

June
2020

KEYS



Hildenborough village news



Church and Community News

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From the Vicar

Here are a few reflections that might help us, if we take time to ponder on them. We are in a storm in every sense in this world and in our nation. We might feel we are in a storm personally. A storm of life can bring many powerful emotions and feelings, ask any sailor who has journeyed through stormy seas.

We might feel overwhelmed, confused, scared, unsettled, anxious, confused, lost, disorientated. Unsure of the way ahead.

Often in a storm of life the best thing to do is not change course but to keep our eyes fixed forward. Someone said once never change course in the heart of a storm. In what direction are we heading? Often the direction we need to travel may not always be clear, but we can be clear about the fact that we need travel. One irony of life is we might feel we grow old too soon and wise too late. Let's be wise and see this season of pandemic for what it is for us personally as well as others. What can we learn about ourselves, our family and friends and God?

The bible says a wise person seek counsel; a wise person seeks God.

Even the past does not really help us in the present, as we are facing something the world has not seen before. This is a new kind of disease. My encouragement for you in this season is perseverance. Trying times are not the times to stop trying. By perseverance the snail reached the ark. Michael Angelo persevered and painted on his back for over seven years when he painted the

ceiling in the Sistine chapel. He kept going. Keep going, don't give in to fear and despair and discouragement.

When doubts and fears are growing, its hard to keep on going. From day to day not knowing, just what the end will be. Take each day as you find it. If things are wrong don't mind it. For each day leaves behind it, the opportunity to persevere again. Jesus said in the bible I know your deeds, I know your hard work and I know your perseverance. With Me you can face any storm and any challenge, for I am with you. We often feel we can face any trial when we are encouraged and feel loved. The bible says worry weights a person down, an encouraging word cheers a person up.

The word encouragement means to put courage into someone. Encouragement is like oxygen to the soul. We can go further in our life more than we thought we could, because someone thought we could. Let's bend down to lift someone up. The bible says that we should not worry, we should not fear, we should encourage one another, we should persevere and we should seek God in times of trouble. Good advice to a hurting world. We cannot become what we need to be by remaining where we are. We are all being shaped by the external events we find ourselves experiencing in this season. Let's make sure that we travel forward together and not lose sight of the things that matter to us and to God.

Take care of yourselves.

Tim

ACTIVITIES AT THE CHURCH CENTRE

“OPEN TO EVERYBODY”

WHO LET THE DADS OUT ?

For Dads and young children.

Hildenborough Church Centre

Second Saturday of the month 10 a.m.

Contact: Andrew Narcombe-Thorne

Phone - 07506 737 633

Email – andrewnthorne@hotmail.com

THE KING'S MEN'S GROUP

Will meet monthly in the Church hall at 7.30 till 10 pm. All men are welcome - come and meet us in a relaxed friendly atmosphere, where we can hear new exciting and encouraging testimony.

More information from Gordon Paterson

01732 832 079 or 07836 262 833

BRIGHT SPARKS (formerly SUNBEAMS)

St. John's Toddler group

Every Monday 1.30 p.m. - 3.30 p.m. (School term time only)

Contact: Marcus Hockley 07800 887 938

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH SERVICES

SUNDAYS

9AM

INFORMAL CONTEMPORARY SERVICE

11.15AM

FORMAL SERVICE

TUESDAYS

11.15AM

MORNING SERVICE (SPOKEN)

Hildenborough Gospel Hall

Sunday meetings

11.45am Wayfinders Children's Meeting; school term time only

6.30pm Gospel Meeting; not last Sunday of the month

4.30pm Gospel Meeting; only last Sunday of the month

Thursdays

7.00 pm Prayer and Bible Teaching

Mount Pleasant, Hildenborough, TN11 9JG

info@hildenboroughgospelhall.co.uk

www.hildenboroughgospelhall.co.uk/

WHO'S WHO IN ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

CLERGY	Vicar: Revd. Tim Sait Tel: 833 596 or Mobile: 07973 136 968 tim@stjohnshildenborough.co.uk
CHILDREN and FAMILIES' PASTOR	Marcus Hockley (07800 887 938) marcus@stjohnshildenborough.co.uk
READER and SENIORS' PASTOR	Sue Trowbridge (833 848)
CHURCH WEBSITE	www.stjohnshildenborough.co.uk
WARDENS	David Green (838 435), Wyatt Glass (832 430)
ARCHIVIST	Terry Barton (832 207)
PCC SECRETARY	Amanda Willmont (350 565) (NB <i>Parish Council tel. is on p 38</i>) amanda@stjohnshildenborough.co.uk
TREASURER	Chris Mileham (chris.mileham@virginmedia.com)
CHURCH CENTRE BOOKINGS	Cynthia Fawcus (833 397) cafawcus@hotmail.com
CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR and PA to the VICAR	Sal Hamlyn, Church Office, St John's Church Centre, Foxbush, TN11 9HT, (833 596) Email: sal@stjohnshildenborough.co.uk (do ring the church office or email Sal any time, if you would like to discuss any pastoral or administrative matter, or if you would like to make an appointment with the Vicar).
YOUTH WORK	See organisations list on page 38
"KEYS" MAGAZINE	Editor: David Haugh (832 869) Deputy Editor: Claire Rawlinson (834 896) Distribution: Clem Giles (833 543) Advertising: Jill Hinds (07931 976 957) keysmag@hotmail.com keysmagazineadvertising@gmail.com

From the Registers

Deaths

- Maureen Groves – born 15 Feb 1936, died 8th Feb 2020 – Funeral in church followed by full burial .
- Lieselot Jones - born 11 August 1926, died 6th March 2020 - Full burial in churchyard

VE Day in Lockdown (a poem for today)

