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MAY 2025

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Bluebells at Coldwaltham,  
pictured by  
Sarah Ffoulkes Roberts



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## MAY SERVICES & BIBLE READINGS

### SUNDAY, 4th MAY 3rd SUNDAY OF EASTER White Array

9.15am	Holy Communion	Parham
11.00am	Holy Communion	Amberley
6.00pm	Evensong	Wiggonholt

### SUNDAY 11th MAY 4th SUNDAY OF EASTER White Array

9.00am	Holy Communion	Greatham
10.00am	Café Church	Amberley

### SUNDAY 18th MAY 5th SUNDAY OF EASTER White Array

9.15am	Holy Communion	Wiggonholt
11.00am	Holy Communion	Amberley

### SUNDAY 25th MAY 6th SUNDAY OF EASTER White Array

9.00am	Matins	Greatham
11.00am	Holy Communion	Amberley

### SUNDAY 1st JUNE 7th SUNDAY OF EASTER White Array

9.15am	Holy Communion	Parham
11.00am	Holy Communion	Amberley
6.00pm	Evensong	Wiggonholt

## BIBLE READINGS



**Sunday, 4th May**  
*Acts 9:1-6; John 21:1-19; Psalm 30*

**Sunday, 11th May**  
*Acts 9:36-end, John 10:22-30; Psalm 23*

**Sunday, 18th May**  
*Acts 11:1-18; John 13:31-35; Psalm 148*

**Sunday, 25th May**  
*Acts 16:9-15; John 14:23-29; Psalm 67*

**Sunday, 1st June**  
*Acts 16:16-34; John 17:20-end; Psalm 97*

## Interregnum arrangements

If you need pastoral support and a listening ear, prayer or Communion at home, please don't hesitate to call Amberley churchwardens in the first instance on (07973) 163369; alternatively send an e-mail to [amberleystmichael@gmail.com](mailto:amberleystmichael@gmail.com)

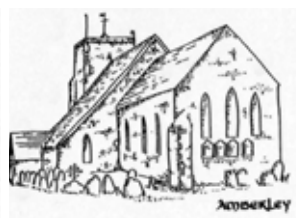
We seek help from visiting clergy to cover at least one Communion service each week. Elaine Corbett, our Lay Reader, is taking a number of other services.



Elaine Corbett

For baptisms, marriages and funerals at any of the four parishes within the benefice, please contact the relevant churchwardens (details on page 36).

The best way to stay up to date is to ensure you are on the list for a weekly church e-mail with notices of services and events, readings and prayers for each Sunday. Please e-mail Michael on [mpdavey@gmail.com](mailto:mpdavey@gmail.com) to ensure your name is on the list.



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## People & Events



### Church Hall upgrade – next steps

Many of us enjoy the space and opportunity that St Michael's Church Hall offers to connect with others – but the decrepit heating, poor acoustics, grimy floor (despite regular mopping) and the bottleneck created by the dividing doors during events limits enjoyment and the hall's potential.

The Hallraisers are planning to address all these issues in the third phase of the hall upgrade – the refurbishment of the main hall itself. We started the design process with an open day on April 5, where people were invited to discuss their ideas for how the space could be improved.

There were no surprises in the wish list for change – better heating, more flexible lighting, a new sound & IT system, a new floor, more storage – and many asked for the dividers to be removed, as they are never used and seem to be a reason for the poor acoustics. There was no shortage of proposed solutions either.

While change is planned for the main hall, there is also change afoot in the Hallraisers' team itself. The fragrant Michael Donovan and his husband have already moved to Warningcamp and the luminous Sheena Skinner and her family will be moving to the Brighton area in the summer. As they will no longer be living in the village, they have sadly decided to give up their Hallraisers' work. It's been a special experience working with them both and I thank them for their friendship and the enormous creativity they have brought to our fundraising work.

To start the next phase, Churchwarden Mel Edge is putting together a design group who will prepare a design plan for the main hall refurbishment (drawing on the many ideas that were submitted on the open day). More to follow when the plan is in place!

Meanwhile, if you have not already done so ... why not sign up for the Hallraisers' next fundraising event – the Roving Supper on June 28. Tickets are selling fast. Details were sent via Gagglemail on March 31. Alternatively, contact [dave.lynne@icloud.com](mailto:dave.lynne@icloud.com) for more information.

**Susan Watson**

### Amberley Museum and station car parking

Trustees at Amberley Museum have transferred the management of the museum car park (opposite Amberley station) to a company which will open up the car park on a round-the-clock basis, offering free parking for museum visitors and paid-for parking for non-visitors.

