THE LINK

February 2026







In this issue:

- tributes to Wendy Izod and John Green
- a regal pooch
- mooning around
- dovetailing perfectly
- the big screen

...and so much more

Parish magazine of Four Elms, Hever and Markbeech

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Welcome to the February Link

"Midwinter spring is its own season
Sempiternal though sodden towards sundown,
Suspended in time, between pole and tropic.
When the short day is brightest, with frost and fire,
The brief sun flames the ice, on pond and ditches,
In windless cold that is the heart's heat ....."
(From Little Gidding by T. S Eliot)

Whilst not being sure what Eliot means most of the time, I have always loved the music of these words and the idea of "midwinter spring". And, my goodness, didn't we have one in early January? Crisp days with frost as bright as blossom.... I was excited to find this dandelion glittering in the sun. By the end of February we will be heading for the true spring with an extra hour of daylight accumulated over the 28 days, the pace speeding up daily. Maybe I'm being a bit of an optimist as many people hate March, but things can only get better!! Hever Castle reopens on 11 February and you can start to enjoy its wonders, officially recognised by a fistful of "South and South East England in Bloom" awards - a gold for the umpteenth year running, Heritage Park/Garden of the year AND the chairman's award for the newly restored Church Gill which is apparently a horticulturalist's dream.

And it isn't only horticulturalists who should be celebrating - after decades of campaigning by the RSPB and other conservation organisations, the UK Government has announced new restrictions on lead ammunition. This will help prevent toxic lead from contaminating habitats and save tens of thousands of birds – including swans, ducks and birds of prey – from lead poisoning. And bees are happy too, neonicotinoid pesticides are deadly for pollinators – with a single teaspoon capable of killing an astonishing 1.25 billion bees. They've been banned since 2018, yet the UK Government repeatedly granted permission for farmers to use them on sugar beet crops.... until this year when a full ban has been sanctioned alongside a commitment to support farmers to switch to bee-friendly alternatives because sugar beet is an important food for many animals.

So enjoy the not-quite-spring, and this edition of the Link too we hope!

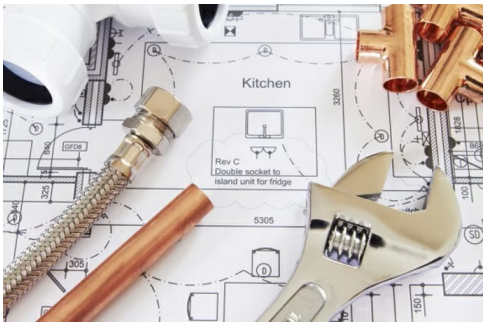
Joanna Wade
thelink@hever.org



THE LINK

what I do

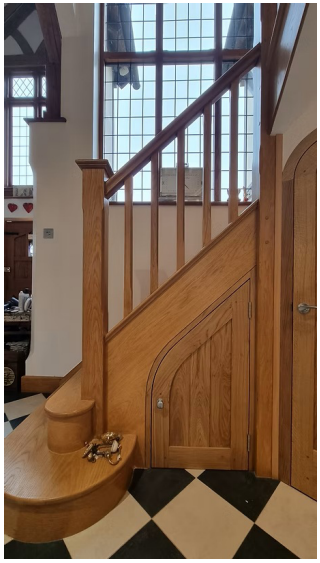
When I left Eden Valley School in 1985 (the secondary school in Edenbridge which closed in 2002), I found it difficult to get a carpentry apprenticeship so I ended up on a year's general building course at West Kent College. By the end, while I still loved working with wood I discovered I preferred joinery to carpentry as I really liked the challenge of designing projects, producing technical drawings, and then manufacturing the work from nothing but a piece of sawn timber.



Following this course, I was fortunate enough to finally get my apprenticeship with Causeway Joinery when Albert Ellis was the director. The company based in Chiddingstone Causeway at that time, opposite what was the old cricket ball factory. I really enjoyed learning my trade from Bert and the team there. The good thing about working for a company like ours is that we cover an extremely broad range of work. Your last job may have been sliding sash windows, your current job a bespoke staircase and your next job a bespoke kitchen or fitted wardrobe fitments. That is what really sets us apart from other companies. We are a one stop shop for all joinery or cabinetry needs, sometimes running through a complete renovation project with our customers, from upgrading their windows & doors to completing their vision of the interior fitments. I took over from Bert in 2000 when he retired and we now have a team of 5 Joiners, some of whom have now been with the company for more than 20 years.



With interiors, we use computer aided design software which enables us to sit with the customer and design their kitchen, bedroom or bathroom fitments from scratch, and then render it in high definition to really get a feel for the room, the cabinet design and the colours. It really is a wonderful feeling when you are standing there at the end of a project photographing it and comparing it back to the original concept renders. We



manufacture staircases, anything from floating staircases that incorporate steel structures within the design and glass handless balustrades to traditional staircases where we turn our own bespoke patterns to the spindles and newel posts. And then there are the bespoke windows & doors, which these days are factory finished either in a spray or hand applied finish, colour matched to any colour of the customer's choice.