1945, 8th of May
Was a very special day
People came out to sing and shout
For peace had finally broken out
Peace after 6 years of war
Hearts would be lifted, spirits soar
At 3:00 pm Churchill took to the air
Whilst people danced without a care
People cheered, Vera sang
Throughout the land church bells rang
An end to crying an end to tears
Now let's fast forward 75 years
We currently have our own war to fight
Let's keep calm, let's sit tight
Yes, we can party and celebrate
Whilst keeping our distance and isolate
We can put up our bunting, make party food
Lighten the tension, lighten the mood
Toast each other with tea and warm beer
Fill the air with song and good cheer
Hang bunting and flags from tree to tree
Remember those who set us free
Free from tyranny, free from war
We can still celebrate with folks next door
Have that party inside your gate
Bring out the picnic, don't be late
Yard, garden or balcony
Put out the flags for all to see
Celebrate together but keep apart
Be of good spirits be kind of heart
There will be no conga snaking the street
It won't look the same with gaps of 6 feet
Let's all sing along to that old refrain
Join Vera in "We'll meet again".
Let's think positive, let's all dream
We will beat this COVID-19
So get suited and booted, put on that dress
And party whilst protecting the NHS.

Mark Crabtree

New Writing

Although Sarah Crockford had to suspend her creative writing groups and dog training classes until further notice, she's been keeping busy during lockdown. Part 1 of her romantic comedy novel 'Run or Love' is now available on Kindle, as is her short guide to puppy behaviour and training: 'How to Cope with your Puppy or Young Dog'. Details of both of these can be found on her website

www.sarahcrockford.com

Keep an eye out for the elderly

When did you last see your elderly neighbour? Seriously: are they okay? During this time of social distancing, it is all too easy to assume that the elderly person you never see is simply safe indoors. But are they?

Isolation can be dangerous: it is too easy for them to have had an accident and be unable to call for help.

Why not arrange a system with them whereby you agree that you will give them a quick ring once a day, or even stand outside their house and wave? It only takes a few seconds to make sure they are still on their feet, and that all is well.

If you have several elderly neighbours, why not ask a few of your local friends to help you keep in brief touch with them each day?

Forget-me-not Cafés



Companionship over a cuppa



As I write this, as a nation we have just celebrated VE day in the best way we can – either with a social distancing street party or watching the television. Sadly, our café VE day celebrations could not go ahead, which was such a shame, as many of our café members have many interesting tales of their war experiences.

An event that has also been postponed until later in the year is Dementia Action Week, which is run by the Alzheimer's Society, where tens of thousands of people across the country come together to make a difference to the lives of people living with dementia through activities and awareness events. Throughout this lockdown, the Alzheimer's Society has a support line which is open every day for anyone experiencing problems and would like advice. It is 0333 150 3456.

As soon as we are able to reopen the café, Elaine (07805 367 268) or myself, Julie, 01732 833 125 will be in touch. Until then please keep safe.

In Vera Lynn's famous wartime song it says: *"We'll meet again, don't know where, don't know when, but I know we'll meet again some sunny day"*, and I can't wait to be able to have the café open again and catch up with all our members and helpers. I really do miss you all.

Julie Rhodes

Five Tips for Tackling Loneliness and Isolation

The Church of England has published a leaflet giving five tips to help loneliness.

Pray. Light a candle, if safe, and pray for hope, faith and strength to keep loving and caring for each other during this time of struggle.

Talk about how you feel. This may be difficult if you are self-isolating, but do use the telephone, internet, and social media. If you need to contact a counsellor this can be arranged by your GP, or via local agencies, or privately. Samaritans are there 24 hours a day, every day, and it's free to call them on 116 123.

Focus on the things that you can change, not on the things you can't.

Look after yourself - physically, emotionally, spiritually. Plan in things that you enjoy at regular intervals during the day – a TV programme, a phone call, a book, a favourite dish, a game.

Look after others. Even if only in small ways, but do what you can: a smile, a kind word, writing a letter or an email.

Latest update from TMBC

Country park car parking

The car parks at our country parks (Haysden and Leybourne Lakes) re-open from Wednesday 13 May. Tickets must be purchased. Charges for parking at other council-owned car parks remain suspended.

Household waste and recycling centres

Centres in Kent and Medway to re-open from Friday 15 May. Booking required.

Council meetings

Meetings resume from Tuesday 19 May when Cabinet will meet online via Microsoft Teams.

Coronavirus testing

If you have coronavirus symptoms and are over 65 or an essential worker, testing is available in Kent. Testing is taking place at regional and local centres but you will need to book an appointment. Alternatively, you can request a test kit is sent to your home.

Summary of changes to council services

Council offices and meetings

- Council offices: The receptions at Kings Hill offices and Tonbridge Gateway are closed. If you need to contact us, please do so via email customer.services@tmbc.gov.uk or telephone - 01732 844 522.

Committee meetings resume from Tuesday 19 May when Cabinet will meet online via Microsoft Teams.

You can pay bills or get advice via our website, email or telephone.

Tonbridge Castle (visitor attraction) is closed.

Parking

- Country park car parks (Haysden and Leybourne Lakes) re-open from Wednesday 13 May. Tickets must be purchased.
- We are currently not issuing parking penalties at other council-owned car parks and purchase of a ticket is not necessary.

Parking restrictions, including yellow lines, resident parking bays and disabled parking still apply. Many residents and businesses are still carrying out essential work across the borough so please park safely and with consideration to pedestrians and other road users.

Waste and recycling

- Garden waste collections resume from Monday 11 May 2020.

Bulky waste collections for up to six items have resumed.

- The Saturday freighter service is suspended.

Guidance is available on disposing of domestic waste, such as tissues, which may be

contaminated. Please do not put tissues in green recycling boxes.

