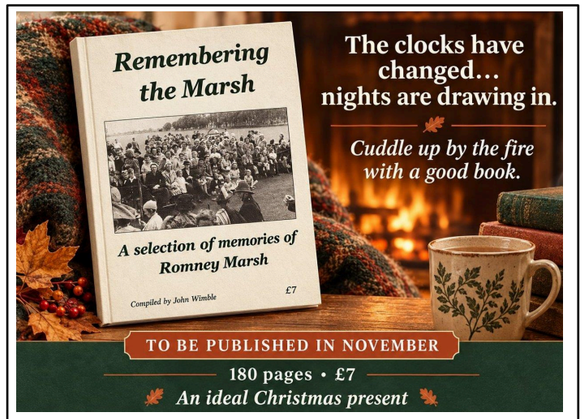
At the end of the last century, the Southlands Charity opened a small school in Governor's House, Cannon Street, New Romney. In 1917, they moved to The White House at Littlestone and it opened as a Grammar School and four years later, the Kent County Council Education Committee found a property called 'The Elms' in New Romney with extensive grounds which was perfect for conversion into a school and they established a modern school there under the title of Southlands Grammar School. It eventually closed in 1936. and the headmaster for the whole time it was a Grammar School was Mr. Manser.

In 1924, the St. Mary's Bay Holiday Camp Centre was created as a Residential School Centre for Schools during the summer on the disused aerodrome. It was for boys and girls of all ages under the supervision of their own staff. There was dormitory accommodation and extensive playing fields. On site was a private hospital and it was an ideal centre for school journeys. It was regularly visited by the Duke of Kent and was commonly known as the Duke of Kent's Camp. It was very successful from the start, and its purpose was to provide a safe venue for children from different backgrounds. A highlight of the week was the Campfire and Sing Song attended on many occasions by the Duke of York.

The Churches were the focal point of every community and Brenzett, Snave, Snargate, Ivychurch, Newchurch, Burmarsh, St. Mary's, Old Romney and Littlestone all had a church that was well attended on a regular basis, whilst Dymchurch, Brookland, New Romney and Lydd had more than one. In Lydd, the original Roman Catholic Church on the west edge of the town near the entrance to the Military Camp was built of timber but it was destroyed by a fire in 1925, and a new one was built. The bells of Lydd Parish Church were falling into poor condition in the 1920s and they were re-cast in 1926. With added metal, they were made into a peal of eight and re-hung in solid teak frames.

In Lydd and New Romney, the Church was regularly used for municipal business and the Mayor was annually elected there up until the beginning of the 20th Century. In New Romney, a memorial to the men who fell in the Great War was unveiled in 1921. The famous writer, E. Nesbit, died at St. Mary's Bay in 1924 and was buried in St. Mary-in-the-Marsh Churchyard.





Contributions from Maggie Ansell (Southerden), Eddie Ashdown, Joe Barnes, Dick Body, Eileen Bolton (Hartop), Basil Bourne, Stella Duck (Tordoff), Ernie Ford, Andrew Foord, Cyril Foreman, Edward Freathy, Syd Goodsell, Vic Haisell, Marianne Harmer (Polden), Shirley Harrison (Gillham), Godfrey Hartop, Janet Higgins (Foreman), Sir Peter Imbert, Frank Jones, Brig Kitchener, Brian Lancaster, Colin Masey, Sally Maycock (Whiting), Bernard Morris, Raymond Moses, Ken Oiller, Bill Piper, Alistair Rabson, Richard Ray, Pat Richardson, Olive Roots, Bill Smith, Peter Southerden, Ruth Spencer, John Thomas, Peter Webb, Vera Williams (Masey), John Wraight and many more.

A nostalgic look back at life on Romney Marsh over the past 100 years.

Order from Foords, St Mary's Bay; Premier High Street, New Romney; Romney Marsh Community Hub, New Romney; Sally Lyons, Lydd; Richardson's Fish Shop, Dungeness; Hub on the Beach, Greatstone; or direct from John Wimble.



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Postcards From The Past



Above: Alliance Inn, Brookland.
Below: Brookland High Street.



Worth the wait: a brighter future for Folkestone Sports Centre



Folkestone Sports Centre is moving towards a welcome comeback, with major improvements promising to give the much-loved community venue a fresh start.

The sound of swimmers returning to the pool and games getting under way in the sports hall could be a step closer, with the latest programme aiming to reopen key facilities early in 2027.

For families, clubs and residents who have missed the centre since its sudden closure in July 2024, the wait has been frustrating. But behind its closed doors, an extensive programme of repairs and refurbishment is laying the foundations for its next chapter.

The Sports Trust, which took on the Radnor Park Avenue venue in 2025 with support from businessman Sir Roger De Haan, has been tackling a demanding restoration project.

Its ambition is to bring the swimming pool, gym and sports hall back into use alongside a new accessible entrance. Plans for a new Changing Village also promise a welcome improvement to the pool's tired changing facilities.

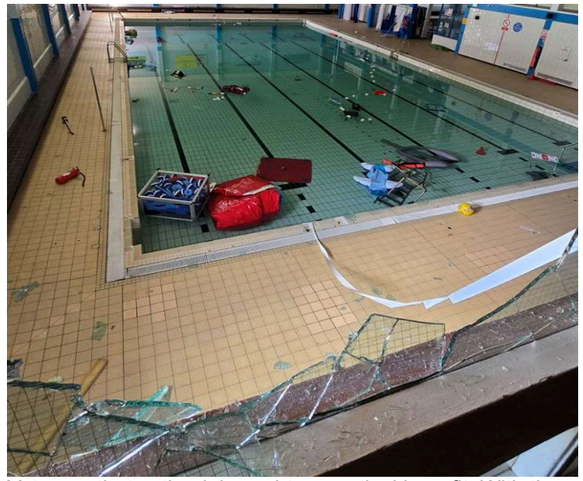
Together, these changes offer an encouraging prospect: the return of a familiar local landmark with improvements that should make visiting more comfortable and welcoming.

Some of the most important work, however, will be hidden from view.

Significant investment is going into the plant room equipment essential to running the facilities. While visitors will naturally look forward to getting back into the water, this work is a crucial part of preparing the centre for its return.

The scale of the challenge became clear once the trust received the keys. An ageing building brought unexpected structural problems, while repeated break-ins and vandalism caused further damage and delayed progress.

One particularly disappointing incident left broken glass in the swimming pool, forcing the team to drain it completely.



Yet even that setback brought a practical benefit. With the water removed, workers could examine structural issues around the pool more easily and at lower cost, without needing a specialist dive team.

It is a small example of how the restoration team has continued finding ways forward despite the obstacles.

The centre's history is also receiving care and attention. Volunteer Jon has been sorting through sentimental items discovered inside, with the aim of returning them to their owners or displaying them when the building reopens.

That effort recognises something important: a sports centre holds memories as well as equipment. For many local people, this building is associated with swimming lessons, sporting achievements, friendships and family routines.

The trust's wider community commitment was demonstrated last month when it opened Three Hills Sports Park to people evacuated from the Grand Burstin Hotel following a fire.



Now that same community spirit is helping drive the sports centre's recovery.

An official opening date has yet to be confirmed, and early 2027 remains a target. But the progress offers residents good reason to feel positive.

After a difficult period, Folkestone can look forward to the prospect of a much-loved facility opening its doors again — with renewed purpose, improved facilities and many more memories waiting to be made.



Gardening

By Michael Gooch

After all the beautiful weather the autumn has now set in, and you have to grab a few hours in the garden when you can. With the rain and the wind, and the shortening days, opportunities are shrinking. The rain is, of course, very welcome. Whatever the weather the weeds never seem to slow down, so in dry moments you can do some weeding. The experts tell us it is now a good time to plant and split existing perennials, while the soil still has some warmth. If splitting perennials, you dig up the whole clump, with a good root ball. Then, with a spade you can separate it into manageable clump to make new plants. If it too tough for a spade, you can sink two garden forks into it, back-to-back and lever them apart, and eventually you will get separate clumps.