Looking to the future, I hope that one of our apprentices would like to follow in my footsteps and take the company forwards through the next 50 years, adding their own twist on things. We are all immensely proud of the reputation that we have built over the years in our trade.

Paul Chapman
Causeway Joinery
01342 850170
www.causewayjoinery.co.uk

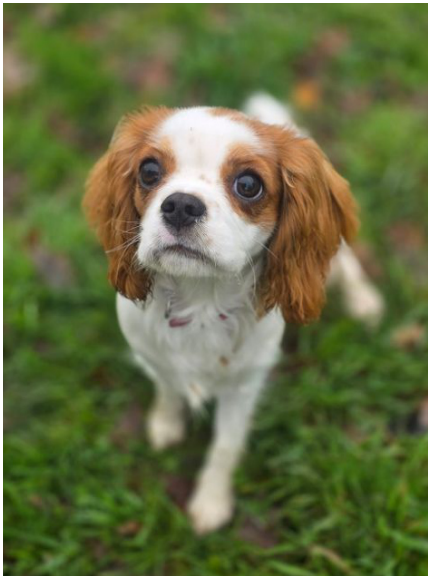
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Many thanks to all those who have standing orders or other arrangements in place to pay your sub in the course of the year. If you haven't, please pay now. We had to chase up lots of subs last year, please don't wait to be chased again. If you aren't sure of your position please contact Bridget, contact and payment details on page 21.

The annual sub is unchanged at a modest £5 for a hand delivered copy (£18 for postal subscribers). If you no longer want a paper copy you can read the Link online for free at www.hever.org BUT please let us know. Many thanks

pet of the month

Hello! My name is Austin and I am 8 years old. I want to tell you about my puppy Mabel. She is a Cavalier King Charles and she is 7 months old. She is very cute with big floppy ears, but she is also very cheeky. Mabel's favourite toy is her caterpillar, and her favourite thing to do is destroy it. The caterpillar used to look normal, but now it is very flat and missing bits. Mabel did that.





She loves to wrestle and play fight with our other dog, Dylan. They chase each other around the house and the garden and sometimes bump into things. Mabel thinks she always wins, even when she doesn't.



Mabel is brave with toys and dogs, but she is scared of our cat because the cat is bigger than her. When she sees the cat, she squeaks like a tiny mouse and runs away very fast. Mabel makes us laugh every day and gives really good cuddles. Dylan does too, and we love them both lots.

Wendy Izod - a tribute

Wendy Izod, who died on 21st December, was a much-loved and indefatigable presence in the parish which she served as a priest for many years. Wendy was born in 1947 near Warrington; her father was the accountant at RAF Padgate. The family moved south to RAF Medmenham in Buckinghamshire when she was 11. She remembered asking him "shall I be a physiotherapist?" and he recommending that she go into HR instead so Wendy wrote to Mars, a big local employer, who agreed to take her on as a trainee if she got a degree. Off she went to Sheffield where she studied politics under the famous Bernard Crick. The mid 60s were exciting times, there were noticeably fewer women students than men but she never felt a victim of discrimination, instead being happy about the opportunities which were opening up.



Wendy duly went back to Mars where part of the training was to work on the production line - and she soon became the Maltesers supervisor. She did so well that she was promoted to "special packs" until, in a race to get the largest weight of chocolate into the delivery area, her forklift driver Ron's equipment tangled in the sprinkler system and drowned the factory. After that she was sent off to the HR desk where, in one factory, her office was known as "the Wendy House." Then came Black & Decker in Maidenhead where she was "Personnel officer for women". In those days men and women were paid differently (guess who got paid less?) and very often worked in segregated roles. In Black & Decker the women worked only on the domestic appliances.

Wendy met her husband Andrew in London. He and a friend came to supper and she daringly served spaghetti bolognese after which love flourished and they married in October 1973. A few years later, they moved to Chittenden Cottages in Four Elms as Andrew had known the area from childhood. After their daughters Caroline and Elizabeth were born Wendy quickly went back to work, there was no maternity pay in those days! The family moved to Stick Hill in 1985. Wendy became actively engaged in the church at Four Elms after Caroline was born and she was soon confirmed. She then started helping with the Four Elms parish magazine, typing it on her kitchen table

on a cyclostyle stencil which Andrew then took to TopFoto to run off. She remembered their joy at the delivery of a long-armed stapler! When the Benefice united, the separate village magazines joined together and became The Link with Wendy as editor, a role she held for 14 years.

She was already a churchwarden and working full time when she started to train as a lay reader. She was licenced in 1994 and well remembered her terror before her giving first sermon and how her fellow warden said “look at me and I will smile at you” - which got her through. Wendy then trained part time for the ministry and was ordained deacon in 2000. These were early days for women priests who, from 1998, were permitted to be ordained, but only as deacons. She became a non-stipendiary priest in 2001 when the rules changed and was a proud part of the tradition of “worker priests” with a ministry at work as well as in the Benefice.

