



THE VOICE

April 2024



**A COMMUNITY MAGAZINE FOR BOROUGH GREEN
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You having a laugh...?

As often happens, this year Easter Sunday (31st March) comes close to April Fool's Day. In the 1600s there was a theory, particularly popular in German churches, that Easter was God's April Fool trick on the devil. The devil thought he'd won when Jesus died but, fooled you, He is alive!

Those closest to Jesus, when they heard that He had risen, struggled to believe it. But if they thought someone was trying to play a joke on them, then it would have been a very cruel joke. Jesus had died a painful death at the hands of a regime that was very good at killing people. And even before His execution he'd been brutally whipped. And now people are saying He's alive? Are you having a laugh? That's not funny!!

Many of them had to encounter Jesus, meet with Him, eat, talk and spend time with the risen Lord before they could grasp the reality of what had happened. And even when they did meet Him, it often took a while to understand it was real, no joke. Since then many millions have also met with the risen Jesus in some way and through those encounters have believed. Equally there have been millions who would not claim to have met Jesus and yet still believe. They believe the unbelievable; that Jesus did die, taking our sin to the cross, and that He has risen bringing us new life.

As unbelievable as the resurrection might seem, perhaps even more unbelievable is what it means. It means that this earthly life is not the end; there is something more. It means that we don't need to chase after the things that this world values so much, that this world says we need for our protection; for God holds us in His hand, keeps us safe and provides all we need. It means we do not need to be afraid, for eternal life in the love of God's kingdom begins now and, as the Bible tells us, "Perfect love drives out fear".

Perhaps you've previously fallen for an April Fool. Maybe not spotted the salt in place of sugar, sat on a Whoopee cushion or believed that spaghetti grows on trees. But don't fall for the one of the world's oldest (yet unfunniest) jokes that says Jesus has not risen and you should put your trust in the things the world offers. Instead ask for the reality of the resurrection to be made known to you so you may experience the joy (and perhaps laughter) of God's kingdom today.

God bless
Revd. Chris



Tea Time Church

Church of the Good Shepherd

4:30 pm
Sunday 28 April

A chance to share some food, some fellowship and some faith on a Sunday afternoon. Sing some favourite hymns, meet with others and there's even jelly!

**C
I
N
E
M
A**

Please check the Church noticeboard for this month's presentation



3rd Wednesday of the month

It's FREE!

The Church of the Good Shepherd
Quarry Hill Road, BG TN15 8RF

TODDLER TIME

1st and 3rd
Monday of
Month
in term time



April 15th
May 20th
June
3rd, 17th
July
1st, 15th

Play and socialising for pre school children and their grown ups

10am till 12 noon in the Annex of
The Church Of The Good Shepherd
Quarry Hill Road, Borough Green, TN15 8RF
linda.bryce56@gmail.com

No charge, just a donation for tea and coffee please



A reminder of the timing of services on Good Friday and Easter Sunday is in the diary section at page 16.

FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS
FUNERAL
Pauline Hall

We offer our condolences to all those recently bereaved.



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



Church of the Good Shepherd Foodbank

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



Donations of non-perishable goods may be left at the Church of the Good Shepherd at any time during the day (the Church is usually open 10am - 5pm each day).

For any enquiries regarding our Foodbank please contact

Ian Simpson on **07801 135 460** or

foodbank.cogs@gmail.com

Thank you

Saturday Open House

Fancy a cuppa, cake and some conversation?

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Church of the Good Shepherd



The Church of the Good Shepherd

COGS website www.cogsonline.co.uk

Facebook - [COGSBG](https://www.facebook.com/COGSBG)

Email - vicar.cogs@gmail.com

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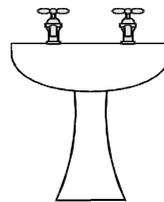
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Notes from Borough Green Parish Council



ESTABLISHED
APRIL 1934

The Council met at 7.30pm Monday 11th March 2024.

