# THE VOICE



A COMMUNITY MAGAZINE FOR BOROUGH GREEN PRODUCED BY THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD.

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#### Editorial from the Church of the Good Shepherd

March 2025

#### If Only....

If only I won the lottery. If only I got that promotion. If only they liked me. If only I looked like that celebrity. If only my family understood me. If only my health was better.

There are many times we might say "if only" with the view that, if only a certain something changed, our life would be perfect. And many people chase after that "if only" idea, sometimes even to the exclusion of everything else, only to discover that life is not as they expected. The executive who's made it to the top, has the big corner office, the high salary and fat bonus coming, finds their family is miserable, or perhaps even gone, their co-workers hate them and all because of their relentless pursuit of that "if only".

The season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on 5th March and runs all the way up to Easter. A traditional Christian practice during Lent was some sort of fasting. This helps us recall the time Jesus spent fasting in the wilderness and facing temptation (Matthew 4:1-11). While those fasting during Lent often went without food on certain days, eat a much simpler diet or refrained from certain foods - such as meat - in this modern age people might instead fast in different ways. For example, not looking at the internet or social media, not using any single-use plastic, not buying a lottery ticket or perhaps by taking something up - always recycling, getting in touch with friends we've not spoken to in ages.

However, part of the fast is also about spending time concentrating on God. If we fast by cutting out one meal from out usual routine, the time we normally spend cooking and eating could be spent in prayer or reading the Bible.

What can happen as we fast is that we find the things we said "if only" about aren't all that essential after all. And as we turn more of our attention to God we discover that what we were really seeking lies there.

Jesus said, "I came to give life - life in all its fullness". We chase after those "if only" ideas because that's where we think we'll find fullness of life. But in looking towards Jesus, we discover that He is offering to us the very things we've been chasing after. If we can take some time to turn away from the "if only" we might find the "only" one who can give us the fullness of life and that with Him there is no "if".

Perhaps during this Lent, we might practice a fast from whatever "if only" we might be chasing. We might even practice physical fast as well. And also, we might find some time to turn our attention towards God and the full life offered by His Son.

God bless. Revd. Chris

#### P.S. Please consult your doctor before undertaking a food or liquids fast.



# Ash Wednesday - 5th March Service of Holy Communion with Imposition of Ashes The Church of the Good Shepherd, Quarry Hill Road 2pm and 7.30pm.

#### NOTHING FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS THIS MONTH

#### **Monday Minis Toddler Time**



Play and socialising for pre-school children and their grown ups. **Mondays 3 and 17 March** 10 to 12 noon in COGS annexe. No charge, just a donation for tea and coffee please.

#### Cinema at COGS

**Wednesday 19 March** 2pm in the Church of the Good Shepherd. Please check the Church's noticeboard for this month's presentation. All are welcome so come for an afternoon of free entertainment. Refreshments available during the interval.



#### Games, Tea & Chat



On alternative **Mondays** (for dates see diary section) at 2 - 4pm in the annexe to the Church of the Good Shepherd. Come and enjoy board games, tea and a chat. Plenty of room for new folk so, if you are wondering whether it's for you, do get in touch and ask for more information or just turn up at 2.00.

Contact Elaine Almond on 886440 or etalmond@aol.com



#### The Church of the Good Shepherd

COGS website www.cogsonline.co.uk
Facebook - COGSBG

Email - vicar.cogs@gmail.com

01732 882447

#### **OUR FOOD BANK STORE APPEAL**

Borough Green Food Bank, which also covers Platt, Ightham and Wrotham, is a vital lifeline for many in our community, providing essential support to individuals and families facing hardship. Operated by volunteers from a temporary space at the Church of the Good Shepherd, the food bank's crucial work is now facing a challenge: its own success.

The unfortunate reality is that demand for the food bank's services has doubled over the last five years and is still growing. This increased need has placed a significant strain on its existing facilities. Quite simply, they've outgrown their current space. Donated food, essential for feeding those in need, is becoming increasingly difficult to store and organise efficiently. Volunteers, the backbone of the food bank's operation, are struggling to work effectively in cramped conditions.