I am waiting for the cosmos in a front annual bed to go over, so that I can plant bulbs. I think I will have to be ruthless soon and pull them all up. It is amazing how they flourish, with hundreds of flowers, some are 5' high and some have planted themselves. For several years I dug up and saved bulbs, and was quite successful. However, in the past couple of years, many have rotted away. I thought maybe they had got damp in our potting shed. This year, I tidied them up in August, and brought them indoors. With our drought summer, they certainly weren't too damp. But still many have rotted away, so I have bought several packs of new ones.

Our dahlias and roses are still valiantly flowering, and will still benefit from dead heading. Old gardening books talk about lifting dahlia tubers, but in our warmer winters I never bother, and they seem to survive. When the first frosts come, the destruction of dahlias is quite spectacular! One day you have flowering dahlias, the next a mess of nasty brown vegetation. I have heard hints of some very cold weather with a 'polar vortex' so hopefully it won't come!

A little story that has nothing to do with gardening. I have a sister living in Calgary, Canada. They moved into a beautifully done up bungalow in February 24 in a very desirable area. As soon as it was on the market, they went to see it, on the weekend of a 'polar vortex', immediately putting in an offer and paid a deposit. The temperature was -40dC, so not many people out house-hunting. The system in Canada is so much better and simpler. You sign a contract when you pay your deposit and you are committed. They might have had to fight harder in normal times!

In the last edition, I mentioned about planting hyacinths for winter indoor displays. If not done already, this should be done soon. On a practical note, one job I would love to have time for is to blitz our potting shed. On a nice day, take every out, and only put back what you really need. Like our homes, there are so many things that you 'might need' or never have time to sort out properly. On Gardeners World you envy Monty his tidy, organised potting sheds at Longmeadow! I did read they have 2 full time gardeners, so maybe that helps!

AND NOW FOR THE VEG (and some pruning)

The recent rain is very welcome and will start to make up for the drought conditions earlier in the year. It will certainly give a boost to all the autumn and winter crops which have been flagging somewhat. With windier conditions on the way, don't forget to stake up brassica crops, in particular brussels, as the constant swaying will loosen the roots and diminish your crop. Hopefully the time has passed when white butterflies will have disappeared and egg-laying come to an end.

One crop which has become increasingly popular over the years is garlic. If you like garlic and want to grow some, now is a good time to plant garlic cloves, as they like cold weather. They need fertile, well-drained soil on a sunny site, preferably free from clay, or can be grown in large containers. Break the garlic bulb into individual cloves and push each clove about one and a half to two inches deep with the flat root-end facing down and the pointy tip facing up. Space about six inches apart. Sometimes birds will pull up the emerging cloves so if you can net them over this will prevent disturbance. You can expect to harvest about eight months after planting. If growing in containers, use deep pots filled with compost to which you should add a good quantity of grit or perlite to help with drainage.

If you have currant bushes, prune them now to encourage early spring growth. Blackcurrant bushes can be pruned by cutting out some of the older wood and keeping the newer wood, as this will bear next year's crop. Take off about one third of the remaining branches with the aim of creating a globe shape.

Red and white currants are pruned differently. They produce fruit on spurs which grow on older branches so aim to keep these and remove any dead or damaged low-hanging branches that touch the ground. Trim back the older branches by about one third and remove any inward growing branches to allow air and light to penetrate the bush. Aim to complete pruning by the end of November.

If you haven't done so already, prune summer-fruiting raspberries by removing dead canes and taking off about one third of existing canes to stimulate growth. For autumn-fruiting raspberries, cut the canes to ground level as they will grow new canes from next spring. This is a good time of year to provide support for raspberries by making a framework of poles strung with wire so that canes will grow upright, especially as they start to bear fruit.

And, of course, keep those weeds under control in the veg garden!

Happy gardening!



Budgeting Tips

By June Gooch

Thoughts about vehicle fuel.

The motoring organisations, and Martin Lewis, have issued some thoughts on saving fuel as we travel. Maybe we can't change the number of journeys, but driving wisely can save fuel. If you have a storage box, or carry a lot of extra tosh around like Sports gear, remove it when you don't need it. Many moons ago, when I learn to drive, I remember my instructor saying wise driving is driving on your gears, and anticipate, anticipate anticipate!!! Good driving shouldn't involve standing on your brake, every ten seconds! Every time you brake, you are using extra fuel.

If you find yourself in a rush in the car, try setting your alarm 5 mins earlier! If the local authority wanted to find another income stream, set a camera at the top of the avenue in NR. Quite often, we see people going through a red light! We know the sequence, and when you have green, but there are still people coming through, so you know they have jumped red lights! In modern traffic, rushing about like whirling dervishes, is always a mugs game! Often when people rush past you like bats out of hell, you catch up with them about 200 yards further on behind a tractor, a bus, lights or a junction! Some years ago, I read of a study where a motoring organisation set two drivers to do 100 miles on a motorway. One was driving aggressively, the other defensively. The aggressive driver got to his destination 2 and half minutes before the defensive one. So, he didn't gain much. They were followed by cameras, and the defensive driver was much safer.

Household fuel.

Make sure you are not heating rooms that are not in use. Ideally, have thermostats fitted to your radiators, so you can set the temperature for each room. Generally, bedrooms don't need to be heated to the same level as living rooms, unless you have infants or sick and frail people in the house. Our thermostats have a frost protection setting. So even if they are switched off, if the temperate went below freezing they would click in to prevent damage to the system.

Keep on eye on your thermostat. Ordinarily, if people are able to move about, 17-19dC is enough, unless it is really cold outside. There is a current move to keep our bodies warm, rather than heat the room excessively. You can buy coveralls, gloves and jackets with built in electrical heating. We are officially "oldies" and have lap blankets which I knitted and crocheted! Two of our daughters-in-law love to wrap themselves in knitted or fleece blankets! There are lots of garments and wraps with really deep fleece on the go at the moment! And pyjamas for children and adults made of the same stuff.

<u>Seasonal TATT</u>

Sometimes, at present, it is hard to find the useful things you need in big stores, because of the aisles and aisles full of 'seasonal tatt'. How much does a society need? As Christians, we don't "do" Halloween. Fortunately, when our older children were young the emphasis was more of bonfire night. We would have a celebration in the garden with a bonfire, fireworks and food, or went to a big organised display. If they were invited to a Halloween party, I would make a ghost outfit out of an old sheet, rather than spoil their fun, but back then it wasn't so OTT. Some of the churches used to have 'non-halloween' parties as well, so children didn't miss out on fun.

Trick and treating had started when our youngest was growing up, but he wasn't that bothered, so we never got involved. Maybe it is fun for younger children to dress up with their parents, but I have known it to descend into thuggery and an excuse for terrorising pensioners, with older kids. Where we used to live there were eggs and flour thrown at old people's doors, if they didn't open it. Legalised 'begging with menaces' I think it would be called in a court of law.

Most of this Halloween tatt, is also cheap, nasty and plastic, and will inevitably finish up in landfill! To add to the country's problems with excess waste and bad for the environment. Generally, I can't see the point of permanent things like pjs, clothes, bedding and towels, being seasonal. Those things are going to be in your house for years. Do you carry on using them out of season? I've had seasonal items as gifts and they get used all year round. With all the need in the world, it seems indulgent to buy permanent things to use for a couple of weeks a year. Years ago, everything was more expensive compared to the money available. In fact, children's clothes are cheaper now, than they were 50 years ago! With the avalanche of cheap, shoddy clothes from China and the developing world.

So, if you are struggling, try not to get overly involved in this 'tatt' race. I suppose you need an outfit if your children are invited to a halloween party, but try the old sheet and ghost thing first! And make sure your bought outfit is fireproof. I remember a fuss a few years ago, when a child was badly burnt in a cheap outfit that went up in flames at the speed of light, when a spark caught her clothes. I believe they were going to pass legislation to make it compulsory for them to be fireproof, but don't know whether it actually happened.