Matters discussed and reports received included:

- **The Voice Magazine** is a hugely important source of local news and information and, as you see here, the Parish Council has used it for many years to keep residents up to date. It began as a purely Church of the Good Shepherd newsletter but over the years more and more of the content is "secular". COGS have also done wonders with what was a simply photocopied monochrome newsletter to what you see today - a glossy, informative and well illustrated village magazine. But until now the considerable cost has been borne solely by the Church (and their advertisers) and the Parish Council have decided that a community magazine warrants financial support from the community it serves. We are grateful to COGS for carrying this financial burden for so long and will monitor the effect of this grant to ensure it is sufficient to carry the Voice with us into the future.
- **Voice Volunteers.** This is an appropriate point to mention the small group of volunteers who month after month collate and edit the magazine, sort and distribute it to 1950 homes and businesses - THANK YOU ALL VERY MUCH.
- **Solar Project.** The Parish Council has taken the next step towards solar power for Potters Mede, the bowls club and the village hall by earmarking specific funds, obtaining quotes and beginning the grant application process. It is hoped that this clear demonstration of local people tackling climate change whilst Governments and big business dither and delay can be used as a lever as the TMBC Local Plan develops, to try and ensure developers are required to include climate change mitigation and sustainable building, otherwise the UK is just building more problems.
- **Public Toilets.** The repairs to the arson damage were completed on 16 February, followed up by a deep clean on the 23rd, and the toilets reopened to the public. Over the next few weeks we will be upgrading the lighting and heating making the toilets much brighter and welcoming. We also intend to move the door for the Ladies to the front of the building as it is hidden around a quite dark and dismal corner at the moment. When new CCTV is installed at the village hall, the Council will obtain improved coverage of the toilets.
- **The Recreation Ground.** The stream has run along this path for centuries and, like all natural watercourses, it meanders. In years past we have allowed this natural process to continue but, over the very wet winter, these meanders are getting very close to the perimeter path. So in the coming months the groundsmen will be installing concrete planks to reinforce the banks and digging out the past buildups of silt. We don't want to lose the character of the stream but we do want to keep the rest of the recreation ground protected from this natural process.

(Continued on page 9)

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- **Charitable Donations.** The Clerk, with Barry and Rob, have continued their winter task of collecting unwanted furniture and the like from other large users, finding and delivering to buyers, and their final total this year has been £2500, disbursed in £50 gifts to registered charities across the country and indeed the world, including Ukraine and Gaza. During bad weather it gives them something to do when it is too wet to garden and the only cost to us is the charging cost for the van. It is also a hugely satisfying task for them and I am sure you will join me (and the grateful recipients) in thanking them for their hard work.
- **D-DAY 80 years 6th June.** Plans are in hand for a community celebration on that Thursday, that will involve an extended lunch party for the elderly in the village hall and a gathering in the evening in the Rec to watch a pipe band, have a bite and a drink from "Sizzles" catering outfit and a beacon lighting at 9.15pm. A group of parishes are trying to arrange a historic flypast. If anyone has other ideas to add please contact Cllrs Sue Butterfill or Sam Thrush.
- **MOTO.** The planning application for a 200 HGV truckstop and services at Nepicar roundabout came before Area 2 Planning Committee and was rejected on the grounds of harm to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Greenbelt. This will undoubtedly go to appeal but Wrotham, Platt and Borough Green PCs will have their own planning team at any Inquiry.
- **Council Vacancy.** There is still a vacancy on the Parish Council,  apply to the Clerk as below.
- **58 & 70 Shopper Buses** The two services are still well used and we are still exploring grant aid for next year as the lead parish for 12 other parishes. However, in the event we are unsuccessful in obtaining grants, all the parish councils have agreed to fund it out of their budgets, so the service will definitely continue.
- Whilst you are all undoubtedly looking forward to Easter and the associated holidays, the first week of April is "Borough Green Week" commemorating our inauguration in April 1934 as an individual parish in its own right. It is the 90th Anniversary of a parish born from the "offcuts" of our larger neighbours and, what was once the tiny neighbour of Wrotham, Ightham, Plaxtol and St Mary's Platt, is now the largest of the parishes and the hub village to them all.

The **next** Parish Council meeting will be held at **7.30pm** on **Monday 8 April 2024 at BG Village Hall**. The agenda will include a period for public contributions and questions.