Household waste and recycling centres in Kent and Medway re-open from Friday 15 May.
Booking required.

Council tax

If your savings are below £16,000 you may be entitled to reduction based on your household income. To estimate your entitlement you can use our online calculator.

We may also be able to either reduce your instalments temporarily or spread them over 12 months rather than the usual 10. To discuss instalments please email revenues@tmbc.gov.uk

If you would like to talk through your options, call our Customer Services Team on 01732 876388.

Housing and health

Most housing and health services are being provided via telephone or email only. This includes support for homelessness and appointments with our OneYou health team.

Our private sector housing team are only carrying out urgent home visits, for example where there is a risk of imminent harm. In some cases virtual inspections are possible using smart phones or tablets. Updated guidance is available.

Some food businesses are changing the way they operate. The Food and Safety Team has developed guidelines to help.

Planning

Planning services continue to operate. If you have queries relating to planning or the changes in permitted development rights for food businesses then please visit the planning service page.

- The Local Plan hearing sessions which were scheduled to take place during May and June have been postponed.

We have relaxed rules around night-time deliveries to supermarkets to help meet demand.

Tonbridge Cemetery

- Tonbridge Cemetery Chapel is closed.

The number of mourners permitted is limited - contact the Cemetery Office on 01732 876357.

Parks and leisure

- Leisure centres and swimming pools are closed.
- While parks and sports grounds remain open for daily exercise, catering facilities at Haysden and Leybourne Lakes country parks are closed.

For tips on how to keep or get active in and around your home go to Sport England's national campaign for people to stay active during lockdown.

This information can be viewed on the TMBC website.

The first thing I must do this month is to express our sincere thanks to the Half Moon for allowing some of our stallholders to operate from their car park - it is so very much appreciated by everyone. Thanks are also due to Tracey Bettles and Kath Barton who have been supporting the stallholders for us, and making sure that social distancing is adhered to – both regular customers and Hildenborough Cub Scout Leaders – brilliant! Of course huge thanks to the now FOUR food stallholders who have been arriving outside the Half Moon each Tuesday morning from 8.30 – 10.30 to bring us such essential supplies.

It is mainly necessary to order in advance by the previous SUNDAY and I give below contact details:

Baker - Rusbridge Bakery - robrusbridge@live.com

Fishmonger – Mikey's Plaice - 07427 549 475

Cakes - Lou and Helen's Cakes - helen.aldridge@btinternet.com

Cheese - plus other items – carlabetts3812@gmail.com No need to order.



Thought this month I'd tell you a little bit more about the Farmers' Market and just how many volunteers are involved in its operation week by week.

The 'Team':

Janet Richardson,
Manager; Julie Kury,
Secretary; Annie Hawkins,
Health and Safety;
Sue Gorham, Treasurer; and with Ann Wood
and Julie Rhodes all have their own
responsibilities and expertise in organising the
added events and activities we like to have, and
if they don't know, they usually know someone
who does!

Since the start it has been led by the
incomparable Janet Richardson, who is the
whirling dervish of the Team, she and husband
Bill are first at the Market each week and
usually the last to leave just before midday –
and the 8th June will be our 12th Birthday!

A huge 'THANK YOU' Janet and Bill.

It isn't a case of just turning up if you feel like it. Janet spends many a happy hour, keeping in contact with her Team and the stallholders. We have a great core of stallholders who come weekly, but other stallholders are 2 or 4 weekly, and the logistics are quite a headache, as well as dealing with little items such as insurances, licences, TMBC, etc. As I told you last month, the success of our market comes from our volunteer teams who are always there to lend support. We miss them all and their always good humour, and just can't wait to get back to normality.

We love putting on the extra events, the first of which, and always the favourite, is 'Cooking for Kids', which we started in 2009 during the summer holidays, and haven't stopped since. We have made everything from jam tarts, scones and pasta to wontons, stir fries and popcorn - not to mention trifles and Knickerbocker Glories. What great memories. (We have learned a lot, as well as the young people and their mums!)

It is especially rewarding to organise something for the children in half term and other holidays, and this has ranged from:

- pedalling a bike to make milkshakes
- science workshops with stallholder Gary
- 3 metre collages of Spring
- more recently, the wedding of Harry and Megan
- planting Spring bulbs in children's decorated wellies.

But we do like a challenge and loved putting on a 'Bee' Day (don't say that too fast) with everything we could think of connected to bees, to show children and adults alike. You will know from last month's Keys that there is always something to look forward to at the Market - I'm only just getting a first taste of my favourite asparagus and it's nearly the middle of May! What are we missing? Looking forward to meeting you all again. Meantime, keep an eye on our Facebook page which Julie R. kindly updates weekly, giving details of stallholders who will be at the Half Moon each Tuesday.

Something new (well for me) Having prepared another curry for dinner last night, decided that I couldn't face rice again so looked for an easy recipe for Naan bread that didn't need yeast. These were excellent. Quick and easy and just two ingredients:

For 2 people: 1 cup SR flour; ½ cup Greek yoghurt; little salt; ¼ tsp. baking powder. Put it all in a bowl together and mix, then bring together with your hands until smooth. Divide into 4 and roll out to ½cm thick. Cook on hot dry pan or griddle for 1 to 2 minutes each side. Serve hot coated with melted butter.

How much easier could that be? They were really yummy and made a change from rice again. Enjoy.