Station parking will continue to be free for the time being, but rail users will now have the option of using the museum car park should there be no available spaces at the station.

From the beginning of May, non-museum visitors will be able to pay for parking using RinGo (a car parking app) and will be able to park their cars throughout the week and beyond 5pm. This will benefit those using the railway station, visiting other places in the local area, or going for walk.

There are additional benefits to the museum and to those using the car park, particularly as the extra CCTV cameras and lighting will improve security. There will also be an opportunity to address issues with some of the potholes.

Pricing has yet to be confirmed, but over the next few weeks signage will be going up, which will explain the tariffs. Visitors to the museum will be able to benefit from free parking by entering their registration on to a screen when they come through the shop.

**Katrina Burton**

**Amberley Museum Director**



### Gridlocked Amberley

Following an accident on the B2139 on March 30, when two cars collided and overturned, eastbound traffic was diverted down School Road and westbound traffic via Rackham. Result: total chaos. I have lived here for 40 years and have never seen anything like it. Unfortunately, it ruined many people's plans for lunches on Mothering Sunday. There were plenty of frayed tempers but fortunately no serious casualties. Sadly, that was not the case in the late afternoon of the same day, when a motorcyclist died in an accident close to the junction of Newland Gardens.

**Mike Toynbee**



## A weekend of nostalgia

Rewind to the 1940s for a weekend of nostalgia and living history at Amberley Museum's Home Front Weekend, taking place on May 17-18.

Experience the sights, sounds, and stories of the Second World War as the museum is transformed into a vibrant wartime encampment. Featuring authentic WW2 vehicles, uniforms, and equipment, this immersive event will bring history to life for visitors of all ages.

The Home Guard will be on site to demonstrate their crucial role in defending Britain's shores, while American forces showcase military maintenance operations and a stunning array of restored and original artefacts.

Visitors can also explore how wartime innovations shaped the years that followed, with special displays highlighting post-war developments in technology and design.

Visitors are encouraged to dress the part and wear their best 1940s-style fashion and join the fun. Take a nostalgic ride on a 1930s bus and enjoy a journey around the museum site aboard steam locomotive *Peter*.

With re-enactments, displays, and hands-on experiences, Home Front Weekend promises a truly memorable trip back in time.

For more information and to book tickets, visit [www.amberley-museum.co.uk/](http://www.amberley-museum.co.uk/) or follow Amberley Museum on social media for updates.

## Motorcycles, cars and even James Bond for good measure

May Bank Holiday Monday (May 5) sees the return of the classic motorcycle gathering to Amberley Museum. A celebration of time-honoured British brands including BSA, Norton, Royal Enfield, Triumph and Matchless. An anticipated 150-plus bikes will be on display to be admired, photographed and talked about.

Included in the day will be motorcycles up to the present day with beautiful examples from other manufacturers such as Ducati, Honda, Harley Davidson and Moto Guzzi.

On Sunday, May 11, the Southern Classic Car Club will have a range of vintage and classic cars on display. Evolving from a small group of Southern Water plc employees who owned a variety of classic cars, Southern Classics is now one of the leading independent classic car clubs in the south east.

Did you know that Amberley Museum was one of the main filming locations for the 1985 James Bond Film *A View to a Kill*, starring Roger Moore?



### Who do you think you are kidding Mr Hitler....?

In September 1984 locations across Amberley Museum's old chalk pits and quarry tunnel were transformed into the fictional Main Strike Mine. Items from the museum's collection took on starring roles in the film (and they left a few behind!)

On May 25, the museum will be running regular guided tours delving into the detail of how the old Amberley chalk pits were transformed into a filming location nearly 40 years ago.

Speakers from the Shaken not Stirred Fan Club will be in attendance to give an overview of all things James Bond, along with special guests to answer visitors' questions.



And the Aston Martin Owners' Club will be displaying an impressive selection of cars throughout the day together with some visiting Rolls-Royces and Jaguars as well.

Finally, at the end of the month (May 28-30) there will be a range of half-term activities on offer. On Thursday, May 29, there will be an opportunity to have a go at the traditional craft of woodturning with the West Sussex Woodturners, taking home a small wooden keepsake.

## On the move

Readers who know former Amberley resident Tim Ashby, will be delighted to hear he is comfortably settling into his new surroundings at Barlavington Manor.

The Sussexdown Care Home in Storrington, where he has been a resident for the past few years, is being replaced with a modern complex and is not due to reopen until 2028. Only the existing dementia unit remains.