Council Contacts

Chairman mike.taylor@boroughgreen.gov.uk 01732 882880

Clerk clerk@boroughgreen.gov.uk 07568 536405

Full minutes are posted at [MINUTES | mysite \(boroughgreen.gov.uk\)](#)



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THE VOICE : 25TH ANNIVERSARY

TWO THOUSAND A MONTH

This is the 25th anniversary of the magazine in this format. Before April 1999 the Church of the Good Shepherd had a small circulation church magazine that then became a community publication delivered to every home and business in the village.

Over the years there have been changes in production methods – from being photocopied at the church and collated by up to 20 people, to using commercial printers and eventually to full colour. What has not changed is that everyone involved, including those who deliver the magazine around the village, does so on an unpaid voluntary basis. With the increasing number of houses in the village the circulation of the Voice, including to churches in neighbouring villages etc, necessitates a print run of 2000 copies.

The magazine is only viable due to the sponsorship of our advertisers whose patronage is greatly appreciated.

We hope that the Voice still has a part to play in village life.

Voice Editorial Committee

FROM THE ARCHIVES

The following is an extract from Canon Tony Powell's letter in the April 2009 edition of the Voice marking the 10th anniversary and that which was at the time his 26th year of writing for the church magazine (so a similar number to what we are celebrating currently).

“FIVE HUNDRED A MONTH

This is the 10th year of the magazine in this format, and we are indebted to all who give their **voluntary** time and effort to have made this happen. But before THE VOICE we had a small circulation church magazine, so I've been writing these monthly letter-things for 26 years. Which is: approx. 300 letters at 500 words = 150,000 words. That's more words than The New Testament 138,020 and Shakespeare's Hamlet 29,492 (isn't Google a wonderful thing!). Although I will be the first to admit that The New Testament and Hamlet have had a little more influence.

In fact of these thousands of words, only very occasionally have I received a little encouragement and a little criticism. And in 26 years I have only caused 2 real upsets: once when I reflected upon immigration and I received an anonymous outburst of racial hatred from someone in London!: and secondly when I mentioned the increase in dogs' mess and received a good community response. Albeit a divided community, where half the comments said it needed to be said and the other half calling me a dog-hater.

It is a sobering thought that as every month I have tried to condense a sense of God & Co in to 500 words per month, the thing that stirs people is dogs' mess. But I won't be beaten....”

Election for Kent Police and Crime Commissioner: 2 May

The main deadlines leading up to this election are :-

16 April receiving applications for registration

17 April receiving applications for postal votes

24 April receiving applications for Voter Authority Certificates

Photo ID is needed to vote at a polling station. For those who do not have suitable photo ID applications can be made for a Voter Authority Certificate.

For more information contact the voting and elections team at TMBC.

www.tmbc.gov.uk/voting-elections

01732 876022

voting@tmbc.gov.uk



In the light of this election, and in keeping with our longstanding practice, there will be no items in the May Voice regarded as party political.

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 £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 magazine is also available to read on the COGS, BG Community and Parish Council websites.

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.



As a new initiative we are asking shopkeepers in the village if they would like to write (at no charge) about the services they offer and/or any community projects they take part in. We look forward to hearing from them.

The deadline for articles for the next magazine will be **Tuesday 16 April** and these should be sent to the address below. The next magazine will cover May 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

01732 883978

Margaret Jeffery
7 Lendon Road
Borough Green
TN15 8SE

Borough Green & Wrotham u3a

Meetings are held every second Monday of the month at 2pm in Borough Green village hall.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

8 April	“Tools with a Mission for Africa”
13 May	“Missionary Ships around the World”
10 June	“Folly Wildlife Rescue”

The February Fun Quiz proved a huge success. Feedback from members was very positive and encouraging. We will endeavour to repeat before the end of the year. As previously mentioned, we would welcome any suggestions from you as to what you would like from your u3a.

We still have a long list of groups awaiting a contact person to notify their group of date, time and venue. If you feel you could help us get more groups off the ground please contact lorrainegroupsliaisonbgwu3a@gmail.com.

Membership all ages are welcome- please contact Irene Gudrups on membershipsec.bgwu3a@gmail.com

Annual fee £20. Non-members guest fee £3.

We look forward to seeing you on 8 April and if you have any unwanted DIY tools, please arrange with David Heren after the meeting regarding collection. Thank you.

Best wishes Christine Ward V.Chair



**A Christian Charity
sending tools across
the world to help
people out of poverty.**

Have you got any tools, sewing machines, knitting machines or computers you no longer use?