That's why our APPEAL FOR FUNDS, to build a new storehouse, is so critical. This isn't just about bricks and mortar; it's about ensuring the food bank can continue to meet the rising need in our community. A larger, more efficient storage facility will allow them to accept and distribute more food, streamline their operations and, ultimately, better serve those struggling to make ends meet.

Let's rally together and support our food bank's vital work and show our community cares. We aim to raise £15,000 to build and furnish the new store. Please help. To donate:

Visit:



#### Or:

- Account number 81189883: reference Foodbankstore; Ac/name Church of the Good Shepherd.
  - ♦ Cheque payable to 'Church of the Good Shepherd' (please write 'Food Bank Store' on back).
  - \* all donations go into a Reserved fund dedicated to the Food Bank

A Community That Cares: Supporting Our Food Bank's Needs For more information please email: foodbank.cogs@gmail.com

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#### **Notes from Borough Green Parish Council**

The Council met at 7.30pm Monday **3rd February 2025** at the Bowls Club. Matters discussed and reports received included.



- Recreation Ground Pavilion. Cllr Sam Thrush tabled a "guesstimate list" of costs to bring the Pavilion back into regular use, upgraded to modern standards. This figure is £35k, considerably less than the earmarked reserves of £50k. This is a hugely important historic building being our War Memorial Pavilion but also the beginning of Borough Green as the "DIY Village". The first stage of damp-proofing the building is underway and is unfortunately generating a lot of mud, for which we apologise. This excavation phase should end shortly and we have the power washing contractor on stand-by to restore it as quickly as possible; Honeycomb are doing their best to shovel mud clear each day.
- Allotments have always been in short supply in Borough Green and the
  three at the Parish Church Hall have a long waiting list. But we have been
  contacted by Brian Saunders, Chair of Wrotham Allotments, to say that as
  many as three will coming free shortly. (See elsewhere in this edition.)
- COGS Community Welcome Event was very successful although a cold and dark January night did not generate a huge attendance by new residents of the village, but a lot of important contacts were made. Sevenoaks Mind attended and the Parish Council has invited them to use Potters Mede as a new venue for local help groups.
- Criminal Damage & ASB. A new Community hub has been set up involving the Parish Council, local businesses and the Police. It is most important that any incident is reported to Police either by calling 101 or on the Kent Police website <a href="www.kent.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/">www.kent.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/</a>. These reports will build to the point where the Police will commit resources it is no use just complaining on social media or to friends in the street. But also email the details of that crime including Police incident number, street, date and time, damage and any other notes like registration numbers to <a href="clerk@boroughgreen.gov.uk">clerk@boroughgreen.gov.uk</a> or <a href="Guy.Heseleden@boroughgreen.gov.uk">Guy.Heseleden@boroughgreen.gov.uk</a>.
- TMBC Civil Enforcement Officers have been particularly successful in Tonbridge and Larkfield reducing ASB, and Parishes have been asked if the scheme should be rolled out to a wider area. BGPC believes this is a good initiative and has joined a small number of other Parishes supporting the scheme with an initial pledge of £1000.
- The Borough Green Pharmacy in the High St has an application for a change of use to residential but this does not apply to the retail section which will be smaller but still our pharmacy.
- **Devolution** has generated a lot of discussion and Cllr Rayner advises that the joint KCC and Medway proposal to Government did not make the priority list, so KCC Elections will still go ahead in May 2025 and no-one knows what happens after that.

(Continued on page 9)

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- **30mph stickers** for our wheelie bins proved very successful and the Parish Council has ordered a new supply contact the Clerk or your nearest Parish Councillor, particularly if you live on a main road.
- The Chairman and Clerk can still be contacted on the email addresses and numbers below and in person meetings can still be arranged. We still have vacancies for two Councillors.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Monday 10th March 2025 at the Bowls Club. The agenda will include a period for public contributions and questions. Parking at the Bowls Club is via Drylands Rd, (but take a torch), or pedestrian access via Harrison Rd Rec entrance

#### **Council Contacts**

Chairman mike.taylor@boroughgreen.gov.uk 01732 882880 Clerk clerk@boroughgreen.gov.uk 07568 536405 Full minutes are posted at MINUTES | mysite (boroughgreen.gov.uk)

#### **Advertising**

Any commercial bodies or people offering services who wish to advertise should contact **Chris Atkins** email **chris.atkins1952@gmail.com** or phone **01732 366615** about rates and availability of spaces.