Andrew takes up the narrative: "Wendy served as curate to three Rectors of Hever and during three interregna, when she became the pastoral glue that held the benefice together. When the living became vacant in 2015, many in the parishes asked why Wendy couldn’t become Rector. She was more than capable of undertaking the role, but was restricted by the age at which clergy were expected to retire (70). Nevertheless, there was provision for the Bishop to appoint a priest to a full-time stipendiary role for three years and so Wendy became Priest-in-Charge of the Benefice of Hever, Four Elms and Markbeech in 2016. Parishioners became used to the sight of her popping about her parishes in her Popemobile (Fiat Panda Cross) tending her flock for its spiritual needs, be it baptismal, marital or funereal and more besides - school governor or fete opener!

She retired in November 2019 and was looking forward to travelling to New Zealand but in 2020 developed double vision which curtailed her driving and lasted for two and a half years until being corrected. This put paid to her post-retirement continuation training and may have been a precursor to PSP (Progressive Supranuclear Palsy) that was diagnosed over the course of 2023. Wendy had to endure the purgatory of this frightful condition for two years until she was finally released, to the great relief of herself and those about her who had witnessed her suffering. She will be best remembered as the smiling, laughing, hugely competent, compassionate and supportive woman of faith that she was."



village screen film club 2026



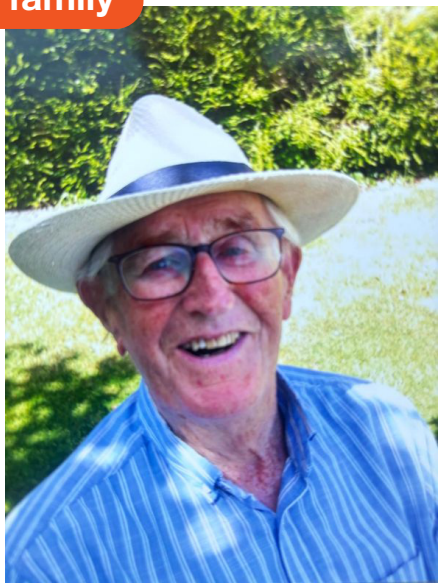
The film season continues at the usual venue, Hever Castle Golf Club.

Friday 13 February - Big Night
A 1996 classic rated 97% by the website "Rotten Tomatoes" stars Stanley Tucci as one of two Italian brothers, a chef and a businessman, who must do whatever it takes to impress a famous American-Italian singer and save their failing restaurant. One to make your mouth water!

The films (all less than two hours long) start at 7.30 and doors open at 6.30 for the pre-show meal and bar - with ice cream in the interval. Tickets are a suggested donation of £2 for the film or £16.00 to include the meal (the same price as last year) – cottage pie or baked potato with cheese and/or beans. You can book with Joanna Wade on 07958 919631 or heverbrocas@gmail.com or buy tickets at the door. However please pre-book your meal by the Wednesday before the show if you would like to eat and please bring cash if possible.



John Green - a tribute by his family



John, who died on 25th November 2025, was born in Twickenham in 1934 and grew up in Southport and then at Bushwood in Longfield, Kent. This upbringing was due to the fact that his father was a hydrographic surveyor and worked for the Port of London Authority. John was proud to be descended from a long line of seafarers and of his father's achievements in charge of a mine sweeper during the war. John was one of 4 children. He had an older sister Freda known as Bunty, and two brothers Peter and Falcon. He attended Gravesend Grammar School and particularly enjoyed his National Service at RAF Sapley in Hampshire.

John was always a hard worker and qualified as a Chartered Quantity Surveyor after time at Regent Street Polytechnic and on a correspondence course. He joined Smith & Ruddle in 1963 which became Baker Wilkins & Smith and he rose to be Senior Partner retiring in 2003.

Wendy was at school with John's brother Peter and she met John, who was a few years older, in Longfield. However, she had plans to travel. Wendy spent 3 years travelling around Canada and America and during this time she and John wrote letters to each other. Apparently, John really looked forward to receiving her letters. After she came back they started dating and they were married in 1966. They enjoyed dances at Hartley Country Club and sailing and playing tennis together. They converted some offices on the Hemsley family farm in Hartley to a bungalow where their sons Mark, Jason and Damian were able to spend the first few years of their lives playing with their Hemsley cousins.

In 1977 John and Wendy moved across the county to Buckhurst Farm, in Mark Beech just in time to enjoy the village party outside the Kentish Horse to celebrate the Queen's Silver Jubilee. John and Wendy threw themselves into village life and made lifelong friends. As treasurer of the Village Hall Committee John supported Robin Denison Pender as Chairman until he was persuaded to take over the role which he really enjoyed for many years. During this time work took John to Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Oman amongst other countries growing the Baker Wilkins & Smith business. He developed strong business relationships some of which lasted long into retirement.

Family life at Buckhurst Farm was busy and often noisy with friends and family welcomed with hearty food, wise advice

and a bed for the night when needed. John and Wendy spent a lot of time in the car with, at one point, one son at school in Tunbridge Wells, one in Tonbridge and one in Sevenoaks. John fitted some of these lifts into his daily commute to London and once the boys were driving had the occasional late-night trip to pull them or friends out of a ditch or a muddy field.