Would you consider donating them to charity?

A drop-off point for TWAM will be open at Borough Green Baptist Chapel on Saturday 13 and 20 April from 10.00am to 1.00pm

All donations are greatly appreciated.

If you want more details about Tools with a Mission, please look at our website at: www.twam.uk

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Thursday 30th May 2024

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**Kent Fire &
Rescue Service**

BOROUGH GREEN FIRE STATION CHARITY CAR WASH



Borough Green fire fighters will be holding a car wash event at the fire station in Western Road on **Saturday 20 April** in aid of The Fire Fighters Charity. Drive over between 10am and 2pm to have your car washed by crews in exchange for a donation. Cash donations will be accepted.

To help the event run as smoothly as possible, please:

- Remain in your car
- Stick to the 5mph speed limit for all vehicles
- Once on-site, your vehicle engine will need to be switched off, with the handbrake put on, ready for your car wash



**The
Fire Fighters
Charity**

For more information about the Fire Fighters Charity (including other ways to donate) go to www.firefighterscharity.org.uk



Borough Green Lunch Club - Greensleeves

The club runs from 10.00 until 1.00 on both Thursday and Friday in the Village Hall, providing friendship, fun and food. We are able to provide transport if mobility is a problem. For further information contact Pauline on 01622 815647 or 07503 156 713.

The Walk4 Wellbeing leaves from St Mary's Church steps, Platt, at 10am on Mondays.

The walk is about 75 minutes through the woods and along local footpaths with occasional sections on roads, and refreshments are served in the Church afterwards.



Events in the Village for the month of April

March

- 29 Good Friday**
COGS - Family Worship - 10.00
 BGBC - Service - 10.30
COGS - The Final Hour - 2.00
 SJCC - Solemn Liturgy - 3.00
- 30 Saturday Open House - COGS - 10.00 to 12.00**
- 31 Easter Sunday**
COGS - First Light Service - 8.30
COGS - Breakfast Church - 9.00
 SJCC - Mass - 9.30
COGS - Holy Communion for Easter Day - 10.30
 BGBC - Service - 10.30



April

- 2 Messy Play - BGVH - 9.45 to 10.45**
 BG Library - Scrabble Club - 2.15 to 4.15
- 4 SJCC - Mass - 10.00**
 BG Lunch Club Greensleeves - BGVH - 10.00 to 1.00
 BG Library - Coffee & Chat - 10.15 to 12.15
- 5 BG Lunch Club Greensleeves - BGVH - 10.00 to 1.00**
 BG Library - Baby Bounce and Rhyme Time - 10.15 to 10.45
- 6 Saturday Open House - COGS - 10.00 to 12.00**
- 7 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
- 8 BGVH - u3a meeting - 2.00**
 BG Parish Council - BGVH - 7.30
- 9 Messy Play - BGVH - 9.45 to 10.45**
 BG Library - Scrabble Club - 2.15 to 4.15
- 10 Sticky Fingers - BGBC - 10.00 to 11.15**
 BGBC - Women's Fellowship - 2.00 - Do you remember?
- 11 SJCC - Mass - 10.00**
 BG Lunch Club Greensleeves - BGVH - 10.00 to 1.00
 BG Library - Coffee & Chat - 10.15 to 12.15
- 12 BG Lunch Club Greensleeves - 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
 Wrotham Historical Society - 8.00 - Wrotham Village Hall
- 13 Saturday Open House - COGS - 10.00 to 12.00**
 BGBC - Tools with a Mission drop-off point 10.00 - 1.00
- 14 SJCC - Mass - 9.30**
COGS - Holy Communion and Children's Church - 10.00
 BGBC - Service - 10.30