If you have something you want to sell, a caravan or cottage you want to let for holidays etc then contact Margaret Jeffery. The cost of such personal notices are just  $\pounds 2$  per issue.

The views expressed in articles are not necessarily those of the Editorial Team. The Editorial Team cannot accept responsibility for wrong information received, or mistakes that occur in publication. The Editorial Team cannot accept responsibility for any delay in distribution. Publication of advertisements does not imply any form of recommendation. All articles in this magazine are covered by copyright and permission must be obtained before reproducing them in any format.

The total print run of the magazine is 2000 copies and it is also available to read on the COGS, BG Community and Parish Council websites.

#### **Thanks**

Thank you to the Borough Green Parish Council for their generous grant and to all our advertisers for their financial support which makes the production of this magazine possible. Also thank you to all our distributors who get the Voice to every house in the village.

#### Articles for the next magazine

The Voice is your community magazine and it relies on the people of Borough Green to make it as interesting as possible. Organisations, clubs and individuals are welcome to submit articles on their activities and subjects likely to be of interest to the village.

The deadline for articles for the next magazine will be **Tuesday 18 March** and these should be sent to the address below. The next magazine will cover **April** so if you have any events planned for that month and you would like them to appear in the diary section please send to:-

m-jeffery@talktalk.net

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Margaret Jeffery 7 Lendon Road Borough Green TN15 8SE

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## PARISH ALLIANCE SHOPPER BUSES New Timetable

#### **MONDAYS ROUTE 70**

10.00 Wrotham Square, 10.05 Borough Green Station, 10.11 Platt, Wrotham Heath, Offham, West Malling, Leybourne Chase, East Malling to Larkfield. Returning from Tesco at 12.45.

#### **FRIDAYS ROUTE 58**

9.30 Wrotham Square, 9.35 Borough Green Station, 9.38 Platt, Wrotham Heath, Addington, Trottiscliffe, Ryarsh, Birling, Leybourne, West Malling, East Malling to Larkfield and Maidstone. Returning from Maidstone at 1.00.

#### Allotments in Wrotham Village

It is likely that some allotment plots may become available in April that, at the present time, could be offered to residents living in Borough Green. Easily worked soil with water on site and a hard standing area for cars. Would suit a keen gardener with the available time.

If interested please contact the clerk to Wrotham Parish Council (wrothampc@btinternet.com) when an informal site visit can be arranged.



1st Borough Green Guides now meet at Platt Scout Hut and new girls aged 10-14 are always welcome. Please look on the Girlguiding website www.girlguiding.org.uk and enter the girl's name and details on the database and I will be in contact.

The groups for younger girls are 1st St. Mary's Platt Rainbows and Brownies. Platt Rainbows for girls aged 4-7 also meet at Platt Scout HQ but they would need to join a waiting list! Platt Brownies for girls aged 7-10 meet at the Platt Memorial Hall and again they would need to join a waiting list. These are the nearest Guiding groups for girls living in Borough Green.

Help is needed to run all of these groups so if you feel this is for you please apply through the website above.

Patricia Arnold

boroughgreenquides@gmail.com

#### Borough Green & Wrotham u3a

Borough Green and Wrotham u3a meetings are held on the second Monday of each month at 2pm in Borough Green Village Hall, with tea, coffee and biscuits. Parking/disabled access available.



The next monthly meeting will be on **Monday 10 March** at 2 pm. Our speaker will be the ever-popular Bob Ogley who will talk about the History of Biggin Hill and the important role it played in protecting London and the South East during WW2. This event is free for members and guests are welcome with a £3 charge. We look forward to seeing you at what promises to be a very interesting talk.

Please be aware that charges are now payable for the car park at Borough Green Village Hall. Full instructions are given on the signs at the car park, including instructions for free parking for Hall users who are exempt from charges when they sign in with their car registration inside the Hall.