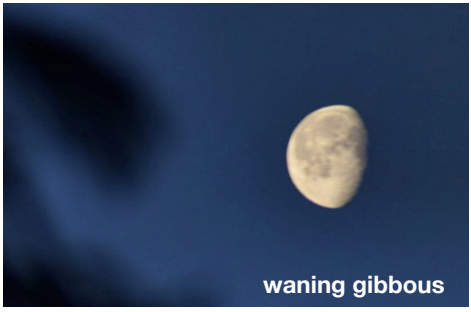
John and Wendy enjoyed family gatherings and entertaining and there were many dinner parties, Burns Nights and Conservative Party events. John was also a great one for making a speech! They also enjoyed playing golf together and played on some beautiful courses all over the world. They enjoyed welcoming and getting to know their daughters in law Celia, Georgina and Sophie and had a great relationship with their parents always finding something in common to chat about. When grandchildren came along John insisted on being called Grandpa Green and being photographed meeting them in his famous white Aran jumper! They have 11 grandchildren.

After 40 years of life in Mark Beech John and Wendy moved to Edenbridge where they continued to welcome friends and family.



mooning around

Full, half, crescent and harvest moons are phases we are all aware of. But who has heard of a gibbous moon, even though we get two every lunar month? When the moon is looking a bit raggedy we tend to ignore it….. But this phase has a name - a gibbous moon - a moon on the wax or the wane, half way up or down between a full and a half moon. The Latin "gibbus" means "hump" and in English the word is used to mean convex or protuberant. When you look at it, the shape is indeed a bit bulgy and it isn't nearly as clearly geometric as the other phases. I'm not sure it is the most exciting phase of the moon, and I don't think the romantic poets wrote about it, but according to the website "positiveprints.com": "Waxing gibbous birthdays are just shy of the full moon and its peak energy. Those born under this moon are likely nurturing, caring people who naturally guide others." Which is a nice thing to be.


waning gibbous


wolf moon

More celebrated is the wolf super moon – which we first enjoyed in early January – a breathtaking golden disc hanging in the sky and dazzling us all the way round to dawn. Super moons appear about three times a year and although of course the moon doesn't swell in size it appears 14% larger and 30% brighter than normal. This is because the moon is full just as it comes closest to the earth in its elliptical circuit – it is 360,000 kilometres away from us as opposed to 400,000.

The moon is called a wolf moon because it was believed that wolves howled more at this time – it was also believed that eruptions and other natural disasters happened, but both theories are untrue although we do get higher tides. At the distant end of the orbit we get a “micromoon” – keep looking up, keep wondering what you might see once in a blue moon….

Joanna Wade



the festive local tractor run





A seemingly endless conga of glittering tractors hit the road again at the end of December, who ever knew there were so many around? Starting in Markbeech, 136 parped and flashed their way around a circuit delighting onlookers with their inventive decorations and raising over £4,000 for the British Heart Foundation and Macmillan. Here are three of them: an angel, James and Jacob Tisdall's reindeer and a glittering Father Christmas by Jane Rosam.



Business directory

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Accommodation

Greyhound at Hever, Bed & Breakfast, restaurant for residents.		01732 862221

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Beauproperty	house design and building	01892 249000
Causeway Joinery	bespoke joinery for the public and trade	01342 850170
Eden Valley Builders	extensions, conversions and general building	07778431470
HJM Plumbing & Heating	general plumbing, heating and maintenance	07908854881
G Moss	joiner & builder	07778 440 644
Jem Pickard	painting and decorating	07850 371558 or 01732 863062
M & M Walker	painting & decorating, plumbing, heating	07774 218 684
Michael Beall	bespoke carpentry and joinery	07796 175140
Richard A Maslen	Fine furniture and bespoke joinery	07930 341415
W Smithers & Sons	listed building, conversions, extensions,	01342 850 559

Dog Training

Claire Cook, Positive Reinforcement Dog Trainer in Edenbridge		07818 070672

Education

Chiddingstone Nursery School for children 2-5 years		01892 871315
Jade Johnson language tuition in German, French & English online or in person		07761 287517

Fitness and Health

BDHL private & group health insurance and corporate wellbeing		01892 891900
Flexi Foot Care, Diane Fletcher - home visiting podiatrist/chiropodist		0790 3293533
Hever Castle Golf Club	golf course	01732 700771
Step by Step, Michelle Hogan, mobile foot care practice		07786 038149
Falconhurst Cricket Club	cricket and training sessions	07771 892762
Paul Marro Cognitive Hypnotherapy www.htherapy.co.uk		01732 808211
Realign, osteopathy and personal training www.realign-osteo.co.uk		07841 776591
Smart Nutrition and Fitness personal training for midlife women & beyond		0771 8588847
Tennis by Nature	kids tennis coaching by Gary Markham	07802 842554

Food - Catering and Restaurants

Gorard Dean Catering -	all events undertaken call Melanie Dean	07710 005 635
Greyhound at Hever, Restaurant with rooms, open to non-residents		01732 862221