- 15 Toddler Time - COGS Annexe - 10.00 to 12.00**
Games, Tea and Chat - COGS Annexe - 2.00 to 4.00
- 16** Messy Play - BGVH - 9.45 to 10.45
 BG Library - Scrabble Club - 2.15 to 4.15
- 17 COGS - Film Afternoon - 2.00**
 Potters Mede - Youth Club - 3.00 to 5.00
- 18** SJCC - Mass - 10.00
 BG Lunch Club Greensleeves - BGVH - 10.00 to 1.00
 BG Library - Coffee & Chat - 10.15 to 12.15
- 19** Potters Tots Playgroup - Potters Mede - 9.30 to 11.00
 BG Lunch Club Greensleeves - BGVH - 10.00 to 1.00
 BG Library - Baby Bounce and Rhyme Time - 10.15 to 10.45
- 20 Saturday Open House - COGS - 10.00 to 12.00**
 Fire Station Charity Car Wash - 10.00 to 2.00
 BGBC -Tools with a Mission drop-off point 10.00 - 1.00
- 21 COGS - Breakfast Church - 9.00**
 SJCC - Mass - 9.30
COGS - Holy Communion - 10.30
 BGBC - Service - 10.30
- 23** Messy Play - BGVH - 9.45 to 10.45
 BG Library - Scrabble Club - 2.15 to 4.15
 Ightham and District Gardeners Club - Ightham Village Hall - 7.15
- 24** Sticky Fingers - BGBC - 10.00 to 11.15
 BGBC - Women's Fellowship - 2.00 - "The life of ..."
 Potters Mede - Youth Club - 3.00 to 5.00
- 25** SJCC - Mass - 10.00
 BG Lunch Club Greensleeves - BGVH - 10.00 to 1.00
 BG Library - Coffee & Chat - 10.15 to 12.15
- 26** Potters Tots Playgroup - Potters Mede - 9.30 to 11.00
 BG Lunch Club Greensleeves - BGVH - 10.00 to 1.00
 BG Library - Baby Bounce and Rhyme Time - 10.15 to 10.45
- 27 Saturday Open House - COGS - 10.00 to 12.00**
- 28** SJCC - Mass - 9.30
COGS - Holy Communion and Children's Church - 10.00
 BGBC - Service - 10.30
COGS - Tea-Time Church - 4.30
- 29 Games, Tea and Chat - COGS Annexe - 2.00 to 4.00**
- 30** Messy Play - BGVH - 9.45 to 10.45
 BG Library - Scrabble Club - 2.15 to 4.15



Abbreviations

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

Borough Green Medical Practice

This is produced for the benefit of all patients on behalf of the surgery for sharing information and updates on a regular basis.



Receptionists

Our receptionists are a vital part of the practice. We are fortunate at Borough Green to have such a wonderful reception team. They are fully trained to ensure you get the most appropriate medical care from the most appropriate health professional. They are bound by strict rules regarding confidentiality. They field an enormous number of calls every day and deal with referrals, test results and appointment scheduling but sadly they are often the recipients of verbal abuse and hostility from patients. Please treat our wonderful team with the respect they deserve. Of course being in a queue for your call to be answered is enormously frustrating. The team know this and do try to get to you as quickly as they can. And be assured that any test results they give you will have been screened by your GP prior to them being put on your record. We do ask for your support and patience.

Patients entitled to use the Surgery Pharmacy

There are frequent requests from patients living within 1 mile (1.6km) of the surgery to use the onsite pharmacy. This is not a decision made by the practice but a Government requirement as stated below:

Regulations under the Health Act 2009: Market entry by means of Pharmaceutical Needs Assessments Information for Primary Care Trusts Chapter 15

A patient may at any time request in writing that a doctor provides them with pharmaceutical services. However, the patient must meet one or more of the three conditions set out in regulation 48(2) to (4) and they must be on the doctor's patient list, or the patient list of the practice at which the doctor provides or performs primary care.

An example of this is where under regulation 50(2) the PCT postpones the termination of arrangements for the provision of pharmaceutical services for a period of time following the opening of a pharmacy in a controlled locality. In this instance, it is only the dispensing doctors with patients living within 1.6 km of those premises that are affected, and only for a certain period.

The Patient Participation Group

We are a committed group of people, patients, staff and members of the community, who work collectively to form the Patient Participation Group. We give our time voluntarily to support the partners and practice manager in the effective running of the practice. Our energies are focused on maintaining and building upon the collaborative and community focused spirit, which exists within the practice, and the desire which the practice staff have to offer the best primary healthcare service possible to their patients and our diverse community.

Getting Your View

The group would like to contact patients on occasion by email and/or text so that they can obtain the views of the widest group of patients possible. We would like to obtain your email address and mobile phone number to do this.