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

#### Saturday Open House

Fancy a cuppa, cake and some conversation? Pop in. Everyone Welcome. No Charge No Agenda Just Community

10-12 Every Saturday @ COGS Church of the Good Shepherd,

Hello Weekend!

#### Church of the Good Shepherd Food Bank

Thanks to your continuing generosity we have been able to support many local families in need.

Donations of non-perishable goods may be left in the Church's porch (where there is a list of the items we need most) on any day - the Church is usually open 10am - 5pm.

#### Thank you

For any enquiries regarding our food bank please contact lan Simpson on 07801 135 460 or foodbank.cogs@gmail.com



#### Spring is in the Air!

This year is now flying by with the hall as busy as ever and getting busier, organisers seeking to run events and local residents wanting venues from weddings to cream tea and cakes. The hall is particularly interested in any charitable organisations

seeking venues for fundraising activities. Please feel free to make contact at bookings@boroughgreenvillagehall.co.uk

#### Car Parking (Again!)

Car park charging at the hall started in early January after many months of consulting, notices, face to face discussions and hundreds of 'flyers' for users.

#### **Contact Details**

Please can we politely request that, if you have issues over parking, you contact the parking provider (Gemini) or the Hall Committee rather than accosting or spamming our busy local councillors as made clear on their council website:

THE PARISH COUNCIL HAVE NO INVOLVEMENT WITH THE BG VILLAGE HALL. ANY PROBLEMS WITH THE HALL OR CAR PARK SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO bookings@boroughgreenvillagehall.co.uk or call 01732 646040.

#### Technical Issues

We apologise for technical issues (though not our fault) over first few weeks with the 'all singing, all dancing' pay machine consistently failing to work - probably due to lack of sunlight in winter as it's solar powered ("D'oh" as Homer says!). No parking charges were raised while technical faults were sorted - so you can relax (you know who you are (2).

#### **Questions and Answers**

The committee produced a quite extensive Q&A document in January on social media and in the hall. We are updating it as more questions come in such as:

- Why is the Parking App (e.g. Ringo) charging me 30p? This is common with parking apps and nothing to do with the village hall. It is a 'Convenience' charge which varies depending on the app. You can reduce charges by amending settings to not receive updates and notifications on parking or pay by card at machine.
- If I park for 1/2 hour, then get free ticket from Machine can I get 11/2 hour free parking? No - entry time is recorded by ANPR with a 'grace' period to park and pay - the clock is ticking. If you pop for coffee for 30 minutes, come back and get a 'Free Hour' ticket from the machine, as the clock is still ticking it will be invalid in 30 minutes. You may therefore get a PCN. Presenting invalid tickets as evidence is unlikely to support an appeal – sorry!
- I used the Hall and entered details on Tablet, I go for coffee with friends. Do I need to pay for additional parking? When you attend event and enter registration in hall tablet you have a short time after (approx. 30 minutes depending on event) to say farewell and depart. While at the event you have used your 'Free Hour'. If remaining parked please pay the additional hour (£1.20+) to avoid potential charges.

#### Hall Maintenance Plan

The committee have started their 2025 Maintenance Plan upgrading and rejuvenating hall facilities. Plans include, but are not limited to, updating entrance way, rewiring and additional sockets, upgrade to toilet facilities, cleaning, improving security (please close the windows and lock the doors!), redecoration, posters and displays, flooring upgrades and many more - and hopefully the clock will work - but at least its right twice a day!

We will provide updates as work takes place using email and social media and try to minimise any potential disruption.

Thank you for your continued and wholly positive support – it is always welcomed!







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#### **DISCOVER YOUR COMMUNITY**

Our first 'Discover Your Community' event was held recently, hosted by the Church of the Good Sheperd. The event aimed to welcome new residents, create connections within the community and showcase local not-for-profit organisations and groups.

We welcomed around 100 guests with hospitality including glasses of wine, cake and snacks. Although the dark and wintery weather may have kept some residents away, the event exceeded expectations in terms of the total number of organisations' representatives in attendance and their positive feedback. Many mentioned their appreciation of the rare opportunity to be informed of each other's activities and services. On reflection, maybe this event can be a stepping stone towards future welcoming and networking events aimed at building a greater sense of belonging and community spirit?