It is the same with all the **Christmas tatt!** How much does a society need? Most people I know, even the youngsters in the family, heave a box out of the loft, and use the same things every year. Maybe a new set of baubles, or lights if they aren't working. But the old joke about getting the lights to work doesn't apply now, they seem to be much more reliable. Baubles are also made of plastic now, so they don't break in the same quantity was they used to! Tradition and memories, have a lot to do with many people's deccys. Some things are years old, or made when our children or grandchildren were young, or given or used by loved ones no longer with us, and are very precious.

So, if you are struggling with finances, don't feel you have to get involved with this consumer circus, and 'tatt race'. You will be happier and more fulfilled if you keep yourself on a strict budget, and minimise debt. Practice saying "I can't afford it!" The most liberating words in the English language.



Politics is becoming a nasty old game and ordinary people deserve better

Politics has always involved disagreement. It should. Decisions about our country, our taxes and our communities deserve passionate debate. But there is a growing nastiness in public life that goes beyond challenging someone's policies. Increasingly, the aim appears to be to destroy their reputation and make supporting their party socially unacceptable.

As a Reform UK member and councillor, I find that deeply troubling. Too often, it feels as though sections of the political establishment regard us as an enemy to be defeated by whatever means are available, rather than democratic opponents whose arguments deserve an answer.

That atmosphere affects ordinary members, too. People who have never previously belonged to a political party can suddenly find themselves labelled extremists simply because they want a different direction for Britain.

The recent ITV documentary, Undercover: A Year in Reform, will have reinforced some viewers' worst impressions. It exposed racist, sexist and violent remarks by individuals associated with the party. Those remarks deserve condemnation, and credible allegations require proper investigation and appropriate action. Supporting Reform does not require anyone to defend the indefensible.

But neither should supporting Reform mean accepting that those individuals represent everybody who carries a membership card, delivers a leaflet or votes for the party.

They certainly do not represent the people I know.

Attend a local Reform meeting and you will meet ordinary people: retired workers, small business owners, former public servants, parents and grandparents. In my experience, many are in their mid-50s to 70s. That is an observation about meetings I attend, rather than a claim about the national membership's average age.

These are people who have worked, paid taxes, raised families and contributed to their communities. Many have supported Labour or the Conservatives in the past. Others have spent years feeling that voting makes little difference.

What brings them together is frustration.

They worry about access to healthcare, the condition of their high streets, the cost of living, immigration, housing and whether their children will enjoy the opportunities they once expected. They feel that successive governments have offered promises while everyday problems have grown harder to solve.

Calling those people far-right thugs avoids engaging with what they are saying.

Reform often talks about the "silent majority". I understand the sentiment: people who feel ignored are finding their voice. But no party can simply declare that it speaks for most of Britain. That support must be earned and demonstrated at the ballot box.

The same honesty should apply when discussing misconduct.

I wanted to know how many people other parties had expelled. The published figures offer useful context, although they do not provide a straightforward comparison with the individuals featured in ITV's investigation.

The Conservative Party's own transparency report records 39 expulsion sanctions in 2025, following 39 in 2024 and 30 in 2023. Those are the party's published figures, rather than an estimate by its political opponents.

Labour's January 2026 disciplinary report records eight expulsions through its National Constitutional Committee during 2025, and one through its Independent Complaints Board. Separately, it records 20 membership terminations for activities such as standing against Labour or supporting opposing candidates through nomination papers or election agency work. These are distinct categories and should remain distinct.

For 2024, LabourList's analysis of Labour figures reported 137 removals for supporting rival parties or banned groups: 84 automatic membership terminations and 53 expulsions following investigation. Again, these were particular rule breaches, and cannot all be presented as cases of racism or personal misconduct.

None of those numbers excuses wrongdoing in Reform. Nor do they establish which party has the greatest problem. Membership sizes, reporting periods, offences and disciplinary procedures differ.

They do establish that removing unsuitable members is a challenge across politics. The presence of a disciplinary case should prompt questions about the individual, what the party knew and how it responded. It should not automatically become a verdict on every decent person within that organisation.

Reform must be judged on its response, too.

Its published membership restrictions exclude people with past or present membership of organisations including the BNP, National Front, Britain First and English Defence League. That is a clear statement about who should have no place in the party.

Its parliamentary application process also sets out vetting, an assessment centre, policy assessment and a panel interview. The party says parliamentary vetting will need to be the most stringent of any UK political party. That is an ambition it must demonstrate in practice; it is not an independently established ranking of membership checks.

Nigel Farage made a reasonable point when he said: "You can't vet for future comments." No organisation can predict every remark someone might make after joining. But that limitation also makes consistent enforcement essential when unacceptable behaviour emerges.

Members deserve confidence that the rules apply to everyone. Voters deserve it even more.

Journalists have a legitimate role in exposing misconduct. Having worked in the media myself, I would never argue that a political party should be protected from scrutiny. Equally, I believe coverage should help the public understand a movement's ordinary supporters as well as its worst examples.

Political opponents have responsibilities here, too. Challenge our spending plans. Question our policies. Examine our record in office. Those are proper democratic arguments.

But stop treating every Reform supporter as someone whose character can be dismissed without a conversation.

Britain needs people willing to participate in public life. Persistent abuse drives decent people away and leaves everyone poorer.

Politics is becoming a nasty old game. Things in this country really do have to change. That change should include higher standards, fair scrutiny and the basic courtesy of listening to ordinary people who have decided they have had enough.

Driss Hodgson:

A much-loved part of the local music scene



The Looker is saddened to hear of the death of Driss Hodgson, who passed away on 9 October.

A familiar and much-loved figure on the local music scene for more than 40 years, Driss brought pleasure to so many people through his love of music and his warm personality.

He was, quite simply, one of life's nice guys. Alongside his contribution to local music, he will be remembered for the kindness and friendship he offered to those who knew him. His passing leaves a gap in a community of musicians, friends and listeners whose lives he touched over four decades.

Our thoughts are especially with Terri Hodson, who shared a close bond with Driss stretching back to their first meeting 40 years ago. That shared history holds memories which words can scarcely capture, and we send her our deepest sympathy at this sad time.

Everyone at The Looker extends their condolences to Terri, Driss's family, his friends and all those who had the pleasure of knowing him.

He brought happiness to others and will be remembered with great affection.





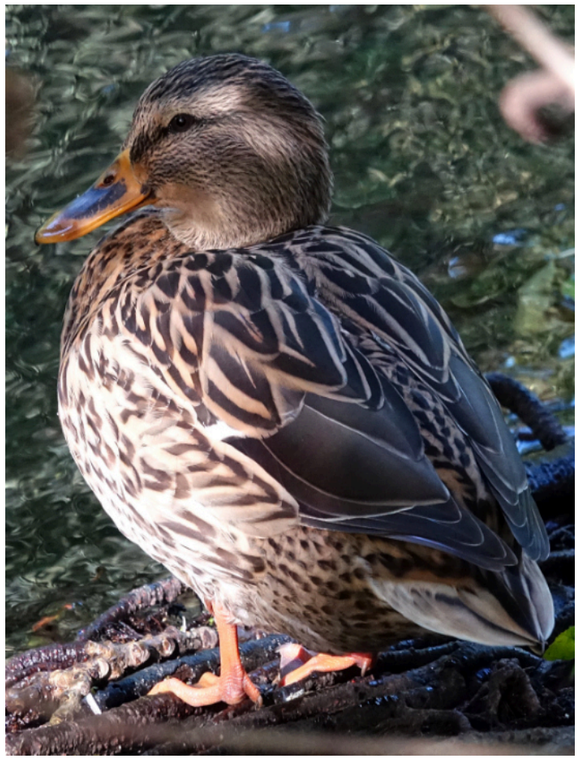






The Mallard's Autumn Makeover

Along the Royal Military Canal, the drakes are back in their dazzling green finery.