Funeral Services and Burial Grounds

Alex Jones funeral directors & monumental masons	01732 860047
Eden Valley Woodland Burial Ground on the Kent/Surrey border	07802 630012

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APF Trees	tree surgery and garden maintenance	07786 884924
Hever Landscapes	for all your garden projects	01892 740133
French's Fencing	gates, automation, fencing supply & fitting	0779 5551436
SA Landscaping	landscaping, garden maintenance, fencing, driveways and more	01732 671146
Thompson Tree Care Ltd,	tree surgery, tree felling, hedge cutting	07747345815
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Daren Wood	chimney sweep, pots and cowls fitted	01959 564263
MOLE CATCHER, Peter King		Mob:07432 813614 or 01892 520287
Pegrum	boilers, heating, plumbing & oil tanks	01732 463256
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My IT Wizard Ltd	Computer problem solving	07779 285839
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news from four elms primary

As we begin a new term at Four Elms Primary School, we are delighted to celebrate the fantastic learning and experiences already taking place across our classes. It has been wonderful to welcome all the children back after the Christmas break and the enthusiasm they have shown for their new topics is truly inspiring.

Reception (Class 1) have started the term exploring People Who Help Us. They were thrilled to meet a local police officer and had great fun investigating the police car and equipment. This hands-on experience has sparked lots of curiosity and conversation about the important roles people play in keeping us safe.

Class 2 are diving into the fascinating history of The Great Fire of London, and their enthusiasm has been fantastic to see. The children have been busy building their own model houses and they are looking forward to a visit from a local firefighter, who will talk to them about home fire safety and explain how quickly a fire can spread using photos and age appropriate resources. He will deliver an engaging and informative session that helps bring their learning to life in a safe and meaningful way.

Class 3 are looking forward to learning all about electricity. They will be building circuits and discovering how electricity powers our world, combining practical skills with scientific understanding.

Class 4 are focusing on resources and developing their debating skills. Later this term, they will host their own mini COP-29 across the Trust, giving them a real insight into global discussions on sustainability and climate action.

We are also thrilled that our Young Voices Choir will be heading to the O2 next week! This is such an exciting opportunity for our children to perform on a world-class stage and be part of an unforgettable musical experience. It's clear that this term is packed with creativity, curiosity, and opportunities for growth. Thank you to our dedicated staff and supportive families for making these experiences possible - we can't wait to share more highlights as the term unfolds.

Anna Cheddie
Co-Head of School



Hever Parish Council

Your Hever Parish Council
PROUDLY REPRESENTING HEVER, MARKBEECH & FOUR ELMS
Any questions? Please contact clerk@hever.org

With this being the first edition of 2026, on behalf of Hever Parish Council, I would like to wish you all a Happy New Year. Mick and the team at Willerby Landscapes very kindly donated the Four Elms Christmas tree again this year, decorated and kept the lights shining to be enjoyed by all. Huge thanks go to them and their generosity is much appreciated. With this colder weather, there are places locals can visit for some company in a warm space. These include Bridges in Edenbridge High Street https://www.bridgescentre.org telephone 01732 864224 and Stones https://www.facebook.com/groups/884696403256962/ who are located at the front of Edenbridge Leisure Centre. Don't forget the Hever Parish Lunches that are run on a monthly basis too. The Four Elms Pond had a tidy recently by volunteers and continues to be looked after by Edenbridge Angling Club and is looking in a healthy state.

Just a reminder of some convenient contacts to report issues to is below. This will ensure issues are logged with the appropriate parties and, where appropriate, for action to be taken to resolve them. **For potholes, street light faults, drainage, traffic signal faults, damage to bus stops (for example poles or timetables), overgrown vegetation (including hedges and grass)**, and information about roadworks report via the online reporting tool: https://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-or-track-a-problem-on-the-road-or-pavement Or call 03000 41 81 81 **For rubbish and recycling**: https://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/info/20000/rubbish_and_recycling **Footpath info and issues**: https://www.kent.gov.uk/environment-waste-and-planning/public-rights-of-way **To report a crime or suspicious activity**: https://www.kent.police.uk/contact/af/contact-us-beta/contact-us/report-crime-incident-suspicion/ or call 999 in an emergency

We are currently progressing plans to improve the Four Elms play area. We are working with several suppliers to look into options for new equipment for the younger children and hope to have an update on this soon.

Should you wish to speak to your Parish Councillors about a matter you would like to raise, their contact details can be found on the website http://hever.org/members We have a Hever Parish Announcement group on WhatsApp. Please do join it to be kept informed of local announcements. This group only provides information so you will not be overloaded with comments on there! To join the QR code is:

Finally, please note the March meeting has changed and will be held on Tuesday 24th March in Four Elms Village Hall.

Please see the website http://hever.org/parish-council for more information.