Hospice in the Weald

#HeartsformyHospice

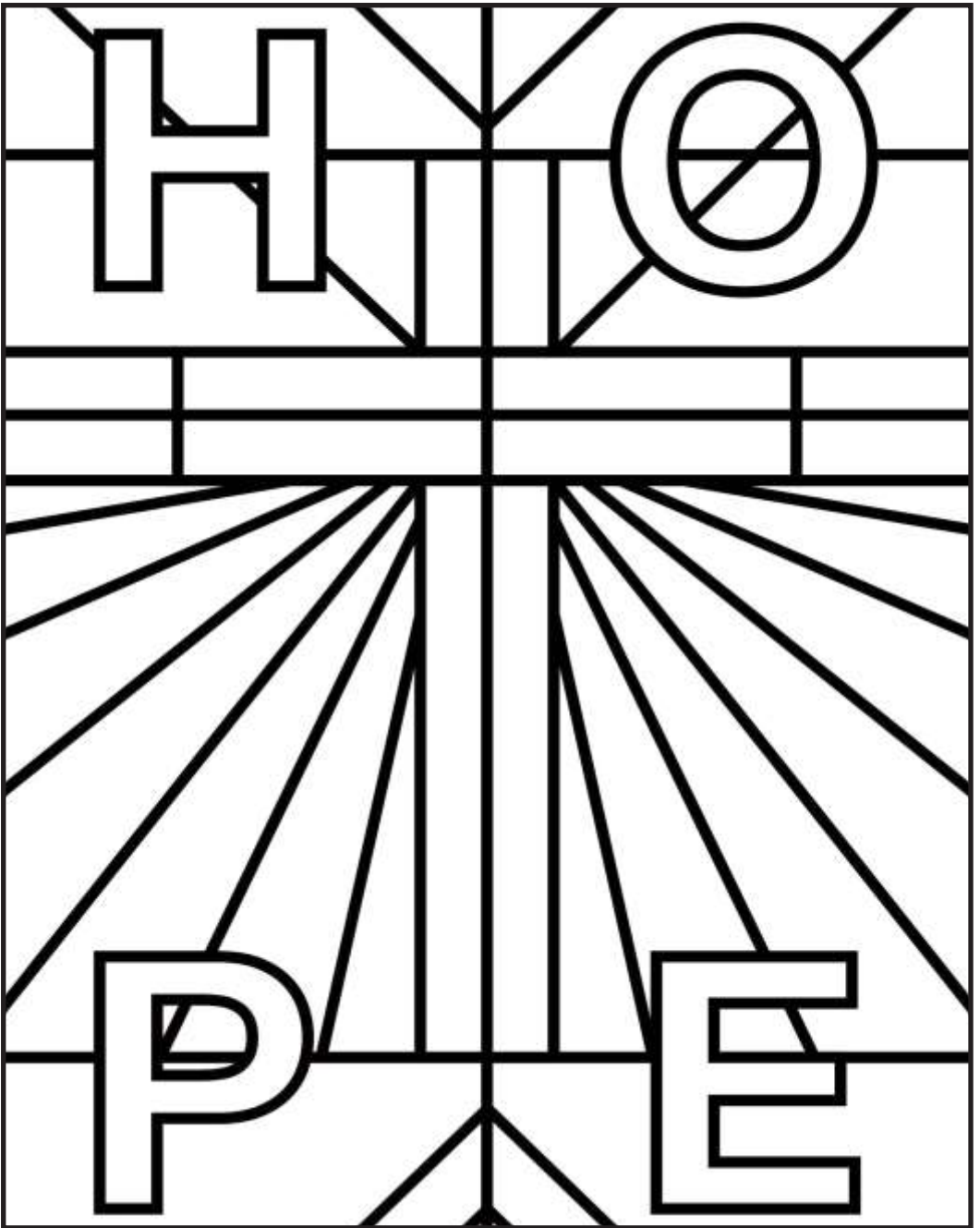
Recently the Hospice launched a “Hearts for your Hospice” campaign. The Covid-19 issue has meant that fundraising has ceased, so the Hospice would greatly appreciate donations to enable them to continue to care for our aged and elderly persons needing help. The photographs below have been put together by the Hildenborough Friends Group for Hospice in the Weald. It is hoped to be able to organise a quiz or other fundraising event later in the year. Thank you for your support.



Thelma Fairs

Text HOSPICEHEARTS to 70470 to donate £5 to Hospice in the Weald
www.hospiceintheweald.org.uk
01892 820 500





Feel free to colour in this picture as we while away the time
at home

Weeds and wildflowers?

Like many in the village this year, I have spent far more time in my garden. I have spent my summer battling the weeds that try to take over my garden. If I do not do battle, I would lose my vegetable patch and my flower beds to a collection of wild flowers. Some of the weeds may look attractive, but they have a nasty habit of taking over, and then the plants you want to grow are smothered and do not do well. Two of the villains have a common action, they creep. The Bindweed creeps underground while the Buttercup creeps along the surface. Both put on a good display of flowers, but they wreak havoc with everything else.

If you have bindweed running up your bean poles, the white trumpet flowers may look good, but they do not produce an edible fruit.

The Hedge Bindweed (Greater bindweed) is a very strong plant and well adapted to dealing with any opposition. Its strong underground rhizomes go deep into the soil and drain the soil of water and nutrients. This means that any plants I try to grow in the area next to the hedge do not thrive, they are starved. On top of this, the bindweed grows at such a rate that it can outclimb my runner beans. The plant climbs by twining round other plants, which it smothers as it uses them for support. It twines by the growing tip circling round until it meets an upright. It can twist in a complete circle in two hours on a summer's day and can perform seven or eight circuits. Once attached to a support, it hangs on and can pull down the supporting plant. The flowers are very attractive with large white trumpets but poor compensation for the problems it causes.