For those anxious to keep in touch, Tim's new address is: Barlavington Manor, Burton Park Road, Petworth GU28 0JS.

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## Goodwoof: a special day out for dogs and their owners

Dog lovers will be converging on the Goodwood Estate during the weekend of May 17-18 for Goodwoof, the annual celebration of all things dog.

Set against the spectacular backdrop of The Kennels, Goodwood members' clubhouse, the event is set to offer something for everyone – whether they're on two legs, or four.

From canine tales read by well-known authors and celebrities in Literary Corner, to dog disco with Ministry of Hound and brilliant architecturally designed kennels in the Barkitecture competition, every moment at Goodwoof is an incredible celebration of dogs.

Visitors can enjoy wellness workshops including dog yoga and reiki, talks from behavioral and veterinary experts, world class competitions from top canine athletes and plenty of 'have-a-go activities' all of which are included in the entry price. They can meander down the quiet Woodland Walk, stopping off to see the tarot reader or tattoo artist along the way, have a dip in the refreshing Fido's Lido, sip a glass of Taittinger champagne or pre-book a Fortnum & Mason hamper to enjoy in the sunshine.

There are plenty of other catering outlets and shaded places to picnic too as well as an off-lead paddock where dogs can let off steam. The Fastest Dog competition is always a popular spot as dogs speed along the 50m track against the clock.

Each year, Goodwoof celebrates a particular breed and, this year, they looking forward to welcoming dachshunds of all shapes, sizes, and colours to take part in the parade which opens the event each morning. Dogs and their families will lead the way from Goodwood House, on to the event site after pausing for a photograph with the Duke of Richmond and his own dachshund, Winston.

Tickets can be purchased at the Early Bird price (available until May 5) of £30 for adults, £15 for young people aged 13-21, children aged 12 and under and dogs go free. To buy tickets, or for more information, visit [goodwood.com/goodwoof](http://goodwood.com/goodwoof) The event opens at 9.30am both days.

## A timely film...

Just a couple of weeks following the death of Pope Francis, this month's Storrington film night choice is *Conclave*, starring Ralph Fiennes and Stanley Tucci. It is based on a book written in 2016 by novelist Robert Harris

When Cardinal Lawrence is tasked with leading one of the



world's most secretive and ancient events, selecting a new Pope, he finds himself at the centre of a web of conspiracies and intrigue that could shake the very foundation of the Catholic Church.

The last film of the current season, organised by the Rotary Club of Storrington and Pulborough District, it is being shown in Sullington Hall, Thakeham Road. Tickets are £5 and are available in advance from The Card Shop, Storrington, and at the door on the night. As usual there is a bar and raffle during the interval.

Anyone requiring transport should contact John Ollerton on (07523) 322554.

The next season starts on September 10.

## Fittleworth Garden Trail

This year's Fittleworth Garden Trail is being staged during the Bank Holiday weekend of May 4-5. There will be a total of 13 gardens on display, plus the Wynkcoombe Arboretum with over 800 trees and shrubs to be explored.

Tickets are priced £7.50 and are valid for entry to all gardens over both days, from 2pm-6pm. Children under 16 are free.

Attractions include a plant stall, and miscellanea and other local crafts in the Village Hall, where tickets will be on sale on the day. Sandwiches, cakes, teas and ice-creams will also be available.

### THE ARTS SOCIETY

## Talks to broaden the mind

Artists, male and female, are the subjects of this month's talks for the two local branches of the Arts Society in Fittleworth Village Hall.

Paul Cézanne, described as the Painters' Painter, was one of the most influential and considered to be the father of modern art. The talk, by Ian Swankie for members of the West Sussex group at 2pm on Tuesday, May 6, will look at his life, his remarkable still life paintings and depictions of Provence.

On the following morning, May 7, at 10.45, Lois Oliver will be discussing Elisabeth-Louise Vigée Le Brun (1755-1842), who was one of the most celebrated artists her time and was Queen Marie-Antoinette's favourite portraitist.

On June 3, the subject of the West Sussex group's talk will be the Australian Impressionists – a new art for a new country. On June 4, Deborah Devonshire, the youngest of the Mitford sisters and wife of the 11th Duke of Devonshire, will be the subject of the talk for the South Downs members.

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## Masterclasses and exhibitions

On May 1, the first of a series of cookery masterclasses is planned in the Old Kitchen at Parham House. Chef and food writer Valentina Harris is joining forces with Bake-Off finalist Miranda Gore Browne to stage cookery demonstrations, hands-on classes, and tasting sessions with local food and wine producers. The series will continue on a monthly basis throughout the season until October. The second session, on June 6, will be how to make the perfect afternoon tea.