The Church of the Good Shepherd gives thanks to our generous sponsors: Borough Green Parish Council, Stephen P. Gay Funeral Services, Borough Green Co-op and Plaxtol Bakery. Thanks also to organisers - Carole and Ian Simpson and Revd. Chris Turner. Our appreciation to all of those who volunteered their time, including Karen Stephens, Amy Scouler, Julie Sweeting, Chris Atkins, Julia and Thea Cason.

Steve Talmage



## Events in the Village for the month of March

- 1 Saturday Open House COGS 10.00 to 12.00
- 2 COGS Holy Communion said 8.30

SJCC - Mass - 9.30

COGS - All-Age Communion - 10.00

BGBC - Service - 10.30

Bash the Trash - BGVH - 11.30 to 12.30

- Toddler Time COGS Annexe 10.00 to 12.00 Games, Tea and Chat COGS Annexe 2.00 to 4.00
- **4** BG Library Scrabble Club 2.15 to 4.15
- 5 COGS Ash Wednesday Services 2.00 and 7.30
- 6 SJCC 10.00 Mass followed by Adoration BG Lunch Club - BGVH - 10.00 to 1.00 BG Library - Coffee & Chat - 10.15 to 12.15
- 7 BG Lunch Club BGVH 10.00 to 1.00 BG Library - Baby Bounce and Rhyme Time - 10.15 to 10.45 Platt Church - World Day of Prayer - 10.30 SJCC - Stations of the Cross - 6.00
- 8 Saturday Open House COGS 10.00 to 12.00
- 9 SJCC Mass 9.30 COGS - Holy Communion and Children's Church - 10.00 BGBC - Service - 10.30
- **10** BGVH u3a meeting 2.00 BG Parish Council Bowls Club 7.30
- **11** BG Library Scrabble Club 2.15 to 4.15
- **12** Sticky Fingers BGBC 10.00 to 11.15
- 13 SJCC 10.00 Mass followed by Adoration BG Lunch Club - BGVH - 10.00 to 1.00 BG Library - Coffee & Chat - 10.15 to 12.15
- 14 BG Lunch Club BGVH 10.00 to 1.00 BG Library - Baby Bounce and Rhyme Time - 10.15 to 10.45 Friday 2 Book Club - BG Library - 2.00 SJCC - Stations of the Cross - 6.00 Wrotham Historical Society - 7.45 - Wrotham Village Hall
- 15 Saturday Open House COGS 10.00 to 12.00
- 16 COGS Breakfast Church 9.00

SJCC - Mass - 9.30

**COGS - Holy Communion - 10.30** 

BGBC - Service - 10.30

- 17 Toddler Time COGS Annexe 10.00 to 12.00 Games, Tea and Chat COGS Annexe 2.00 to 4.00
- **18** BG Library Scrabble Club 2.15 to 4.15
- 19 COGS Film Afternoon 2.00
- SJCC 10.00 Mass followed by Adoration BG Lunch Club - BGVH - 10.00 to 1.00 BG Library - Coffee & Chat - 10.15 to 12.15



S, C, R, A, B, B, L, E,



- 21 BG Lunch Club BGVH 10.00 to 1.00
  BG Library Baby Bounce and Rhyme Time 10.15 to 10.45
  SJCC Stations of the Cross 6.00
- 22 Saturday Open House COGS 10.00 to 12.00
- 23 SJCC Mass 9.30 COGS Holy Comm
  - COGS Holy Communion and Children's Church 10.00
  - BGBC Service 10.30
  - COGS Tea-Time Church 4.30
- **25** BG Library Scrabble Club 2.15 to 4.15
- **26** Sticky Fingers BGBC 10.00 to 11.15
- SJCC 10.00 Mass followed by Adoration BG Lunch Club - BGVH - 10.00 to 1.00 BG Library - Coffee & Chat - 10.15 to 12.15
- 28 BG Lunch Club BGVH 10.00 to 1.00
  BG Library Baby Bounce and Rhyme Time 10.15 to 10.45
  SJCC Stations of the Cross 6.00
  BGVH BG&PP Rapunzel 7.30
- 29 Saturday Open House COGS 10.00 to 12.00 BGVH BG&PP Rapunzel 2.30 and 7.30
- 30 SJCC Mass 9.30 COGS - Holy Communion - 10.00 BGBC - Service - 10.30 BGVH - BG&PP Rapunzel - 3.00
- 31 Games, Tea and Chat COGS Annexe 2.00 to 4.00