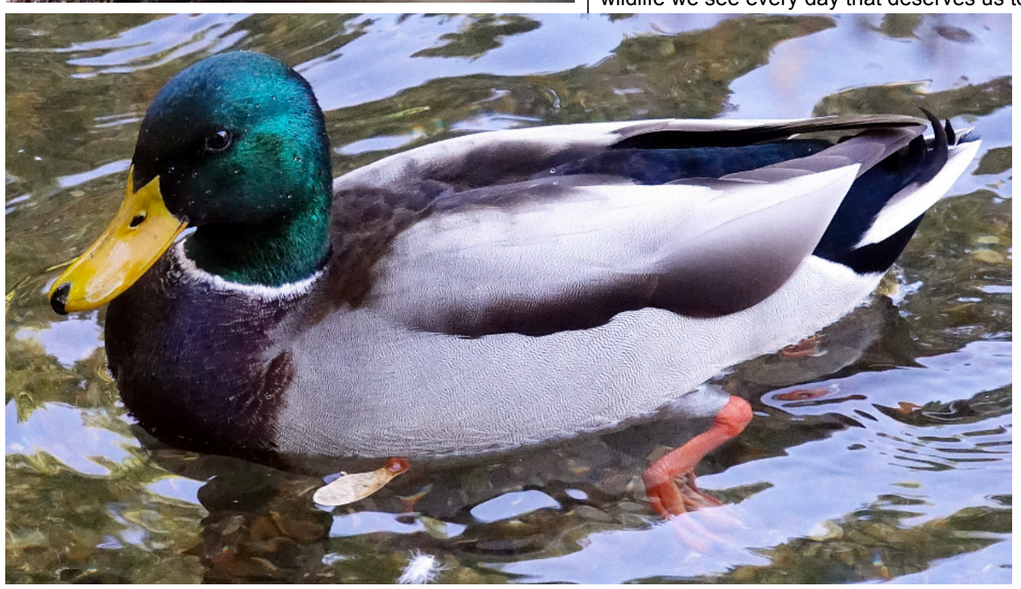
Walking along the Royal Military Canal, right in the heart of the Looker's catchment area between Dungeness and Folkestone, I couldn't help noticing just how many male mallards are now showing off their magnificent green heads. A photograph taken along the canal captures one drake in all his glory, looking every inch the dapper gentleman.

But where have all the males been hiding during the summer? At that time of year, a casual glance around our waterways can leave you thinking the place is full of female ducks. In fact, the males haven't disappeared at all; they have simply changed their appearance.

After the breeding season, male mallards moult into what is known as eclipse plumage. Their distinctive green heads and smart breeding colours are replaced by a much duller, mottled brown appearance, making them look remarkably like females. This temporary camouflage coincides with the replacement of their flight feathers, a vulnerable period when blending into their surroundings is particularly useful.

As summer gives way to autumn, the drakes gradually regain their breeding plumage. That spectacular emerald-green head is back, along with the white neck ring, chestnut breast and grey body. The green itself is particularly fascinating: rather than being simply a green pigment, it is largely produced by microscopic structures in the feathers reflecting light, creating that iridescent sheen which can shift from green to blue depending on the angle and sunlight.

Although mallards are among our most familiar birds, their very abundance means we can sometimes take them for granted. Yet look at one closely, especially when the light catches those shimmering green feathers, and you discover a bird of remarkable beauty. Sometimes, it is the wildlife we see every day that deserves us to stop, look again and appreciate just how stunning it really is.



Picture 1: *The female mallard, in her beautifully patterned, mottled-brown plumage, showing that our familiar ducks have a charm and elegance all of their own. © Kerry King*

Picture 2: *A male mallard in full breeding plumage, showing off his magnificent iridescent green head, photographed along the Royal Military Canal. © Kerry King*



Welcome Lookerites to another batch of reviews and this issue we have got another crop of heavy hitters including the latest from the Walking Dead World, the return of Mobland, the latest from Brad Pitt and a couple of music documentaries.

The Walking Dead was a major success as mankind fought to survive the onslaught of the ravenous dead. There have been a number of spin offs Rick and Michonne in The Walking Dead: The Ones Who Live which sees Rick and Michonne reunited, Daryl and Carol in The Walking Dead: Daryl Dixon as Daryl goes on a worldwide tour and Maggie and Negan in The Walking Dead: Dead City.



The Walking Dead: Dead City – Sky/Now TV is back for its third season. Dead City has always had an edge as Maggie and Negan have built an uneasy alliance, Negan killed Maggie's husband Glenn. The new improved and nicer Negan has gone out of his way to make amends with Maggie and helped reunite Maggie with her son Hershel.

Season three sees the pair taken captive by siblings Renata and Luis, who had lost their uncle and brother to the Croat, Renata and Luis are looking for methane to power an incubator for their sister-in-laws premature baby. The Croat decides to blow up the tanks rather than let New Babylon use them and in doing so is mortally wounded. Maggie is reunited with Hershel who realises that the Dama tried to use Hershel to get to Maggie and Negan makes an unlikely friendship with barman Mason, who has an unusual use of the walking dead.

Maggie persuades Negan to stay in Manhattan and work with the community. Negan agrees but takes root in Mason's bar where he spends his time drinking and playing video games but as usual danger isn't far away and when the community invites two warring groups in the shape of Belleville and Newark into their safe community they are soon caught in the middle of a war and with the ever-present threat of the walking dead Maggie and Negan are forced to join forces.

Dead City once again is a must view for followers of the Walking Dead. Jeffrey Dean Morgan as always steals the show as Negan but is ably pitted with and against Lauren Cohan's Maggie. The ending sets it up nicely for another sequel.

Mobland – Paramount TV is back for its second series as Conrad and Maeve Harrigan are back for more carnage and chaos. The second series starts with a bang as Conrad, Maeve, Paul and Paul's nephew Fergus attend a Greyhound track with a rival Turkish mob to conclude a heroin deal. When Conrad (Pierce Brosnan) finds out that the Turks have gone through son Kevin (Paddy Considine) instead. Enraged by this Conrad and Maeve (Helen Mirren) massacre the Turks leaving Harry (Tom Hardy) to clean up the mess. Harry has his own problems as wife Jan wants a divorce and daughter Gina has her own scam going and is seeing Kevin's son Eddie. With the Harrigan's facing an internal war cartel boss Kat is paying an interest in the Harrigan's affairs as is DCI Kavanagh and retired DCI Tattersall who is going to use drug lord Frankie Cooper in his mission.



With the Harrigan's under attack Cooper kidnaps Kevin's wife Bella. Frankie calls a meeting which Harry and Kevin are present and negotiate Bella's release with Frankie announcing that he wants to run the Harrigan's drug trade. Conrad hearing he wasn't invited to the meet does what he does best and goes on the counter attack with a full-scale war imminent it might be up to Harry to bring it all together.

Mobland is back at it's explosive best and with an all star cast it cannot fail.



Any Brad Pitt movie is usually a guarantee of box office success and **Heart of The Beast** – On general release is no exception. Pitt plays retired Special Forces Command Sergeant Major James Belmont who along with his retired combat dog Odin are living off the beaten track. Both are suffering from PTSD and were injured in combat. Belmont requiring major chest surgery and Odin lost a leg. The pair are travelling Alaska when Belmont suffers a heart attack and crashes his Cessna Skywagon into a body of water. Belmont escapes from the sinking plane but soon learns that Odin was thrown from the plane. Belmont finds the injured Odin and treats him and then recovers his equipment from the sunken plane.

Belmont then tracks a route covering 58 miles that the pair must navigate to get back to civilisation. On route they come across a number of dangerous scenarios raging waters, grizzly bears and a pack of wolves. But the pair, like in battle cover each other as they fight to get home.

Heart of the Beast is an action movie that doubles up as a buddy movie and certainly keeps you gripped to the action. Pitt a star in his own right is upstaged by Odin (Interestingly played by 4 different dogs) You can't help but cheer on the good guys as they fight for survival and each other. Filmed against a scenic backdrop that lulls you into a false sense of security. The beautiful landscape holds many dangers.