From May 4 until May 11, floral artist Deborah Crago will be staging a solo exhibition of her pressed flower and embroidery work.

Later in the month, on May 21, members of the Association of Sussex Artists will gather for 12 days to exhibit their creations and provide a unique opportunity for art enthusiasts to witness first-hand the diverse talents within the local artistic community. Both events will be open from 12 noon until 5pm for the duration.

## Game on

Amberley Cricket Club's first game of the season will be an away match against Nuthurst on Sunday, May 25. The first home game is currently scheduled for Sunday, June 22, against Lavant. The full fixture list appears on page 30.



Work continues on the extensive repairs to the rear wall of Amberley Castle

Picture: Mike Beck

## Canine assistants

Dogs trained for domestic tasks is the subject of this month's talk at Storrington Museum on Tuesday, May 6.

The speaker is Bonnie Tse, from Canine Partners, which transform lives by partnering disabled people with amazing assistance dogs. The talk is at 7.30pm and the charge is £8 for non-members of the museum, which is based in the Old School, School Lane (£6 for members).

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### Events 2025

A Cookery Masterclass - 1<sup>st</sup> May

Flower Press & Embroidery Exbo - 4<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> May

ASA Exhibition - 21<sup>st</sup> May - 8<sup>th</sup> June

Sussex Day 2025 - 15<sup>th</sup> June

HSBA Exhibition - 18<sup>th</sup> June - 8<sup>th</sup> July

The Plant Fairs Roadshow - 6<sup>th</sup> July

Sussex Steam Rally - 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> July

Jaguar Day - 3<sup>rd</sup> Aug

Afternoon Tea Week - 13<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> Aug



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MAY 2025

## Amberley Goes Wild Calendar 2026

### March Submissions

Thanks to all those Amberley residents who have submitted their beautiful Sussex wildlife images, during April 2025, for entry into the calendar selection for 2026. Please participate and send your images to [wildsideuk1@gmail.com](mailto:wildsideuk1@gmail.com): subject AGW2026



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**AMBERLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

## What your councillors discussed



### Highlights of the meeting held on March 13, 2025, in St Michael's Church Hall

**Present:** Jason Charman (chairman), Elisabeth Tooms, Hazel Allinson, Graham Smith, Tim Simpson, Fraser Wheeler, Ian Corcoran and Leigh Cresswell. Also in attendance: Steve Trott (parish clerk), Horsham District councillor Len Ellis Brown and 19 members of the public (and one likeable dark grey dog).

The issue of the South Downs National Park's consultation for its revised Local Plan was the main topic for discussion. The parish council's proposed response, based on a survey among residents, was unanimously approved.

Asked by a member of the public if a limited planning proposal was proposed by SDNPA for extra housing, would APC be open to discussion, it was confirmed that the preferred option was development of only the bottom field (adjacent to the B2139).

Horsham District councillor Len Ellis Brown suggested liaising with HDC to purchase the fields, and said a compromise might be a smaller number of houses on the bottom field only.

Questioned why other village bodies, such as the Amberley Society and Showstoppers, were not being represented in the APC response, it was confirmed that these groups had made their individual submissions and their members' views would have been included as residents in the APC survey.

Asked why APC had not carried out its own study of the chalk stream, which had been identified by a resident, the clerk reassured the meeting that the reference had been included in the APC response and that the classification of the stream would no doubt be tested by SDNPA.

The clerk reported that Nyetimber had purchased a large area of land on the south side of Amberley Rise and erected a two metre-high chain-link fence along the South Downs Way, spoiling the views to the south and was deemed to be unsightly. Having investigated there was little the parish council could do, although the clerk was to arrange a meeting between APC, the South Downs National Park ranger responsible for the area,

and the estate manager for Nyetimber to discuss the matter.

An unclaimed lady's bicycle that had been found in the car park in January was to be offered for sale in exchange for a small donation (perhaps £25) to the Church Hall renovation fund.

The clerk was preparing a submission to the SDNPA for a grant for works to the village pond as discussed at the council's meeting in January. Meanwhile, two coppiced willows adjacent to the village pond had been removed along with a fallen tree.

The clerk was also preparing a submission to HDC for a bus shelter on Rackham Road, opposite The Sportsman, for children waiting for the school bus, and for residents using the village bus.