The other great problem is the Creeping Buttercup. It has attractive yellow flowers and can make the lawn look green when there is no rain. That is not a problem with the Creeping Buttercup - as its name suggests it creeps, making it a nuisance. It will creep along the ground, hugging the ground so tight it gets under the mower blade, then the



BINDWEED



CREEPING BUTTERCUP

grass is smothered and dies. When I remove the Buttercup, it leaves an ugly bare patch, so it is best got rid of quickly. If left too long it will then get beyond the lawn and invade the rest of the garden. The creeping rhizomes are on the surface of the soil and so are easier to remove than the underground rhizomes of the Bindweed. There are two other different but related Buttercups. The much more attractive Bulbous Buttercup grows up from small bulb like swellings. This is the Buttercup that looks so attractive in photographs of summer meadows. There is also a Buttercup that is more like a small version of the Bulbous Buttercup with finer leaves that is rare in the UK.

The Buttercups and the Bindweed are both perennial weeds; they grow from the same rootstock each year. They need to be conquered before you starting to put in your plants. To remove them later causes maximum disturbance. The more troublesome weeds to new gardeners are the annuals; those that grow from seed each year. Plant a row of carrots and you are sure to release weed seeds present in your soil that will grow quicker than the seed you want.

The most difficult thing about the wild flowers that become weeds is that they are very well adapted to the environment of my garden. They enjoy disturbed soil and colonise my garden as if it were another wild place. They can attack on two fronts. They propagate vegetatively, that is, any bit that breaks off can grow, and they also grow from seed. They keep me busy in the garden as they continue to grow when I take a break, but they do make gardening interesting. Trying to understand your weeds helps you keep ahead of the opposition. The plus side of weeds is that they help support the range of wildlife that my garden attracts. They provide variety for the Bumblebees and other insects and a range of visiting birds.

George Gorham

KCC - Kent Together

Helping your community, helping you

Get support

If you are vulnerable and need urgent support that cannot be met through existing support networks, get in touch.

We can help with:

- making sure you have enough food and supplies
- walking your dog
- picking up prescriptions
- putting out the bins
- taking in parcels
- making sure you have someone to talk to (by phone, Skype or Facetime)
- checking if any planned appointments have been cancelled before you travel
- helping to make sure you have simple recipes to hand
- preparing meals for the freezer.

If you're unable to use our online form, call our helpline on **03000 41 92 92**.
<https://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/coronavirus/kent-together>

Dandelions!

Many of us actually like dandelions. Their amazingly cheerful colour always brings a smile to our faces. The not-so-neat-and-tidy gardeners among us can simply enjoy flowers where they grow.

The name 'dandelion' apparently derives from 'dent de lion' – lions' teeth, owing to the tooth-like shape of its leaves. There are many different varieties of dandelion, but they all have the toothed leaves arranged in a rosette around the single flowers, each one made up of up to *two hundred* [yes, really!] tiny florets on a smooth stem, that when picked, releases a milky substance known as latex.

The golden heads, which close up at night, in wet weather, or if picked to go in a vase, give way to the seed-heads we all know as clocks. Who cannot remember proclaiming the time as a child, having blown the seeds away, counting each breath as an hour? And who, if this happened in the garden, remembers the reaction of a parent, or grandparent, to the efficient dispersal of the seeds all over the vegetable patch or flower bed!

In the past, dandelion drinks and concoctions have been valued for their medicinal powers in combating a variety of complaints, and the Victorians used to cultivate them in order to fill sandwiches with the young leaves. Fizzy drinks

manufacturers still produce a variety known as Dandelion and Burdock, and intrepid wine-makers can use the flowers to concoct a heady brew.

The roots, some say, can be dried and ground up for use as a coffee substitute. It is those same roots, long and strong, that our grandmothers would water carefully, to the amusement of onlookers, in order to pull them up completely.

To many of us, dandelions are one of Nature's joys.

George Gorham



The Night Sky in Hildenborough – June 2020

The evening sky has lost the brilliant Venus as it moves closer to our parent star and then passes behind it (an event known as superior conjunction) on the 3rd of this month. In truth Venus isn't *exactly* behind the Sun, because it passes just above it as seen from Earth. This is due to the planets' orbits around the Sun not being on precisely the same plane – they vary by just a few degrees, so that on occasions they appear to pass either to the north or south of the Sun. This is why we don't see transits of Venus and Mercury every year - the conditions have to be exactly right for one of these events to occur. However, once Venus appears on the other side of the Sun (the west) it will become a morning object visible just before sunrise. As the months pass it becomes a prominent object above the eastern horizon for early risers.

Although it isn't nearly as bright as Venus, the other inner planet, Mercury, can be seen in the early evenings this month. It is best placed during the first week of June and will be low down (about 10° high) in the north west. If you look at around 9:50pm the Sun will be 6° below the horizon, which marks the end of civil twilight and the beginning of nautical twilight. Don't be tempted to look for Mercury with binoculars before the Sun has set: you risk blindness if you inadvertently allow sunlight to reach your eyes.

The loss of Venus means there are no bright pre-midnight planets for observation at the beginning of June. However, all good things come to those who wait, because by the last few days of the month, both Jupiter and Saturn will rise around 10:30pm and can be found very low down in the south east. By midnight they will be more than 10° in altitude in the south-south-east. Jupiter will be easy to find because it is the brightest object by far in that part of the sky. Saturn is fainter but can be readily identified because it is just 5° to the east (to the left) of Jupiter and fractionally closer to the horizon. Their position and rise time will improve next month but they will always be low down in the sky.

It seems to have come round very quickly, but the summer solstice is upon us and occurs this year on June 20th at 10:44pm. The word solstice is derived from the Latin for “Sun” and “to stand” (still) and describes the moment that the Sun has reached the point in its yearly journey where it is as high as it can get above the celestial equator. From then on it loses altitude as it moves towards the autumnal equinox in September. Of course, the yearly path of the Sun around the sky is not a real one in the same way that its daily rising and setting is nothing to do with our star; both are due to the motions of the Earth. The latter is simply due to the Earth spinning on its axis from west to east which generally speaking (though not entirely) makes objects in the sky appear to move from east to west. However, the Sun's apparent yearly journey is a little more complex and something that we'll look at in more detail later. It is, of course, a journey that is invisible to us because the Sun's brightness precludes us from seeing the stars around it, except at the time of a total solar eclipse. It was in fact by observing stars at that particular moment, that (later Sir) Arthur Eddington was able to prove Einstein's General Theory of Relativity in 1919.