Heart of the Beast is a film that demands to be seen on the big screen but be warned the ending had Mrs S in floods of tears and left a lump in my throat.

I will never forget the look on Mrs S's face when I told her that I had bought tickets to see Linkin Park at the O2. We had also bought tickets to see Guns N Roses at the London Stadium. We joked at the time that this was likely to be the last time we would see GNR live due to the line up getting on in years however little did we know that a month after we saw Linkin Park frontman Chester Bennington tragically took his own life. The irony is 9 years later and GNR are still touring.

7 years after Chester took his life singer/guitarist Mike Shinoda bassist Dave Farrell and turntablist Joe Hahn got together. They talked, jammed and slowly but surely talked about reforming Linkin Park guitarist Brad Delson joined in with the jamming sessions without fully committing but they were without a singer and drummer after Rob Bourdon left. Enter singer Emily Armstrong and drummer Colin Brittain and Linkin Park were back.



Linkin Park: Unshatter - on general release is the story of the reformation of a group that went from heartbreak to world domination. Directed by band member Joe Hahn Unshatter follows the group from the tragedy through to the jamming sessions onto the relaunch of the new Linkin Park and the new album From Zero. Hahn perfectly captures the transition through a range of emotions from the initial heartbreak to the self-doubt as the bands new members wonder if they can emulate the previous success and all the band members worry wondering if the fans will accept the new line-up. Of course the self-doubt soon turns into euphoria as the fans take to the new line-up. The showcase concert is highly emotive as the fans cheers turn to tears of joy.

Unshatter is one for the fans but even for the neutrals it is a fascinating insight into the rebirth of a much loved band.

When the warring Gallagher brothers argued for the final time and Noel stormed out of the venue it seemed that Oasis were no more. Fast forward and the Gallaghers have reconciled and preparing for a world tour. Recruiting previous Oasis members Bonehead, Gem Archer and Andy Bell they begin rehearsing. **Oasis: Don't Look Back in Anger - Disney +** follows the band from the reconciliation to rehearsals to the sell-out world tour.



Whatever your feelings of the Gallagher brothers when it comes to music they produced some legendary tunes and Liam was one hell of a frontman. Don't Look Back in Anger tells the Oasis story from inside the camp but the real stars of the film is the music and the fans. Like Unshatter the film captures the euphoria of the fans and their emotions. The music simply acts as a catalyst to whip the fans up into a frenzy and the outpouring of emotions is impossible to ignore.

Liam and Noel have kissed and made up and both acknowledge the god-like genius that the other has. Liam is still brimming with arrogance but would you expect anything other. Last in at rehearsal and first out the rest of the band simply accept this as 'typical Liam' The remainder of the band are solid and recreate the Oasis sound with ease and the fans lap up every note.

Don't Look Back in Anger reminds us of just how good Oasis were/are and I guarantee you will be singing



New hospital unit aims to cut waits and get patients home sooner



A new emergency care unit at William Harvey Hospital in Ashford is expected to treat an additional 60 patients a day, helping ease pressure on A&E and allowing more people to return home without an overnight hospital stay.

The Same Day Emergency Care (SDEC) unit has been officially opened, following the launch of a similar facility at Margate's Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother Hospital a few weeks earlier.

Together, the two units represent a £28.95 million investment funded by NHS England, designed to reduce unnecessary admissions, tackle corridor care and improve patients' experience.

The service gives patients with suitable conditions access to specialist assessment, diagnosis and treatment on the day they arrive. Where it is clinically safe, they can then go home without being admitted to a ward.

At William Harvey, where the emergency department normally sees around 350 patients daily, the additional capacity is expected to help reduce overcrowding and lengthy waits, including delays of more than 12 hours.

The new medical area includes eight side rooms, 18 bays, two procedure rooms and seven consultation spaces. A separate surgical area provides three recliners and 12 bays.

Delivered in partnership with 2gether Support Solutions, the unit has been partly operational for several weeks, with full opening planned for this week.

The year-long construction programme involved a series of service moves at both hospitals to make way for the new facilities.

Sarah Hayes, East Kent Hospitals' Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer, thanked staff for their work behind the



scenes to deliver the project.

She said: "The SDEC units will help us to provide a faster and more convenient alternative for patients to see a team of experts immediately, and receive rapid assessment, diagnosis and treatment – allowing them to be home again the very same day.

"This is also a positive milestone for our staff as it supports our work to reduce corridor care, and relieve the pressure on our Emergency Departments."

The opening comes as hospitals prepare for winter pressures, with the new facilities intended to provide a more suitable setting for patients who need urgent specialist care but do not necessarily require a hospital bed.

Health Minister Karin Smyth welcomed the investment, saying patients deserved timely treatment without unnecessary admission.

"This new Same Day Emergency Care unit will enable patients to receive faster assessment, diagnosis, and treatment, while easing pressures on A&E and tackling corridor care this winter, delivering better care for communities across Kent," she said.

She added that the Government's 10-Year Capital Plan would continue investment in NHS buildings and facilities.

For patients and their families, the aim is straightforward: quicker access to the right specialists, fewer lengthy waits and, wherever possible, a safe return home the same day.





The Last Bus to Dungeness

A Romney Marsh Halloween story by David Wimble

There are three things you should never do on Romney Marsh after midnight: follow a light across the fields, ask a fisherman what's in his sack, or board a bus that arrives on time.

On Halloween, I managed two of them…. It began outside The Star at St Mary in the Marsh. I had stayed later than intended, listening to Bert Puddifoot explain that his neighbour's pumpkin had been stolen.

"Fox?" I suggested.
"Carried it off under one arm," Bert said.
"Large fox."
"Wearing my late father's coat.

I decided it was time to go.Outside, fog pressed against the windows. Across the lane, the church had disappeared, although I could hear footsteps moving around it.Slow footsteps….Dragging something.

My car wouldn't start.Then headlights appeared, a cream bus stopped beside me. Its destination board read: DUNGENESS LAST SERVICE.

The doors folded open."New Romney?" I asked.
"Eventually," said the driver.

He wore an old-fashioned cap pulled low. His hands were grey, and one finger appeared to be attached with string.I assumed he'd had a difficult shift.

Inside sat six passengers, all facing forward. At the back was a woman holding a wicker basket.

Something inside it scratched."Evening," I said.

All six passengers turned, none blinked.I sat near the door.

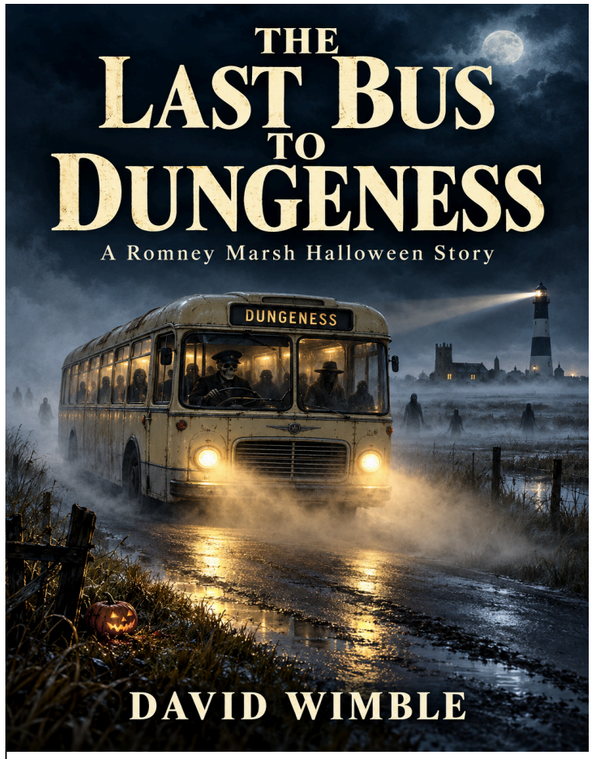
We passed through Newchurch without seeing a single light. At Old Romney, the church bell struck thirteen…."That clock wants looking at," I told the driver. "So do you," he replied.