A message from The Secret Garden



As many of you may know, we are retiring at the end of March (well Russell is, Annette is going to be carrying on with her other job) so we thought that we'd better say a few words.

It's been an absolute pleasure to have been part of the village for the past thirteen years and we cannot thank everyone enough for all the custom, support and friendship that we have been so grateful to receive. We have been lucky to meet so many lovely people and their families and had a great deal of fun along the way. Thankfully the business managed to survive the pandemic while so many businesses, both small and large, were sadly not so fortunate. We have the support of this fantastic community to thank for keeping us going both during and after.

Unfortunately our retirement also means that The Secret Garden will not be carrying on. The building is in the process of being sold and the new owners will be carrying out a complete refurbishment. There will be a shop in our location but we don't know what it will be. It is very sad because we would have loved for The Secret Garden to continue; we did have a buyer for the business last year but circumstances out of our control meant that the sale could not proceed.

It's not like us to be stuck for words but, on this occasion, there are not enough available to express our feelings. We shall miss The Secret Garden and all our lovely customers every day and we will endeavour to visit the village often – after all Borough Green has some great shops!

Thank you all for everything.

**With our kindest regards
Russell & Annette
The Secret Garden**



Wrotham

Following an exploratory meeting on 12 March, the decision has been taken to go ahead with the Wrotham Roses WI with meetings to be held on the second Tuesday of each month - 1 to 3pm at Wrotham village hall. The official opening will be on Tuesday 9 April.

Borough Green Medical Practice continued from page 18

Please complete the Patient Contact Form or email your details to bgmp.ppg@nhs.net to provide your consent for this or to express an interest in joining the group.

Call and Appointment Statistics

From 1 February to 29 February we had 7263 booked appointments and 1.4% (108) did not attend.

121 patients visited e-consult - 108 of these patients submitted an e-consult and 90 of these visits were people who had not used e-consult before.

12,249 inbound telephone calls representing over 600 calls per day.

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Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council items



Funding for community groups

Community and voluntary organisations can now apply for funding through TMBC's Community Development Grants scheme. Grants are available to organisations that provide a service to residents or help to improve the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of the borough. Grants of up to £5,000 are available and applications close on **1 May**. For more details go to www.tmbc.gov.uk/business/community-development-grant-scheme

Recycling Bring Sites ("Bottle Banks")

Further to last month's item TMBC has decided to remove the remaining strategic sites across the borough, including the one at Station Approach, Borough Green. This is in the light of kerbside recycling services for almost every household and evidence that the bottle banks are being abused by some businesses so that they can avoid paying commercial rates for waste collection. Signs will go up at each location ahead of their removal.

Textile, book and other charity collection points on land not owned by the council, such as supermarket car parks, may remain in operation at the discretion of the landowner.

2024-25 Budget

TMBC has approved a budget with their element of council tax increasing by 3% for a Band D home. The Council's medium term financial strategy is addressing a forecast funding gap of £1.7m over the next four years.

Local Plan

It is apparent from papers to be considered at the meeting of the Council's Housing and Planning Scrutiny Committee on 19 March that there will be some slippage from the previously published timetable (April/May 2024) for the Regulation 18b second stage public consultation. Proposals are to be put to the Committee in May/June 2024 with public consultation to follow.

Margaret and Richard Jeffery

Wrotham ARTS Festival
10-12 May 2024
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Sunday 11am to 4pm
St George's Church in the heart of Wrotham Village

The banner features a blue background with a string of colorful triangular bunting at the top. On the left and right sides, there are illustrations of a pink and a blue fountain pen. In the center, there is a stylized illustration of a church building with a tower and a steeple.



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Plan to secure Kent's future approved by councillors

(Extracts from press release issued on 19 February)



A budget which provides record levels of investment in adults social care, children's social care, and home to school transport for young people has today been approved by councillors at a meeting at County Hall.

However, the books have only been balanced by a range of measures which include a major review of frontline services and a council tax increase of nearly 5%. KCC has also had to fall back on vital reserves to present a balanced budget for 2024-25, which is something the authority is legally obliged to do.