Brian Mills FRAS

From the Editor

Many of us require regular medication to remain fit and healthy, and have good reason to publicly thank Ioannis, Robert and all the staff at Thompsons the Chemist – a lifeline for the village. In the past few weeks, they have made numerous home deliveries to allow residents to remain at home in relative safety. Thanks, and thanks again, go to them for their long hours of work and dedication to helping the village.

As I write this column, it is a sad reflection that a good day is one when the virus kills less than 500 people. I do hope that in a month's time we are recording deaths an order of magnitude lower each day. This pandemic has brought problems to virtually everyone, be they great or small. The end is still a long way off, and we will all have to get used to being “unsociable” to protect ourselves and our friends, relatives and colleagues. As the old saying goes – you know it makes sense.

Daily appearances on TV by politicians have in general been well received, as they struggle to deal with the health and economic results of the Covid 19 epidemic. However, we can all see that none of them ever admits to making any mistakes and offers an apology. The general public are not idiots – they can see clearly when something went wrong, and politicians would get much more respect if they took the blame as well as the plaudits.

We have seen almost a mass influx of cyclists on our roads since the lockdown. This is great to see, especially for whole families impersonating the von Trapps! However, many cyclists still believe that have a charmed life, going out in dark or black clothes. Even on a sunny day, there are places and situations where they could become almost invisible to vehicle drivers. Many attempts have been made by authorities to persuade cyclists (and walkers) to wear bright visible, dare I say Hi-viz outer wear, for their protection and for the benefit of motorists. As the parable says – some fell upon stony ground. Perhaps it is time for highways authorities and borough councils to make a bye-law requiring the wearing of visible clothing or suitable flashing lights at all times on public roads. Just about everything else that occurs on roads is legislated for Health and Safety reasons, so why not this?

Whilst on the subject of cycling, the news that more money is to be spent on extended cycleways is welcome, but worrying. The first batch of cycle ways in the region are pretty diabolical, and are frequently ignored by cyclists, since they are uneven, do not flow continuously, and are even dangerous in some instances. It is hoped that when new cycle ways are considered, that the views of actual users and cycling organisations are consulted. The last thing we want is a bigger white elephant.

As more use is made of modern technology during the lockdown, the persistence of criminals trying to take your money has only increased. Be aware of dubious or threatening emails and phone calls, and don't be afraid to say no or log out. If you have received something suspicious, you can report it to report@phishing.gov.uk, when the National Cyber Security Centre (part of GCHQ) analyses them and can remove the culprit sites. Please spread the word.

Finally, it is time again to remind you to examine your renewal quotes for domestic services and insurances. There are great deals to be had on energy, broadband, telephones, home insurance, etc. if you look around. Comparison websites are an easy way to determine your options. The virus situation has delayed the start of our computer assisted sessions in the library, but it is intended to get going once it is safe to do so, and help those not computer literate to save money. If you already use a computer, you have no excuse to delay looking – I am sure most of you have spare time in the day (every day).

From our local MP

I hope that everyone is staying safe and well in these difficult times. I know how many in our parishes are supporting each other and the strength of the community this is showing. The Government has published its latest guidance on the next stage of our response to the virus. Because of the care people have taken in recent weeks, we are able to look at how we can all reach out more and try to get back to work. The social distancing measures that we have all been through in the past few weeks have brought down the infection rate and given us the ability to look for ways out. That's what we've all got to think about now - taking reasonable steps to get back to normal, but staying alert throughout.

The new restrictions give us greater freedom and flexibility about the steps we can take to protect ourselves and others. The message to Stay Alert is being used in France, and elsewhere to ensure we all remain aware of the dangers but start to help people get back to work. We know the cost of the lockdown to individuals across our country. We need it to end, to re-open our economy as quickly as possible, and to do it in a way that doesn't risk the infection rising too high.

If you have any concerns about the guidance, or questions about what you may, or may not, be recommended to do then please get in touch. Though my office in Tonbridge is understandably closed to visitors and I am working at home, I can still answer e-mails on tom.tugendhat.mp@parliament.uk or pick up the phone, where the best number is 01732 441 563.

Over the past few weeks so many people have gone to extraordinary lengths to help protect our communities. I'd like to thank everyone, and especially our key workers. Whether it be doctors or nurses working in the NHS, the waste collectors who continue to empty our bins, or supermarket workers making sure we have all the food we need, thank you.

The past few weeks have seen our communities pull together like never before, and the street parties for VE Day showed just how united we can be. I hope this continues once the pandemic is over. But in the meantime please stay safe.

Tom Tugendhat

Centre Piece

I said last time that hopefully some restrictions of Lockdown would have been lifted by the time I wrote again, and they have, as a result of the majority of the population behaving responsibly. However, this loosening of restrictions has been very marginal, with guidelines being somewhat confusing. The Parish Council does, at this time, need to keep its play and exercise equipment closed, because of the fear of contamination, but has been able to open up the basketball court as it is deemed safe to play basketball whilst maintaining the 2m social distance.

However, we do continue to have problems with young people completely disregarding any restrictions put in place for the safety of us all. There are reports of social meetings in West Wood and of camp building. This, in spite of it being dismantled, continues to be used, as well as groups of youngsters climbing into the play area. In the Recreation Ground there have been gatherings within the grounds and in the car park. Of course, these have been reported to the police, who have been very responsive. In particular, our new PSCO, James Billson, has been extremely supportive and has been seen in the village on many occasions.