We stopped near Brookland. A tall man climbed aboard carrying a spade.

Mud fell from his coat. Wet reeds poked out of his pockets, and there was a small crab in his beard."Evening, Fred," said the woman with the basket."Evening, Mabel."
"Digging?" "Coming up."

I pulled out my phone….No signal.

That was perfectly normal for the Marsh, but it felt unhelpful…. A message appeared anyway. It was from Sarah.
Where are you? Bus home, I typed.
Her reply came immediately. But you drove!
Before I could answer, another message arrived….David. Your car's outside.
I looked through the rear window.
Something was following us.



It ran on all fours, keeping pace without apparent effort. At first I thought it was a sheep.
Then it stood upright.
Its head rose above the roof.

"Don't look at him," whispered Mabel. "Why?" "He takes it as an invitation." I turned away.

A fingernail scraped slowly along the outside of my window.

We reached Lydd, although the streets were wrong. The houses leaned over the road, their upstairs windows glowing red.

Outside one stood a little girl in a white dress. She waved. Her arm kept bending after it should have stopped.

"School night," I muttered. "Someone ought to have her indoors." Nobody laughed.

The bus swung towards Dungeness.

Beyond the shingle, the lighthouse beam swept across the darkness. On each pass, figures appeared beside the road.

Fishermen. Soldiers. Women in long skirts.
All soaking wet….All watching.

Then I noticed the empty seat beside me was occupied. Bert Puddifoot sat there holding his pumpkin.

"Bert! How did you get here?" "Same as everyone."

His face looked pale. "What do you mean?"
He pointed at a brass plate above the driver.

ROMNEY MARSH DEPARTURES…ONE JOURNEY ONLY

I stood. "I'd like to get off." The driver chuckled."They all say that."

Mabel's basket lid lifted. A small hand emerged.Then another.

Then something beneath the cloth said, in a voice like stones rattling in a bucket: "Is this the new one?"

The bus stopped. Outside, hundreds of figures stood on the shingle. They began tapping the windows. Gently at first. Then harder.

The driver turned, beneath his cap was a hole.Deep inside it, something moved.

"Your fare, Mr Wimble." "I haven't got any cash." "We don't take cash."

The tapping became hammering. "What do you take?"

He reached towards me. Then my phone rang.Sarah. "David, where ARE you?" The driver recoiled.

"Put that away!" "No," I said, suddenly understanding. "You don't know my wife."

Sarah continued: "I've been waiting twenty minutes. Get yourself home."

Every passenger covered their ears. The windows cracked.

"Tell her you're busy!" screamed the driver. "I'm married," I said. "I'm not suicidal."

The bus lurched. I fell through its open doors and landed beside my car outside The Star.

Morning sunlight touched the church, Bert emerged carrying a pumpkin.

"Found it in the shed," he said. I drove home without answering.

Sarah was waiting. "You look awful." "Long story."

She handed me my coat. "This was on the doorstep."

Pinned to the sleeve was an old bus ticket.

Across the back, in muddy handwriting, were five words:

NEXT TIME, COME WITHOUT HER.

Does Dress Matter?

Some personal thoughts by June Gooch

In Looker number 411, there was a front-page article, about Lydd Council debating whether there should be a dress code among councillors, with councillors wearing holiday casuals to the meetings in the heat. It was an interesting idea, and it gave me 'furiously to think'.

As a church goer all my life, I remember all the strict rules about going to Chapel with my parents. You always wore you 'best clothes', and a hat. All females, had to wear a hat! It also tied in with culture- in those days lots of women would wear a hat, even just to go shopping, or at the very least, a headscarf. It all got slightly ridiculous, and my brother mocked the Easter 'fashion show'. Everyone had a new summer outfit for Easter, and if Easter was early and cold, hard luck. Now of course, all that formality is turned on its head, and younger people wear the same casuals they wear during the week. One of our sons goes to a lively city church, crawling with children and young people, and the vicar gave an excellent sermon in jeans and trainers. Like my husband, he had on coloured clerical shirt with 2 and half inches of white collar showing to show his status.

Obviously, no one needs to dress up for church now, although our generation of oldies makes the effort. My roles in life have been nurse in uniform, wife and mother, so it is nice to have a reason to wear your best things! We had a funeral in church last week, and all the menfolk were in dark suits and collars and ties. So used to them in casual clothes, you almost did a double take. Same with Remembrance Sunday. On both occasions the formal dress is a mark of respect.

When Mike was in paid ministry, we had an invitation to a Buckingham Palace Garden party. I must admit when I first had the phone call, I thought someone was 'taking the mickey'. The palace secretary gave me some dates to choose from, like it depended on us (sorry Lizzie -washing my hair that day)!!!! The embossed invitation duly arrived. But of course, the dress rules were exceptionally strict for this important day. It was a very special day in our lives. The cakes had the royal crest on them, it seemed a pity to eat them! Our Christian humility took a battering. You could leave by whatever entrance you chose. We chose the front gate, with the tourists peering through the railings!

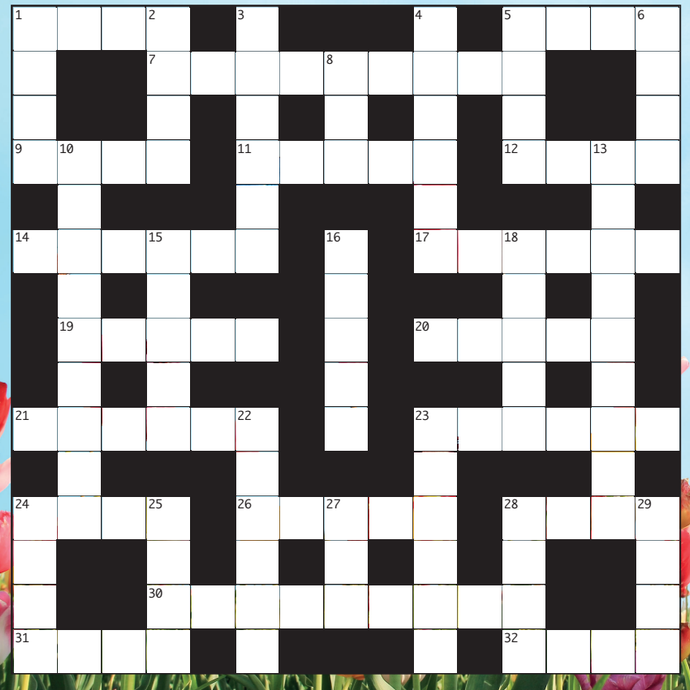
When we were young, we were told we were meeting the King of Kings, so it was only right to be respectful in church and wear formal clothes. Obviously, children in church don't think like that now. But society in general has relaxed dress rules in everything. People have a lot more clothes now, easy care, and they are much cheaper. When we were small, we had 'best' for church and visiting, school clothes, and play clothes. All the clothes I possessed would have fitted on 8 hangers. To our mothers caring for them, it was tedious and hard work, and not easy to replace is they were torn or damaged, so each item was more valuable than any item of our clothes nowadays.

There are situations where formality is creeping back. When you go on a plane, especially on a package holiday to beach resorts, there are definite rules for dress. No beach wear, swimwear or flip-flops. You can't go straight from the beach to the airport. Some restaurants talk about 'smart casual'. Men have to have their shoulders covered, no vests, and no shorts for men or women and midriffs covered.

Was Lydd council right to have a basic "smart casual' rule? Probably.