#### **Abbreviations**

COGS Church of the Good Shepherd
BGBC Borough Green Baptist Church
SJCC St Joseph's Catholic Church
BGVH Borough Green Village Hall



## IGHTHAM & DISTRICT GARDENERS' CLUB SPRING SHOW

**Tuesday 1 April** Ightham Village Hall

Staging for Exhibitors from 6.00 -7.00pm Judging at 7.15pm

Doors open for viewing at 8.15pm

VISITORS WELCOME and ALL CLASSES OPEN to NON-MEMBERS (contact us for show schedule)

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#### **Borough Green Medical Practice Update**



#### Hospital Park and Ride

Park and ride is a more sustainable way for you to visit Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells hospitals. Using the park and ride service is simple and free:

- · Park your car at one of our free car parks (see locations below).
- · Jump on the bus to the hospital. Buses will run Monday to Friday, every half an hour from 6.40am to around 9pm, depending on the hospital. Find bus timetables to plan your journey through links below.
  - · Get the bus back to your car.

#### Maidstone Hospital

The post code for the park and ride site is ME16 OXP. This post code includes some residential streets, so drivers using sat nav should look out for the large car park behind the DFS store, just off Beaver Road.

Bus route and timetable:

www.arrivabus.co.uk/find-a-service/h1-london-road-park-and-ride-to-maidstone-hospital

#### **Tunbridge Wells Hospital**

The post code for the park and ride site is TN2 3UW. When using the Tunbridge Wells park and ride service from Knights Park, you will need to register your number plate on the tablet in the main reception at Tunbridge Wells Hospital on arrival.

Bus routes and timetable:

Knights Park to Tunbridge Wells Hospital

www.arrivabus.co.uk/find-a-service/h3-knights-park-to-tunbridge-wells-hospital 277 Tunbridge Wells to Tunbridge Wells Hospital

www.arrivabus.co.uk/find-a-service/277-tunbridge-wells-to-tunbridge-wells-hospital

The 277 service also stops at the Knights Park and ride site and this bus is free for patients and visitors getting on at the park and ride point.

Free parking at Maidstone Hospital and Tunbridge Wells Hospital will continue for a number of patient/visitor groups including blue badge holders, cancer and renal patients, and parents of babies in the Neonatal Unit.

**Practice activity** We recognise that there is more to be done to improve our phone answering and we are working to match staffing and phone traffic as well as making further changes to our phone system and line capacity. Our opening times are 08:00 to 18:30 and avoiding peak times would be much appreciated.

5504 booked appointments for phone and face to face with 1.5% did not attend 8476 incoming phone calls were recorded with an average wait time of 6 minutes.

**New Audiologist** My name is Danielle and I've recently joined the Borough Green team as an audiologist.

I grew up in South Africa and obtained my BA Hons in Speech Pathology and Audiology in 2013. I immigrated to the UK in 2021 and currently reside in Rochester, Kent with my husband and 2 little boys (Liam and Ethan).

While I have primarily worked in private practice, I look forward to the new challenges and fulfilment that comes with being part of the NHS.

My areas of interest include paediatric audiology and vestibular assessments.

I enjoy travelling, reading and spending time with my family!



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#### Tom Tugendhat MP's Column

We are all too familiar with how frustrating not being able to access phone signal and internet can be and the impact an inefficient and unreliable network service has across our local areas. So many people across our community share with me the problems they experience with getting a consistently good mobile phone service and reception across our community, despite our providers suggesting we should.

This affects every village I represent, including here in Borough Green. Particular issues I am aware of are heading down Thong Lane towards Basted Mill but I am sure there are other areas where we struggle for signal too.