Since I last wrote, the Parish Council has met remotely twice, and has finally caught up with itself. They first met on 29 April when there was a lot to discuss on the Council's finances. The Annual Accounts were agreed, as was the return to the External Auditor. An internal audit had been successfully undertaken remotely. It was a strange experience and took much longer to complete, as, for example, documents needed to be scanned to send instead of just being accessed directly from the files. The Council also took the decision to look into changing their bank accounts in order to start internet banking. This was brought to the fore because of the difficulty in paying accounts during the Lockdown.

The other notable discussion took place on the Highways Improvement Plan. There were many areas raised by the Council for improvement by KCC and they had reported on all aspects. The junction of Leigh Road and Tonbridge Road is being investigated to see if it is feasible to widen it to allow a filter left hand lane, but it is thought this will be far too expensive. Currently, they are investigating the cost of removing to a different position the cabinets containing all the broadband and phone connections. It is thought this would amount to tens of thousands of pounds and consequently be untenable.

Many complaints, prior to Lockdown, were continually being received about parking on the footways opposite the Harvester filling station. KCC will monitor this once we are back to 'normal'.

The problem of HGVs using Foxbush as a turning bay was also considered. KCC have offered to put up signage of 'unsuitable for HGVs' which the Council has accepted. Let us hope this does deter them.

The installation of a footway along Stocks Green Road to Rings Hill was also looked into. This has raised more questions on acquisition of land and the costs involved. However, the Council is seeking to get this reviewed at the Joint Transportation Board's meeting with the support of our Borough and County Councillors.

The good news was the installation of the enhanced belisha beacons on the zebra crossing by the Medical Centre. Although its effectiveness has not been completely tested since Lockdown, it does make the crossing considerably more visible.

Two other places of concern to residents and school pupils are the zebra crossing near Riding Lane and the B245 at Watts X to Mill Lane. These are both in the process of determining the best way forward. KCC is looking at improved signage and the Council has suggested enhanced belisha beacons at the zebra crossing.

Of major concern has been speeding through the village during Lockdown. It seems that many have seen the lack of vehicles on the roads as an opportunity to test out how fast they can drive along the B245. It is highly dangerous, since those taking their daily exercise would stand no chance of escaping their wheels should they be crossing the road, or should drivers lose control of their vehicles. We are not the only village to be affected and the police are aware. With their current huge workload, I am sure that speeding is not high on the list of priorities.

The Council continues to wait for the parking investigation suggestions from the Borough Council. They had been told they would be with the Council in January, but in spite of continued requests, these are not yet to hand.

The second meeting this month was held on 13 May when the chair for the following year was elected. There is no change in chair, vice chair or on any of the committees.

However, we are now able to co-opt a member to fill the vacancy. If you are interested in supporting the community, have ideas for improvement or have a specialist knowledge of value to the Council, please do consider contacting me.

I can give you further details of duties, which are not too onerous. The Council meets on the second Wednesday of the month and asks that each member supports one of its committees.

At the meeting on 13 May, the new website was discussed and a decision made on the way ahead. This should not be too long in coming, as it is expected to be able to go live before July, so watch this space for more details.

The picnic area on the Village Green was approved at the meeting and quotations discussed. One was accepted for the installation of a small area containing a picnic table and seating area in the vicinity of the fountain. This will give some shade, not impede mowing, not become flooded in winter as did the old seating, and should provide a restful area for those working nearby during their lunch break.

As ever, do contact me if you are willing to be co-opted to the Parish Council, have a query, idea or comment on the usual phone number of 01732 832 367 (please leave a message if I do not answer and I will return the call), or by email clerkhildenboroughpc@gmail.com and of course you can always send a letter to the Council's address.

Keep Safe,

Pam

T.M.B.C. News

Haysden Country Park

Due to the ever-increasing numbers of visitors Haysden Country Park is seeing, the decision was taken to upgrade and improve the toilet facilities. A new Eco Plant System was designed and installed; a clever design feature allows the receiving tank to be reduced in size during the winter months. The whole project is now complete and ready to go.

Council Meetings

As I write, Council is about to undertake meetings via Microsoft Teams. It will be interesting to see how the technology interfaces with the requirements of meetings held in public, as well as the public needing to speak at planning meetings.

Website Accessibility

We are informed that the Government's Digital Service (GDS) has published guidance on new regulations to ensure all public sector websites and apps can be accessed by as many people as possible. This includes those with impaired vision, motor difficulties, cognitive impairments or learning disabilities, deafness or impaired hearing. The guidance is aimed at local authorities to assist councils in compliance.

Smoke Alarms

For over 10 years, analysis of official figures indicates that 40% of battery powered smoke alarms failed to activate in residential fires in England. One in ten homes does not have a working smoke alarm and there are far too many people who never test them or replace the battery. A major reason for smoke alarm inaction is the fire not reaching the detector. Residents are encouraged to install one detector on the ceiling of every floor in their home – and test it regularly.

Refuse Collection

The current situation brought about many problems with waste collection, although Green Waste is about to start again. Contractor staff isolating, etc. created staffing issues and numerous collections-changed days. If any resident is still having any difficulties, whatever it maybe, please contact Nick or myself.

Cllr Mark Rhodes

Contact Us

Just a reminder, if any resident wishes to contact Nick or myself, our details follow. Generally speaking, email seems to be the preferred method of contact. If you do email please can you include your address.