The initial budget gap of almost £50m in the earlier draft budget, before the Chancellor's autumn budget and the final local government finance settlement, has been closed with a list of spending reductions and savings which include:

- **Planned spending changes** - such as reduced costs from renegotiated energy prices, stricter application of eligibility criteria for access to services, and reducing debt costs - **£19m**.
- **Savings and income** - additional dividends from our successful trading companies, increasing income from charges, and stronger contract negotiations with suppliers - **£11m**.
- **One-off measures** - including use of reserves to buy time to plan for longer term savings and using sale of assets to fund transformation programmes - **£20m**.

The one-off actions and use of reserves, particularly in the first year, will reduce the Council's ability to absorb any future financial shocks. There will also be a need to make recurring savings and cost reductions in the following two years, as these one-off measures in 2024-25 are not a sustainable solution to increased recurring costs.

Following today's vote on the overall budget plan for 2024/25, KCC will be identifying where public consultation may be required for the key saving proposals before any final decisions on implementation.

For more information on the budget visit:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/finance-and-budget/our-budget>

Millions in extra cash to fill Kent's pothole backlog

(Extracts from press release issued on 5 March)

KCC is getting ready to plough millions in extra cash into tackling road defects, helping to keep Kent moving. Additional funding from the Department of Transport worth £8.6 million will be spent between March and October this year. The financial boost is on top of about £50 million already pledged in KCC's own road and footway planned maintenance budget.

People are asked to continue to report potholes at

www.kent.gov.uk/potholes



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Measures introduced to improve Kent's environment

(Extract from press release issued on 20 February)



Kent County Council (KCC) has launched a Biodiversity Net Gain Site Register for Kent. This work will help to ensure that the creation and improvement of natural habitats as part of development plans is done in a way that delivers the greatest positive impact on wildlife. Known as Biodiversity Net Gain, developers will have to set out how they plan to leave the natural environment in a better state than it was beforehand.

Since 12 February all major developments, including where there are more than 10 residential houses, have now been required to deliver a 10% increase in biodiversity after development than was there before.

KCC is leading work with the county's district and borough councils and Medway Council to draw up guidance and resources to help planners guide developers. As part of this work, KCC commissioned Kent Wildlife Trust to develop an interactive register of sites in Kent and Medway where biodiversity net gain credits are available to purchase or where measures to enhance biodiversity, and establish gains, might be delivered. This register will support local planning authorities, developers and landowners to deliver against new national requirements for Biodiversity Net Gain.

Visit <https://www.makingspacefornaturekent.org.uk/bng/> to find out more.

What to do if you need care and support at home



Have you started to feel like you could do with a little extra help at home? If so, our free guide "Getting help at home" explains what help is available – and whether you might be entitled to financial support with paying for it. There's lots of support available to help you live safely and independently at home for longer. This guide gives an overview of what's on offer. It covers:

- getting a care needs assessment
- getting care and support at home
- home adaptations you could consider
- help with the cost of help at home.

It also lists lots of useful organisations that offer more specialised help and support if you need it. You can download a copy of the guide from

<http://www.ageuk.org.uk/information-advice/care/arranging-care/getting-help-at-home-information-guide> or for a printed version you can call our advice line on **0800 678 1602** or email us at orders@ageuk.co.uk – please include your full postal address and allow 10 days for delivery.



Wrotham Historical Society

Friday 12 April

8.00pm Wrotham Village Hall

All visitors welcome - £4

www.wrothamhistorical.org.uk

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Tom Tugendhat MP's Column

For many of us in Borough Green we use the facilities in Tonbridge as one of our nearest towns. It is a wonderful town with plenty of facilities and a High Street that continues to look well, despite the challenges of larger towns including Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells.

Sainsbury's store in Tonbridge is central to the town. You may have heard over the last few weeks that Sainsbury's have committed to renovating the former Beales site, next door to their current store. Their plans include developing a much larger store which will see an investment of up to £20 million into the town which I know so many of us travel to on a regular basis.

Due to scale of this investment its impact will no doubt be felt far and wide across our community. The re-development of the former Beales unit is something that I have been calling for ever since it was left empty, some four years ago. Last year I supported the '3 Years Empty Is Plenty' campaign which was backed by nearly 2,000 people and helped prompt Sainsbury's into taking action. Thank you to everyone across Borough Green who signed this.