I am currently speaking to all the main service providers but they want to know specific areas where the service needs to improve. So I need your help to improve our mobile phone reception here in Kent. The more you can share your experiences with me, the greater the impact we can have in having better coverage across the community. Better information enables us to speak with each provider about how they can prevent poor coverage, boost facilities and invest in infrastructure needed by our community.

I would be very grateful if you could let me know how you are affected and provide any details so that I can raise specific concerns with the mobile phone companies. Please visit my website to share your thoughts. You can do this at <a href="https://www.tomtugendhat.org/mobile-phone-survey">www.tomtugendhat.org/mobile-phone-survey</a>.

Alternatively, please send me an e-mail with your address, details of your service provider and any particular locations where you really struggle with getting a good mobile reception.

tom.tugendhat.mp@parliament.uk

#### **TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL - LOCAL PLAN TIMETABLE**

At the time of writing the Council's Housing and Planning Scrutiny Select Committee is due to consider papers relating to the preparation of a revised Local Plan at their meeting on 12 February. The papers are available on the Council's website via the Browse Meetings 2025 page.

Amongst the actions envisaged are:-

- i) a call for further sites exercise in February,
- ii) a Regulation 18 public consultation in the period October-December 2025 on what will amount to a draft Local Plan to provide an opportunity for communities and stakeholders to respond to a targeted consultation whilst the Plan is still in its formative stage and the Council is in a position to respond, and
- iii) a Regulation 19/20 public consultation on the "final" draft Local Plan in the period July-September 2026 but, with the Plan due to be submitted by 12 December 2026, it would not be subject to change at that stage unless any issues of soundness or legal compliance are identified.

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If you would like more information about any of our services, please call the team on 01732 870002 or email dementia@spadework.org.uk.

Tonbridge and Malling health walks are free, fun and friendly, perfect to help you get active, meet new people and improve mental health and wellbeing.

The Platt walk leaves from St Mary's Church steps at 10am on Mondays. To attend a walk just come along 10 minutes before the starting time of the walk (no booking necessary). Outdoor clothing and footwear is advisable. The walk (may include hills) lasts for 60-90 minutes. Refreshments are served in the Church afterwards.



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(Extracts from KCC press release issued on 16 January.)

Residents across Kent and Medway are being asked to help shape an exciting new strategy to end the decline of nature across the county and support its recovery.

The draft 'Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy' has been drawn up by the Making Space for Nature project team, which has worked with more than 1000 people over the past year to develop it to this stage. The draft strategy sets out the priorities for the recovery of nature in the county and the recommended actions to deliver this. It also proposes areas where the creation or improvement of habitats could take place, highlighting where the greatest benefits will be for nature. The strategy highlights the ambitions of helping habitats such as chalk grasslands, ancient woodland and coastal grazing marsh and mudflats, as well as identifying priority species that need assistance, like the Shrill Carder Bee, Barn Owl, Duke of Burgundy butterfly and Green-winged Orchid.

The public consultation is an opportunity for people to give their views on a collaborative strategy that will have a lasting legacy for future generations. Residents, organisations, businesses, farmers and landowners are being encouraged to take part in the consultation which is open to 12 March and can be found at <a href="https://www.kent.gov.uk/naturerecovery">www.kent.gov.uk/naturerecovery</a>.

Alongside the consultation, you can also vote on your favourite flagship species. The finalised list of flagship species will then be used to help rally support for nature recovery work in Kent.



#### **Beekeeping Course 2025**

Are you interested in taking up beekeeping? A local beekeeping course is the ideal way to find out if it's really for you and to get started. The Laddingford and District 2025 course runs for six Saturday morning sessions, starting on 15 March (and excluding Easter). The cost is £105.

You'll learn about the life cycle of bees, basic beekeeping techniques and the essential equipment to get started. Even if you decide not to take up the hobby, we guarantee you'll find it fascinating. This initial course is theoretical so you won't have to handle bees or buy a suit.

The course fee includes club membership until September so, after the course, you can attend our weekend apiary sessions and get hands on experience with the guidance of our experienced apiary managers. For more information or to book a place, contact chair@laddingfordbeekeepers.co.uk

Caroline Field Laddingford and District Beekeepers Association

## **SMALL NOTICES**



Slimming World Group on Wednesdays

8.00am, 9.30am, 5.30pm and 7pm at Borough Green Village Hall.