Rachael Turner
Clerk and RFO
077849 12645
clerk@hever.org

church in february

Please watch out for any late changes with details of services below. Readings and full details are also at https://threespires.wordpress.com/diary/

Date & time	Service details	Sunday
1st February 10am	Holy Communion St.Paul's Four Elms	Epiphany 4
8th February 10am	Eucharist Holy Trinity Markbeech	2nd before Lent
8th February 3pm	Forest church Hever churchyard	2nd before Lent
15th February 10am	Holy Communion St.Peter's Hever	Next before Lent
18th February 6pm	Imposition of ashes at St.Paul's Four Elms	Ash Wednesday
22nd February 8am	Said communion St.Peter's Hever	Lent 1
22nd February 10am	Family service Holy Trinity Markbeech	Lent 1

Our Home Group meets at 7.30pm on Tuesdays at various locations and Zoe Joannou's 'life group' is on alternate Wednesdays.

We will be starting a Lent course from 24th February: 'Prayer course II: unanswered prayer'; for more details contact Simon.

Looking forward we will be joining the Confirmation Service with Bishop Simon at St.Peter & St.Paul Edenbridge on Sunday afternoon 22nd March.

Confirmation classes have started but if any adults or teenagers are interested in being confirmed, please contact Simon as soon as possible. Please contact any of us if you would like prayer or to talk to someone or any other help.

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Lynnie Rowan
07881 482154



our rectors thoughts

21st December 2025 marked the sad loss of my predecessor Revd. Wendy Izod. Her funeral was in St.Peter's Hever on 17th January. A very full tribute is in this copy of the Link. I would like to express my gratitude for her welcome when I arrived in 2019 and her legacy following a life of care and service to God, the church and the community.

Life changes and things don't go on for ever. This month, the churches are meeting the Ven.Nick Cornell, Archdeacon of Tonbridge, to discuss succession following my retirement which will be immediately after Easter 2027. The meeting is in Markbeech Village Hall at 8pm on Monday 2nd February, so if you're reading this before that date please come along.

Ash Wednesday on 18th February marks the start of Lent. At the service people come forward to be marked with the sign of the cross in ash often made from burning of palm crosses from the previous year. These words are said: *God our Father; you created us from the dust of the earth: grant that these ashes may be for us a sign of our penitence & a symbol of our mortality; for it is by your grace alone that we receive eternal life in Jesus Christ our Saviour…. Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return. Turn away from sin and be faithful to Christ.*

Both Ash Wednesday and attending funerals remind us that we are mortal. The funeral service includes these words: *Our days are like grass; we flourish like a flower of the field; when the wind goes over it, it is gone and its place will know it no more.* Life is temporal and time seems to pass ever more quickly as we get older. Death is the big unknown, which we must all face one day. The Christian gospel proclaims that Jesus has gone ahead of us through the gates of death so that we don't need to fear. The funeral service includes the Christian Easter hope *'in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our frail bodies that they may be conformed to his glorious body, who died, was buried, and rose again for us.'*

The cosmologist, Stephen Hawking, famously described belief in an afterlife as *'a fairy story for people afraid of the dark.'* Mathematician and scientist John Lennox countered that *'atheism is for people afraid of the light'* This is life's big question. In 2026, please give it some thought and join us as we seek to walk in the light of life, which is Christ.

God bless you all

Simon

news from the pews

Four Elms

The first couple of months of a new year can feel a bit dull and cold following the sparkle of Christmas and the new year celebrations. We still have short days and the bitter cold of January and February always seems to surprise us. But, how glorious the hoar frost looks in our rural village. Certainly brings the poet out in us. Whilst not being a new year's resolution individual (never keep them) I can see that it suits some. What we are able to do is hope, hope for peace throughout the world and fairness. One of my favourite homilies from Jesus is "love your neighbour as yourself". We cannot make the whole world take this on but we may practice this in our own community, here in Four Elms.

It is always a pleasure to see the church filled for our Christmas Carol Service with the Edenbridge Town Band. Thank you to everyone who makes this so special – and I mean everyone, especially those who came to sing and enjoy the Christmas message. However, there was a sadness this year as we learnt of the passing of our previous Priest in Charge at the Hever Benefice, Wendy (Izod) on the morning of the Carols. Wendy was a regular at our Carols and it was fitting to hear the audible gasp as her death was announced. She was much loved and will be greatly missed.

To the coming months. We celebrate our Patronal saint, Paul, who was so instrumental in spreading the Word. Please continue to attend the Enjoy a Cuppa on the second Tuesday of the month. We move into Lent on 18th February with a day before to enjoy pancakes on Shrove Tuesday. Enjoy the beautiful country walks around our village and you probably will meet your neighbour.

Christina Hodson
Churchwarden

Hever

St Peter's will be re-opening to the public on a daily basis starting Wednesday, 11th February. This daily access is only possible thanks to our incredible team of dedicated volunteers who open, clean, and close the building throughout the year. We offer them a huge thank you for their hard work. For those who visit, please know that your donations remain a vital part of the building's upkeep and our ongoing mission within the parish.

As the frost finally begins to retreat from our lanes, we are starting to see the first signs of spring. The emergence of snowdrops and crocuses serves as a wonderful reminder of resilience; these fragile blooms pushing through the heavy winter earth are a welcome sight for us all. The brightening mornings and the return of birdsong suggest that the long winter is finally drawing to a close, bringing a sense of renewal to the entire village. As you pass by or visit the church this month, we hope the budding trees and early flowers bring a sense of optimism and growth.