Permission for the partial closure of the B2139 was awaited from WSCC to allow for hedge cutting alongside Corner Cottage, staff accommodation owned by Amberley Castle, to improve visibility for traffic emerging from School Road.

Following the theft of the Village Bus from the village car park, a replacement vehicle had been purchased but lacked wheelchair access. Alternative parking arrangements were being investigated but there was now improved security at the car park. There was now a steady stream of passengers.

An agreed donation of £300 to the Millennium Green Trustees for public liability insurance was capped, despite a revised invoice of £352.

The retrospective planning application applied for by the Black Horse regarding the use of an integral garage as accommodation (currently in use as such) had been withdrawn and a new application was expected to be submitted.

There appeared to have been some progress on the surface water and drainage compliance issues at Swan Meadows, the developer (Antler Homes) having fitted a non-return valve to one pipe by the new bridge to the Millennium Green. Residents felt that things were moving in the right direction, albeit slowly.

Councillors agreed to a request by Fraser Wheeler that Ham Piece (a parcel of land on the Wildbrooks owned by the parish council) be registered with the conservation group Weald to Waves, the RSPB and Sussex Wildlife Trust.

**Date of the next meeting:** Tuesday, May 8, at 7.30pm in St Michael's Church Hall



**The three former East Street Farm fields, owned by Horsham District Council, could be earmarked for between 25 and 45 new homes**

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## WHITE STORK FESTIVAL

# A local celebration of success

The white stork is an iconic symbol of nature revival with the potential to help engineer positive change on our local Wildbrooks, and the wider Arun catchment area. Greener Amberley is closely involved with others in trying to facilitate such change and to mark this, an idea was born to launch the White Stork and Nature Revival Festival, which takes place on the May Bank Holiday Monday (May 5) in and around the Chanctonbury Leisure Centre.

It is the first community event of its type to celebrate the successful reintroduction of the white stork locally and to mark its return from its extraordinary migratory journey across Europe and Africa.

The obvious location in the area for the festival is Storrington, which has close historical ties to the white stork (as reflected in the village sign!). The name Storrington is derived from its old English name, Estorchetone, meaning the home of storks, and referred to in *The Domesday Book*. Storrington, together with Knepp Wildland, is honoured

to be the only UK village to join the European Stork Villages Network <https://www.storkvillages.net>, so there is an important international dimension to this, too.

A catalytic partnership is in train between Storrington & Sullington Parish Council and the White Stork Proj-



ect (managed by the Knepp Wildland Foundation charity), to make this festival happen. They are keen to unite local communities behind it, and Greener Amberley wants to help.

It is a family-friendly event with local artists, mellow music, and refreshments all day, and, furthermore, it's free. There will be interactive stalls, and opportunities to engage in talks and conversation. Greener Amberley will have a stall, so come and visit us.

The event kicks-off at 10.30am with the festival naming ceremony, and runs through the day until 4.30pm. Parking will be available at the Hormare field, accessible from the A283 into Hurston Lane).

**Fraser Wheeler**

● See V. Twin's cartoon on page 38

## Amberley Revival 2025

Around 50 cars are entered for the 5th annual Amberley Revival which takes place on Saturday, May 24. This year the starting point will be Amberley Castle and entrants will be passing through the village (School Road/East Street/Rackham Road) shortly after 9am until around 9.45am, returning to The Sportsman at lunchtime, where the cars will be on display. Local participants include Ian Corcoran (Mercedes), Geoff Davis (Bentley), Sarah Fish (Mazda MX-5), John Fryett (Renault Alpine GTA), Simon Hoy (Mazda MX-5), Neil Moore (Rover P5), Sam Morris-Warburton (Maserati), Tesh Patel (Porsche), and Chris Shanahan (Caterham).



## A splash of colour

A magnificent display of orchids on the kitchen window sill of Janet Bates' home at Crossgates. These exotic plants have survived many years so what is the secret of her success? Janet, who has just turned 91, says she doesn't overfuss them, waters them sparingly and runs her fingers across the foliage from time to time to remove any dust. It certainly seems to work as they continue to flourish, year in, year out.





## **SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK DARK SKIES**

### **Protecting the night sky**

The South Downs National Park, stretching across West Sussex, East Sussex and Hampshire, is among the most visited and cherished natural areas in the UK. Although it is known for its rolling chalk hills, ancient woodlands and dramatic coastline, it's also home to something less tangible, but equally valuable: dark skies.

In a world increasingly saturated with artificial light, the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) has made the preservation of natural darkness a formal priority through its Dark Skies policy.