General Knowledge Crossword #027



Across Clues:
1. Cycle (4)
5. Long book (4)
7. Land located near a boundary (9)
9. Archaic, have (4)
11. Vault (5)
12. Seize (4)
14. Admission (6)
17. Go on (6)
19. Dripping (5)
20. Dissolve (5)
21. Light flat-bottomed boat (6)
23. A business partnership (6)
24. Harmony (4)
26. Faithful (5)
28. Restriction of food (4)
30. Highly contagious (9)
31. Young deer (4)
32. Race (4)

Down Clues:
1. Undergrowth (4)
2. Produce (4)
3. Slightly damaged (6)
4. Violent fight (6)
5. Revise (4)
6. Indication (4)
8. Cut and dried (3)
10. Going with (9)
13. Television tube (9)
15. Aristocracy (5)
16. Plenty of (5)
18. Show, demonstrate (5)
22. Improving, make better (6)
23. Country controlled by a more powerful one (6)
24. Mass of white bubbles (4)
25. Change (4)
27. 2nd person (3)
28. Departed (4)
29. Nylon shelter (4)

Answers: Across: 1. Bike, 5. Epic, 7. Marchland, 9. Hast, 11. Crypt, 12. Take, 14. Access, 17. Extend, 19. Moist, 20. Thaws, 21. Bateau, 23. Cahoot, 24. Sync, 26. Loyal, 28. Diet, 30. Influenza, 31. Fawn, 32. Dart.
Down: 1. Bush, 2. Emit, 3. Cracks, 4. Battle, 5. Edit, 6. Clue, 8. Hay, 10. Accompany, 13. Kinescope, 15. Elite, 16. Ample, 18. Teach, 22. Uplift, 23. Colony, 24. Surf, 25. Coin, 27. You, 28. Dead, 29. Tent.

Sudoku Challenge

		7	4			6	5	
	4	9						7
5					1		8	9
3	8	6		9		5		
9							1	
1	2	5			3			8
				2	6		4	
		2					6	5
		8				2	9	

Ideas that Changed the World

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

Antibiotics
Biodegradable
Bombs
Chemical
Climate Change
Communism
Discoveries
Freedom of Speech
Internet
Inventions
Karl Marx
Liberty
Pollution
Recycle
Vaccines

Spot the Difference!

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



THE RANT!!!



All the Gear but No Idea (part 2)

There comes a moment in a man's life when he looks in the mirror, notices his hair is retreating faster than his mortgage, and decides something must change.

Does he eat less cheese? Go for a walk? Finally deal with the guttering?…Of course not.

He spends £4,000 on a bicycle.

Not because he enjoys cycling. He hasn't ridden a bike since 1987, when his principal safety equipment was a packet of crisps and the belief that cars would stop.

But suddenly he needs carbon fibre.

Apparently, the bicycle must weigh less than a supermarket sandwich, despite its new owner carrying three stone of additional equipment around his waist.

Then comes the clothing….Nobody simply rides a bicycle any more. They dress as though they have been selected to represent Great Britain in an international hostage exchange.

There are aerodynamic helmets, specialist shoes, mirrored glasses and shorts so tight you can identify the loose change.

On Sunday morning, six of them gather outside a café, discussing gear ratios with the solemn intensity of surgeons planning a heart transplant.

They cycle seven miles….Then eat a breakfast containing enough calories to heat a village.

Is this a midlife thing? Does a switch flick somewhere around fifty, replacing common sense with an overwhelming desire to buy equipment?

Because men rarely seem to try a hobby now. They acquire its entire supply chain.

Take golf.
A sensible person might borrow some clubs, book a lesson and establish whether they can hit the ball without endangering livestock.

Our man buys the latest driver, a full set of irons, waterproofs, a laser rangefinder and an electric trolley that follows him around like a disappointed butler.

He arrives looking ready for the Masters….His first shot travels eleven yards and kills a daisy.

Undeterred, he consults his watch…."It says I'm 164 yards from the green."

Yes, Nigel. You were 175 yards away before you hit it. Even the watch is losing patience.

Photography is another magnificent example.

One day a man takes a reasonably decent picture of a robin on his phone. By Thursday he owns a camera body costing more than his first car and a lens capable of inspecting someone's sandwich from Belgium.

He talks about aperture, shutter speed and "glass"…. Previously, glass was something he drank lager from.

Now he crouches behind a hedge for four hours dressed like a camouflage sofa, waiting for a kingfisher.

He comes home with 800 photographs….Seven hundred and ninety-nine feature a branch….The remaining one is his thumb.

Then there is fishing, which appears to involve buying an entire outdoor living room before discovering whether you like fish.

Rods, reels, alarms, shelters, chairs, cooking equipment and enough luggage for a diplomatic posting.

Some anglers arrive beside a pond with more infrastructure than the first settlers took to Australia.

Our beginner spends three days discussing bait….The fish decline to attend.

He returns home sunburnt, exhausted and smelling faintly of luncheon meat, announcing that it was "a difficult water".

It was a pond, Steve….A pond.

And what about the man who takes up running?

He doesn't start with trainers and a gentle jog. He requires a watch that monitors his pulse, sleep, oxygen levels and probably his relationship with his father.

There are compression socks, hydration packs, recovery supplements and shoes designed by people who apparently work part-time at NASA….He runs once.

His watch congratulates him on completing an activity…. His knees issue a solicitor's letter.

The equipment then lives in the hallway, where it becomes an expensive installation entitled Good Intentions, February.

Motorcycling provides perhaps the clearest evidence that this is about something deeper.

A man who has spent twenty years complaining about draughts suddenly buys a machine specifically designed to expose him to a hurricane.

He acquires leathers, boots, gloves and a helmet containing more communications technology than an airport control tower.

He looks dangerous….Then you discover he is an accountant called Malcolm who cannot leave until his wife finds his reading glasses.

But before the women start nodding too enthusiastically, you are not entirely innocent.

Some women can turn one introductory yoga class into a significant retail event.

There is the premium mat, matching outfit, special bag, blocks, straps and a bottle large enough to supply a small hotel.

The instructor says, "Find your inner peace."….Your inner peace is currently checking whether the leggings are available in sage.

Crafting can be equally spectacular.

One pleasant afternoon making a birthday card somehow results in a spare bedroom containing a cutting machine, twelve storage towers and enough ribbon to restrain a rhinoceros.

The first card costs approximately £640….It says "Happy Birthday" slightly crookedly.

Gardening follows the same principle. Six tomato seeds lead to raised beds, specialist compost, personalised labels and a greenhouse requiring planning permission.

The eventual harvest is four tomatoes…One splits. One gets eaten by a slug.

The remaining two are displayed proudly on Instagram before being divided between a family of five.

So why do we do it?
Because buying the equipment is the easy part.

For a glorious afternoon, we can purchase the appearance of being fit, adventurous, creative or interesting.

Learning requires patience. Shopping requires a PIN.

Perhaps middle age also brings the unnerving suspicion that life is becoming a series of appointments, passwords and conversations about insulation.

A new hobby promises escape.

The trouble is, we mistake buying the costume for becoming the character.

And manufacturers understand this perfectly. Somewhere, a marketing department is looking at a fifty-three-year-old man and thinking: "He's frightened of ageing. Sell him titanium."

I'm all for hobbies. Try something new. Be dreadful at it. Enjoy yourself.

But borrow the clubs first.

Because the saddest sight in Britain isn't a beginner looking foolish.

It's a £4,000 bicycle hanging in a garage while its owner drives half a mile to buy biscuits.







Church Update By June Gooch

Food Bank. The main food bank for the area, continues in Romney Marsh Community Church in North Street, New Romney 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 food bank has a long list of needs. This includes Chocolate spread, gluten free, large tinned ham, washing up liquid, men's deodorant, sanitary pads, shampoo, slower gel, salad cream, pasta in sauce packets, white cook in sauce, mayonnaise, tinned fish, vege meals in a tin, noodles, and corned beef.

At present they have plenty of tinned vegs, (including beans, tomatoes, potatoes), soup, toothpaste and pasta.

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. Check the venue when you register for your voucher.

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 con's ditions are the same, as for the Lydd van.

Village Halls. Many villages and towns on the Marsh have new village halls, which are always available for one off occasions or regular hire. The high costs we are all facing have affected them as well, so they will be very happy to host your event/s. The contact will be on the notice board outside the hall.