We also look forward to welcoming you to the next Parish Lunch on Thursday, 12th February, at 12:30pm for a 1pm start. We typically host around 24 people for a simple, warm meal of soup, fruit, and delicious home-made cake. Everyone in the parish is very welcome! To help us with catering, please let us know if you plan to attend or have specific dietary requirements. Finally, a small reminder to please avoid driving or parking on the grass at the hall during these wet winter months.

Mandy Yarnold
Churchwarden

Markbeech

Happy New Year and let's pray it is a peaceful one.

We ended last year with so many beautiful services. Some beautiful harp playing enhanced a baptism service, wonderful carol services, bursting at the seams, and a simply delightful Christmas Day service. Well done, Simon, playing Super-Rector yet again this year – so many places nearly at the same time. Thank you. And as Mandy said before Christmas, we are all so grateful to all the volunteers who work so hard to keep the churches clean, looking beautiful with flowers (Christmas trees) and making welcoming coffees/teas – so much organising and thought goes on behind the scenes.

Simon has circulated all those on the electoral roll his email about the meeting with the Archdeacon, the Ven. Nick Cornell. Please come, whether you are on the roll or not, because we need to try to decide what we want our church to be in future – and what we can afford! But most of all, we need as many people as possible, under 80, to help us, please! We are thinking of the future, which practically some of us might not be here for. It is on February 2nd, 7.45 for 8pm in Markbeech Village Hall.

Now, to February, and the beginning of Lent. On February 22nd, there is the lovely Family Service at Markbeech at 10am, your children are the future, not only for Markbeech, so please bring them. I, personally, still remember many stories from my Sunday School and the stickers that I was given. So, I hope that your children will remember a time when they were made welcome and learnt about Jesus. I still have a picture of Jesus knocking at the door, with the handle only on my side. Might 2026 be the year we all open it, if just a crack. Some of you, of course, have flung it open some time ago.

Janey Cooper
PCC Secretary

REGISTER

Baptisms:
14th December Markbeech Letitia and Penelope Kunhardt

Funerals:
21st November Four Elms Gill Lambert
19th December Markbeech John Green
17th January Hever Revd Wendy Izod

hever hort

Imagine the scene; Queen Victoria had died on 22nd January, 1901. Just six months into the new Edwardian era on 6th August, Mr John Eastman chaired a meeting in the reading room of Hever Castle. Six other local people were in attendance and the main agenda item was the formation of a society to be known as 'The Hever Gardening Society', whose purpose was to promote gardening in the area. I wonder if Mr. Eastman and his committee thought that 125 years later, the offspring of that first incarnation the 'Hever Hort', would still be going.


camelia nobilissima

At the AGM, Jan Tolfree became our new President, in place of the gravely ill Wendy Izod who sadly died in December. Jan's first task was to present the President's trophy, won by Pauline Radford, after a winning streak by Jane Rosam. To celebrate this special year we have a full committee, ready to provide an interesting season of horticultural events, but we are always ready to welcome new blood to take the Society forward (not necessarily for another 125 years!). So, if you would like to be involved, please contact me, or any committee member.

As well as the usual events, there will be a visit to the Himalayan gardens at Riverhill and Tom Hart Dyke will talk about his adventures and the World Garden at Lullingstone Castle. For our first event, Nigel Gibson will give a talk on **late flowering grasses and perennials, on 18th February, 8pm, Hever Village Hall.** Everybody is welcome. The Schedule and Programme can be found on the hever.org website.

gardening

As 2025 morphed into 2026 a couple of intrepid camelias in our garden braved the freezing weather to welcome in the new year. I have always regarded camelias as spring flowers (and they do feature in the Hever Hort Spring Show) but there are over 230 species and more than 20,000 named cultivars or varieties, so it is not surprising that there are some which will blossom in the winter months, including the white camelia nobilissima, the variety which has flowered in our garden. February is the last of the winter months, and there are plenty of jobs to be done before plants start their rapid take off in spring. These include cleaning bird feeders for the nesting season and tidying up greenhouses. Also, pruning apple and pear trees, if not already done, to create a canopy, although I tend to leave our large Bramley until March. Finally, for an earlier crop of rhubarb, cover crowns with a light proof container, to help force them.

Have a happy horticultural year.