The new development will take place over the next two years, with an intended opening date being around Christmas 2025. The new store will see improved ranges across groceries, homeware clothing and Argos and will also go a long way to improving the look of the largest town across Tonbridge and Malling. It will also help to create up to 50 new jobs in the local community and help to regenerate a key central location while installing important amenities such as 6 ultra-rapid electric charging points for electric cars. Sainsbury's also plan on the store being entirely net-zero.

If you would like to find out more about Sainsbury's plans please let me know using the contact details below and I would be pleased to send details to you.

As always, you can let me know what you think about this, or anything that may matter to you. You can get in touch with me via the information below.

tom.tugendhat.mp@parliament.uk
01732 441 563

130 Vale Road, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1SP



**Kent
Police**

Launch of Home Office campaign – Stop! Think Fraud

1 in 17 people were victims of fraud in the UK last year. Fraud costs the taxpayer an estimated £6.8 billion per year. The impact of fraud can be heart breaking as criminals do not just steal your money but steal your sense of security.

Stop! Think Fraud is the Home Office campaign to help you spot fraud and how to protect yourself and seek help if you need it.

The following will take you to an excellent site that will give you the knowledge and tools you need to stay ahead of scams.

<https://stopthinkfraud.campaign.gov.uk>

If you think that you may have been a victim of any type of scam, then contact your Bank immediately, which you can do by calling 159, and report it to Action Fraud at www.actionfraud.police.uk or call 0300 123 2040.

Steve Kelly
Kent Police Fraud Prevent and Protect Officer

SMALL NOTICES



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The Village Hall

Potters Mede

The Recreation Ground

The Fire Station

b) When premises are open

The Medical Centre

BG Primary School

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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.

Ancestry - Monday 10.15 - 12.15 need to book an appointment

Scrabble - Tuesday 2.15 - 4.15

Coffee & Chat - Thursday 10.15 - 12.15

Baby Bounce & Rhyme Time - Friday 10.15 - 10.45

Friday 2 Book Club (second Friday of each month) 2.00



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.

is working to improve digital inclusion and capabilities.



**DIGITAL
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Their next event is on Friday 5 April 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 26 April 2.00 - 3.30.



Heart of Kent Hospice Concert of Favourite Music

The Concert of Favourite Music, which will be performed in aid of Heart of Kent Hospice, is on **Sunday 27 April** at the Invicta Grammar School between 6 and 8pm. The concert will include music performed by local composer and pianist Simon Proctor with Heart of Kent Orchestra and conductor Derek Carden. Guest concert pianist Oliver Poole will also be returning for this year's event.

There are a limited number of tickets available so don't delay in purchasing tickets which are just £12 for adults and £4 for children. Group bookings of 10 or more can receive a 20% discount. Everyone attending can also purchase refreshments at the interval and take part in the exciting raffle to raise additional funds for the Hospice. There is accessible parking on site. For more information and booking go to www.hokh.org

Tonbridge and Malling Ramblers

You don't have to be a Ramblers member to try up to three '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 www.facebook.com/groups/tonbridgeandmallingeramblers or visit www.tonbridgeandmallingeramblers.org.uk.



Dates in April	Route	Distance in miles
Sunday 7th	Circular walk from Wateringbury along the Medway Valley then up over the hill past Roydon Hall and back down via Pizien Wells. Moderate difficulty.	6
Sunday 14th	Circular walk through parts of the Leeds Castle estate, across farmland and woodland paths through King's Wood and Broomfield. Return alongside the River Len, close to the moated Castle. Two stiles and short sections of wet mud are likely. Moderate difficulty.	5.5 or 2.5 (see website)
Thursday 18th	Circular walk up the North Downs from Kemsing. Moderate difficulty	5.5
Sunday 21st	Leisurely walk from Five Oak Green climbing gently up through hop fields and orchards to a ridge looking over a valley. After Spring Grove Farm we make our way back through more orchards at Amherst Bank. A lovely Spring walk.	5
Thursday 25th	Circular walk from Barming passing through Oakham Woods and the East Malling Horticultural Research Station. Return through fields and ancient woodland with some fine views of the Kent countryside. Mainly flat but there may be some mud. Moderate difficulty.	6
Sunday 28th	Circular walk from Plaxtol Spout. Moderate difficulty.	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).



Leeds Castle
14 April walk

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