A friend asked me why I don't put down the times of all services. With 14 different churches in the benefice, and 14 different regimes of worships, I'd have to monopolise the Looker more than I do now!! If you would like to know the times of all services, there are always spare copies of the Marsh Message in St Nick's church, and it is usually open during the day. The schedule of services is on the 1st 3 pages.

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

The next sung evensong will be on November 14th at 6.30pm. There will be a practice for the choir on the previous Thursday at 1.15pm. The Holy Communion service that takes place on alternative Thursday continues. See church magazine for dates.

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. Please do consider the reading rota, the church is really short of volunteers. It isn't onerous at all, and you have the reading beforehand, so you can practice. Don't worry about strange names. Your version is as good as anyone else's!

There will be an early Christmas coffee morning on November 7th, from 10am to 1pm. The Seaside Singers will be taking part. All invited and donations for stalls always welcome.

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

Dymchurch Methodist church. This is now part of 'Marsh Methodist Church' with a central administration, and services will be on a rotating pattern. See notices for dates.

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. All welcome at any of these events.

Craft Fair. The next Craft Fair will take place on Saturday, November 21st, from 10am-2pm, and everyone is invited to this large and diverse craft fair. Several stalls sell edibles of various kinds, and cater for those with restricted diets. With Christmas creeping up on us, an opportunity to buy some unique gifts.

The next fundraiser is a Christmas themed breakfast on Saturday 14th November, from 9am-11.30am. All very warmly welcomed, both old and new customers, if you can resist the smell of bacon! The October afternoon with the seaside singers had to be cancelled, unfortunately.

Ivychurch, St George. The recent production of The Great Gatsby was a well- received success to a packed church. The 4 actors dad an amazing job, and without benefit of curtains and much in the way of scenery, they brought the story to life. At Christmas they will be producing 'A Christmas Carol'. Be sure to book your seat, it will be worthwhile. The date to put it your diary is December 10th. Tickets are now available for this on the website, this is my theatre.

Quiz on Friday, November 6th in the village hall, raising money for the children's Christmas party organised by the Ivychurch Amenity Society. For tickets at £5 per person ring Jools on 01797 344144 or email mlwaite@hotmail.co.uk

Lydd, All Saints. 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.

A new type of get together has started for babies and toddlers, parents and carers, on the 2nd Sunday of each month. **Bubble church**. It starts at 9am, for coffee and croissants, and suitable refreshments for the children. The service itself starts at 9.30am, and is specially geared up to the youngsters and their parents. Several of the helpers have travelled to London for appropriate courses, to give them lots of ideas for activities. For more detail contact Les Carter on 01797 320108 or email bubbleinlydd@btinternet.com So the next one will be November 8th.

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, (provided by other charities) 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.

The big Christmas Fair will take place on Saturday, November 28th Lots of varied stalls many with unique presents. Raffle, tombola, private stalls and lots of delicious refreshments. If you are there over lunch time there are delicious filled rolls for sale. There will also be a Santa's Elves workshop for children, making craft items for Christmas. £1 per maker. This is open from 10.30am-12.30pm. All very welcome. To book a private stall, ring 01797 320108.

Lydd Methodist Church. This is now part of Marsh Methodist Church flannels under one administration, with rotating services. See notices for dates.

New Romney, St Nicholas. Like Lydd church, St Nicholas' is very large and needs a lot of cleaning and care. If anyone has an hour to spare, the church would be very grateful for any help. Maybe you don't attend regularly, but feel for the history of this ancient church, your help would be much appreciated. Call Ann Rolfe on 01797 362719.

Samaritan's purse, the organisation that oversees the shoebox project, will be collecting soon. Pick up a leaflet in church, and you can pack a shoebox for either a boy or girl, in 3 age categories. It is important to pick up a leaflet, because for various cultural, political and practical reasons there are a number of things that cannot be packed. Some of which have only be specified in recent years. If you cannot do a whole box, any contribution will be welcome, and the organisers can put them together.

When full, cover your box with Christmas paper, with the lid separate, so that the contents can be checked. We are all a bit disgusted at how early all the Christmas tosh is arriving in the shops, but the boxes have to be packed and collected before the 8th November, so worth thinking about what you can do now!

The next coffee morning is on Saturday, November 21st from 10am to noon. All welcome, cakes and preserves for sale. Books, CDs and DVDs available at knock down prices. A good crowd attended the last coffee morning, listening to the Doffin Codgers, so I imagine the results were successful.

On Friday, November 6th, there will be a concert by the Shepway U3A Swing Band at 11am and the proceeds will go to the Alzheimer's Society and the church funds. No tickets but a retiring offering. Please give generously. Refreshments will be served.

New Romney Methodist Church. The Saturday morning coffee morning continues from 10am -noon. The worship services are on a rolling rota with the other methodist churches on the Marsh, so see notices for details. The Meeting Point on Thursday mornings continues from 10am-noon, and is much appreciate by the those who attend. All welcome to this chance to chat and share a coffee.

Newchurch. St Peter and Paul The recent events, Harvest service, coffee morning and harvest supper, were all successful. The next fund raiser will be the Coffee morning and Christmas Fair on December 5th from 10.30am-12.30pm. The Christmas tree festival is being revived this year, and will be decorating the church until the New Year.

Several members of the church have been investigating the history of local families, and there are posters and information around the church, if anyone would like to see the results.

Snargate, St Dunstans. The Holy Communion services on the 2nd and 4th Sundays continue at 9am, so the next one will be on Sunday, November 8th, followed by refreshments and fellowship.

St Mary's Bay, All Saints. The Café church, on Mondays and Wednesday morning get togethers continue to flourish, with increasing number, and a tremendous time of fellowship is enjoyed by all. Café church is now staying open until 11.30am.

A new venture is starting in SMB village hall, called "Renew Wellbeing Café" This is a nationwide effort aimed at those who may just need some friendship, activity, and someone to talk to! There will be space for craft, you can take part, or bring your own, and most importantly, a space where it is "ok to be not ok." It takes place on Wednesdays, from 2-4pm. All activities are free, and there are gentle sessions on wellbeing and health, both physically and mentally. All very welcome. For more information, ring Revd Penny Lowe on 07810 717408.7pm. he Bingo

The remaining fund raiser for October is the Bingo session on the 26th from 2pm. Thanks were given in the magazine, to all those who work to keep the church, hall and grounds tidy and spotless. If anyone would like to help, even just for a hour here and there, contact Len on 01303 873451 or Phil on 07413 967934. Pauline is still collecting used postage stamps, so a reminder coming up to Christmas.

St Mary in theMarsh The Haywardians choir, based at the church is a vibrant choir that raises large amounts of money for Charity. The next event is a Christmas concert on December 5th at 4.30pm in All Saints Church in St Mary's Bay. The choir meets in St Mary's each Friday evening at 7.30pm. New members are always welcome. For more information ring Andrew on 07814 292027.

Church Chuckle. I

n the days when children had a scripture exam on Ascension Day, and the rest of the day free, there were some questions on the ten commandments.

One child had written; "The 7th commandment says Thou shalt not admit adultery!"

Wit and Wisdom.

A sweater is what a child wears, when his mother is cold.

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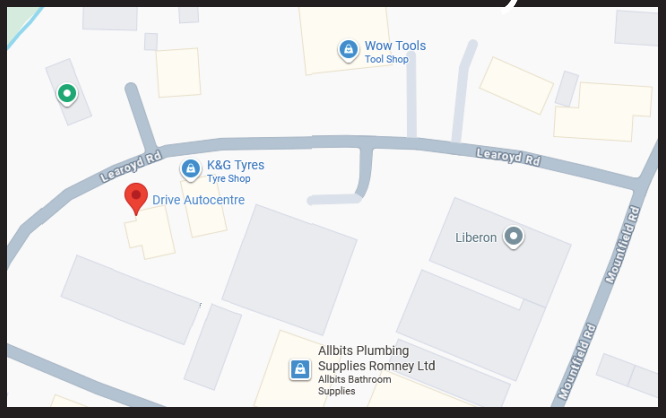
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