Phone Anita on 07725 484 361



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**Potters Mede** 

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Potters Mede

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b) When premises are open

The Medical Centre

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#### **BOROUGH GREEN LIBRARY**

The library is open - with a wide range of services, from free access to books, computers, WiFi and information on the hire of music, audio books and films.

Opening hours are

10 - 1 and 2 - 5 on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and 9 - 1 on Saturday.

Events for which no booking is required see diary section

Ancestry - Monday 10.15 - 12.15 need to book an appointment

For more advice please call the library on 03000 413 131 or email boroughgreenlibrary@kent.gov.uk where staff will be able to help.

#### We look forward to seeing you.

DIGITAL is working to improve digital inclusion and capabilities. The next events are on Fridays 7 March and 4 April at 11.00 - 1.00. To book a session and find out more please visit www.digitalkent.uk or call 0300 0410950.

The next clinic for sound support for deaf and hard of hearing people is on **Friday 28 March** 2.30 to 3.30.



No appointment needed. Drop in and wait your turn.



Heart of Kent Hospice is hosting a free monthly drop-in for all children and families under our care and those living with a life limiting illness in Kent. We focus on fun activities for children and young people such as crafts

and games, with snacks and drinks provided. There is no need to book, but if you have any questions please contact our Family Support Team at fst@hokh.co.uk or call 01622 792200.

These sessions are all about everyone making special memories and having fun together in a comfortable and safe environment. The groups also encourage and support families (including children) by helping them to have honest conversations about what they will be facing together in the future.

The sessions take place once a month on a Saturday (10 to 12) at Heart of Kent Hospice, Preston Hall, Aylesford, Kent, ME20 7PU. The one in March is on  $22^{nd}$ .

Heart of Kent Hospice Charity Shop in Borough Green High Street

The opening hours are from 9.00-4.00 Monday to Friday and 9.00-1.00 on Saturday.

#### Tonbridge and Malling Ramblers

Tonbridge and Malling Ramblers

You don't have to be a Ramblers member to try up to three contridge & Malling 'taster' walks with us. If you're new to our walks, please contact the walk leader to check that their walk will suit you. For details of these and other upcoming walks and walk leaders see our Facebook page at



Ramblers

www.facebook.com/groups/tonbridgeandmallingramblers or visit www.tonbridgeandmallingramblers.org.uk.

March	Route	Distance in miles
Sunday 2nd	Leisurely mainly flat circular walk on tracks around the fishing lake in Haysden Country Park, then over grassy paths to Haysden Water and on good tracks along the Eden Valley path. There is a short road stretch and the return is through fields (can be muddy).	4.8
Thursday 6th	Horsmonden Iron Industry leisurely circular walk taking in part of the High Weald Landscape Trail. Includes woodland, meadows, orchards, lakes, parkland, the National Trust grounds of Sprivers and some quiet lanes. This area was once known for its armaments industry.	5.5
Sunday 9th	Walk through British history in North America starting from Dryhill Nature Park and passing through the estate of Montreal Park. Fields, views and not too much mud! Moderate difficulty.	5.5
Thursday 13th	A leisurely walk following the River Medway from Tudeley. Mostly flat and without stiles. The first half of the walk is across open fields and then along the Medway towpath. The return from Tonbridge is along quiet lanes and through orchards.	5.7
Sunday 16th	A gentle walk from Chiddingstone Causeway to Bough Beech with a break near the reservoir for a spot of birdwatching. Moderate difficulty.	6
Thursday 27th	Circular walk from Birling across fields and footpaths with a gentle ascent to the Pilgrims Way. Return across open fields. Good views; moderate difficulty; couple of stiles.	5.5

Walks usually start mid-morning. There's a short half-way break (bring refreshments) and we usually finish near a pub. Most walks are dog-friendly (see website).



#### **Wrotham Historical Society** 14 March

Bover on the Hover a talk by Captain Laverick-Smith 7.45pm Wrotham Village Hall All visitors welcome - £5

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