Borough Councillors

Nick Foyle 07860 444 217

29 Farm Lane, Tonbridge

nick.foyle@tmbc.gov.uk

Mark Rhodes 01732 833 125

27 Hawden Close, Hildenborough

mark.rhodes@tmbc.gov.uk

TMBC - 01732 844 522

Kent County Councillor

Harry Rayner 03000 421 606

harry.rayner@kent.gov.uk

Contact the Parish Council via

clerkhildenboroughpc@gmail.com or

01732 832 367.

From your local Kent County Councillor

This month I will take the opportunity to address the subject of highways for which Kent County Council has responsibility throughout Kent, except in the Medway Council area and for Motorways, which are the responsibility of Highways England. There are particular trunk A Roads including the A21, which are also maintained by Highways England. Linked to highways, KCC has some responsibility in connection with public transport, which I shall touch on later in this column.

Over recent weeks the opportunity has been taken by many of the public and private utility companies to undertake such daytime work as would in normal circumstances lead to major road traffic delays. With so many private vehicles removed from the highway network KCC Highways has encouraged utilities and their roadwork contractors to undertake any works that can be scheduled to be undertaken during this time. This is a means to pro-actively manage the road network to the benefit of all.

I have sought to actively encourage highways work to be undertaken in my division, especially on the A20 London Road in Wrotham, where the water egress from the Spring Tavern site has now been undertaken by contractors to KCC Highways, arrangements for cost recovery from the landowner is in hand. Users of Common Road Ightham will I hope be as pleased as residents, following the repairs to drainage. Further works to drainage issues to follow shortly in south west Hildenborough.

I sometimes receive correspondence from those seeking speed restrictions, road improvements, changes to on-street vehicle parking or more and occasionally less street furniture.

Arrangements are now in hand for such matters to be considered when parish councils prepare their own local highway and transport plans. KCC highways will then try to use these where possible in order to bring about the types of improvements that residents seek.

Public Transport

Three words that cause concern regarding the upcoming return to work are “avoiding public transport” if possible. This continues to put pressure on many commercial bus operators and must be balanced with the need for them in the long term, as part of the most efficient use of road space, again in the future. In the meantime, commercial and subsidised bus operations continue where possible. Clearly there are some significant challenges ahead in terms of social distancing, depending on circumstances, particularly once arrangements are put in hand to open secondary schools.

Further information is expected on how public transport will have to operate once the current restrictions are eased. At the same time school reopening and future transport needs remain unclear at the time of writing in mid-May.

Harry Rayner, Kent County Councillor
Tel 03000 421 606 Email: Harry.Rayner@kent.gov.uk

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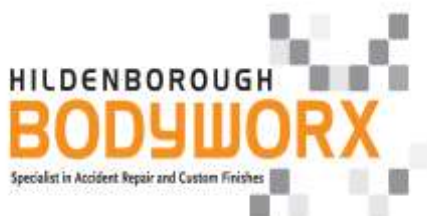
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ORGANISATIONS

Community Groups

AFTERNOON WI	Mrs Betty Mackay (832 549)
EVENING WI	Miss Lorna Stapley (832 871)
GARDENERS' SOCIETY Secretary	David Haugh (832 869)
GUIDES (Hildenborough)	Louise Neale (361 759)
SCOUT GROUP.....	8thtonbridgescouts@gmail.com
CUBS PACK (Ages 8-10.5 Monday evenings)	hildenboroughwolfcubs@gmail.com
BEAVERS (Ages 6-8 Thurs 5.00-6.15 p.m.) HildenboroughBeavers8thTonbridgeScouts@hotmail.com	josh.barkaway@kentscouts.org.uk
EXPLORERS (Ages 14-18)	Mrs Lynne Flower (355 080)
HILDENBOROUGH CONSERVATION GROUP	Janet Richardson (838 903)
HILDENBOROUGH FARMERS' MARKET and COFFEE	Judith McQuillan (834 610)
HILDENBOROUGH HISTORY SOCIETY	Temporarily suspended
HILDENBOROUGH YOUTH CLUB	Thelma Fairs (832 475)
HOSPICE IN THE WEALD	01732 832 367
PARISH COUNCIL	hildenborough.kent.sch.uk (833 394)
HILDENBORO' C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL.....	
FOR THE STOCKS GREEN PRE-SCHOOL DETAILS SEE AD ON PAGE 26	
MUSICAL BUMPS	Margaret Lewin (07736 244 142)
STOCKS GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL	stocksgreenprimary.co.uk (832 758)
VILLAGE HALL BOOKINGS	Pat Davies (833 092)
VILLAGE PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION	David Vanns (835 289)
KENT POLICE (Non-emergency calls)	101

Church Groups

HOUSE GROUPS	Tim Saiet (833 596)
HILDENBOROUGH MEN'S GROUP	Gordon Paterson (832 079)
PRAYER CHAIN	Cynthia Fawcus (833 397)
KIDS' CHURCH	
YOUNGER YOUTH (Sundays term time 4 - 6 p.m.)	Marcus Hockley (07800 887 938)
NEW GENERATION (14 plus)	Marieke Dodd or Louise Stalker
	Contact via Church office

Hildenborough Sports

BADMINTON:	Kathryn Stewart (07809 299 553)
HILDENBOROUGH INDOOR (SHORT MAT) BOWLS CLUB	David Chambers (833 612)
HILDENBOROUGH CRICKET CLUB	Barry Webb (838 422)
HILDENBOROUGH FRIENDLY BADMINTON CLUB	Ivan Kirkpatrick (07730 888 429)
HILDENBOROUGH SHORT MAT BOWLS CLUB (SUNDAYS)	Helen (07941 254 723)
STOOLBALL CLUB	Bill Richardson (838 903)
TENNIS CLUB (membership)	Jo Garrett (832 393)
HILDENBOROUGH SPORTS ASSOCIATION (Running Races)	Mark Taylor (832 948)
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