Doug Bowern

benefice monthly rainfall in millimeters

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Totals
FOUR ELMS													
2023	60	9	105	83	27	27	41.0	23	39	152	122	109	797
2024	58	122	94	61	49	27	64.0	28	165	86	77	78	909
2025	89	61	4	36	13	28	57.0	38	49	85	66	87	613
HEVER													
2023	80	2	111	93.5	37	33.5	58.5	23.5	59	152	131	110	890.5
2024	73	136	81.5	57.5	48.5	25	73.5	31.5	183	82.5	62	52	906
2025	126	54.5	4	29.5	14	31	71.5	27	52	103	61	107	680
MARKBEECH													
2023	90	4	123	105	31	34	56.0	32	48	161	142	106	932
2024	80	139	95	71	61	29	62.0	44	186	77	79	60	983
2025	114	71	4	25	21	33	52.0	22	71	115	63	116	707

HALL BOOKINGS

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Hever – Mrs Ryan 01732 864168
Markbeech – Mrs Paige 01342 850328

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Robert.Mayall@kent.gov.uk

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James Barnett 07831 112901
cllr.barnett@sevenoaks.gov.uk

Hever Parish:
Rachael Turner 077849 12645

the link team

Bridget Harris, Joanna Wade and Ivan Furness
email: thelink@hever.org
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Address 1 Triangle Cottage, Hever Road, Hever TN8 7NL
Benefice website threespires.wordpress.com **Community website** www.hever.org

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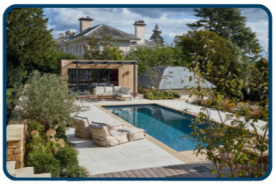
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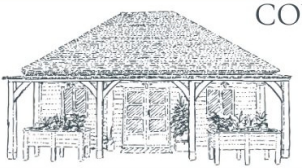
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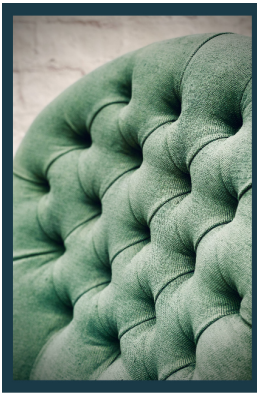
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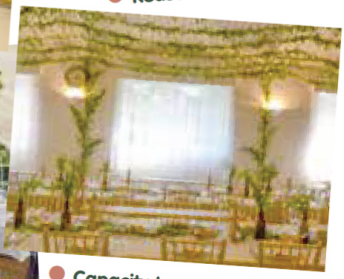
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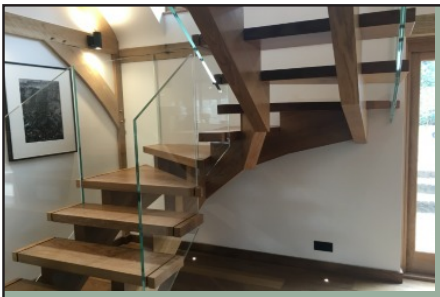
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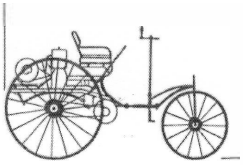






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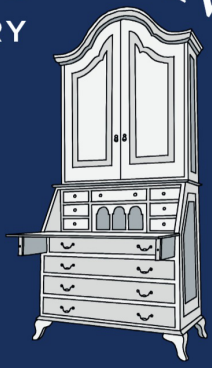
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February diary

Eden Valley Museum celebrating 25 years with two exhibitions 'Discover History through 25 Objects' and 'Explore Change in the Eden Valley'

2nd & 4th Wed each month **Bore Place 'Wilder Wellbeing'** nature sessions for adults – free, book online www.boreplace.org/whats-on

Women's Fitness Class Mondays at 10.30am and Weds at 6pm Markbeech Village Hall

29 Jan	**Get to know your Telescope** at Bore Place, adult £10 child £5	6.30-8.30pm
2 Feb	**Meeting with the Archdeacon** to discuss the future of the benefice, Markbeech Village Hall	8pm
10 Feb	**Enjoy a Cuppa** at St Paul's Four Elms	from 10.45am
11 Feb	**Hever Castle** reopens	
12 Feb	**Hever Parish Lunch**, Hever Village Hall	12.30 for 1pm
13 Feb	**Hever Village Film Club** – Big Night, Hever Golf Club	7.30pm
18 Feb	**Hever Hort talk** on Late Flowering Grasses and Perennials, Hever Village Hall	8pm
5 Mar	**Evening of Mindful Stargazing**, Bore Place adult £5	6.30-9pm
7 Mar	**Introduction to Rag Rugging**, Bore Place, adult £60	10-4pm
10 Mar	**Enjoy a Cuppa** at St Paul's Four Elms	from 10.45am
13 Mar	**Hever Parish Lunch**, Hever Village Hall	12.30 for 1pm
13 Mar	**Hever Village Film Club** – Paddington in Peru, Hever Golf Club	7.30pm
14 Mar	**An Evening of Gilbert & Sullivan** by the Wandering Minstrels, Markbeech Village Hall	7pm
15 Mar	**Spring Foraging Walk**, Bore Place adult £37	2-4.30pm
18 Mar	**Hever Hort talk** The World Garden Tom Hart Dyke, Hever Village Hall	8pm
24 Mar	**Hever Parish Council meeting**, Four Elms VH,	planning 7pm full council 7.30pm
11 Apr	**Hever Hort Spring Show**, Hever Village Hall	2-4pm
9 May	**Fermentation Fundamentals**, Bore Place adult £63	10-2pm
17 May	**Introduction to Beekeeping**, Bore Place adult £80	10- 4pm