Picture: South Downs National Park

### **What is the Dark Skies Policy?**

The South Downs National Park became an International Dark Sky Reserve (IDSR) in May 2016, joining a global network of places recognised by Dark Sky International, a US based non-profit organisation, for their efforts to reduce light pollution and promote astronomy. The designation was not symbolic. It was backed by a clear, structured policy that guides planning decisions, development design and community engagement. The Dark Skies Policy is part of the National Park's 2019 Local Plan (specifically Policy SD8) which focuses on 'Relative Tranquillity and Dark Night Skies.' It sets out how development proposals must demonstrate that they will conserve and enhance the quality of dark night skies. In practical terms that means strict controls on external lighting, including the type, direction, brightness and duration of artificial light sources.

### **Why Does it Matter?**

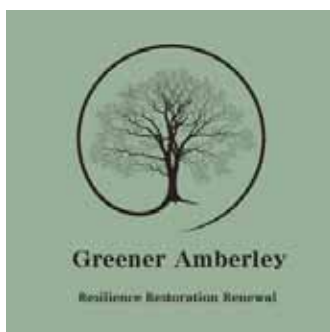
Light pollution is often overlooked compared to other environmental issues, but it has broad consequences. Artificial light at night disrupts ecosystems, particularly affecting nocturnal animals and pollinators. It interferes with the natural behaviours of bats, owls and insects, many of which are protected or declining in the UK. Human health can also be affected as light pollution can disrupt sleep patterns and circadian rhythms. Then there is the cultural and scientific value of the night sky itself. For centuries, humans have looked to the

stars for navigation, storytelling and science. Yet today, many people in urban areas have never seen the Milky Way. The South Downs offers one of the few accessible areas in south-east England where people can experience a truly dark sky. The National Park Authority recognises this as a public good worth defending.

### **Implementation, Planning and Design**

The policy influences a wide range of planning decisions. Developers must submit lighting assessments for any proposals that could impact the dark sky. These assessments need to demonstrate that:

- Lighting is only used where necessary
- Lights are downward directed and fully shielded
- The brightness is as low as possible for the task
- Lights are on timers or motion sensors to reduce usage



For developments within or near the park's 'core dark sky zones' the scrutiny is even tighter. These zones were mapped during the application for Dark Sky Reserve status using satellite data and ground-based measurements. They represent the darkest parts of the park and are critical to maintaining the quality of the night environment. To support compliance, the SDNPA has produced a comprehensive guidance document\*, which local authorities use as a benchmark when evaluating planning applications.

### **Working With Communities**

The Dark Skies policy isn't just about controlling developments. It's also about encouraging people to think about light. The SDNPA runs public outreach programmes, including events during the annual Dark Skies Festival held every February. These events, ranging from astrophotography workshops to night-time wildlife walks, help residents and visitors connect with the night sky and understand why its protection matters. The park authority works directly with parishes and villages to



assess and improve local lighting. This can include retrofitting street lights with lower-impact bulbs, encouraging households to use proper fittings and sharing educational materials. It's an approach to conservation that relies on participation, not just enforcement.

## Challenges

Despite its successes, the policy faces challenges from external development pressure. While the policy applies within the park boundaries, surrounding urban areas and road networks contribute a significant share of the light pollution. The cumulative glow from Brighton, Portsmouth and even London, affects the park's skies. The SDNP advocates for better lighting policies in neighbouring planning authorities, but its influence only goes so far. National level planning guidance in England has historically given limited attention to light pollution, although that is starting to change. Another challenge is compliance and enforcement. While lighting conditions can be attached to planning approvals, once developments are

complete, enforcement becomes more difficult. Not all lighting breaches are reported and local councils lack resources to follow up. This makes proactive education and design at the planning stage all the more important.

## What can we do?

To help preserve our dark skies we can close our curtains, blinds or shutters when we switch our lights on in the evening, replace dusk to dawn outdoor lights with motion activated ones and only use our garden lights when we are actively enjoying an evening outdoors. The Dark Skies policy is a special part of our national park's character. Let's hope that other national parks will follow suit to preserve ecol-

ogy, well-being and a sense of wonder in a densely populated modern world.

**Catherine Cunningham**

*\*Technical Advice Note 1: Dark Night Skies, which includes diagrams, lighting types to avoid and best practices for lighting design*



**Petworth Moon by Giles Embleton-Smith**

Picture: South Downs National Park/Giles Embleton-Smith

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## Historic Amberley painting returns to the village

The painting on the right is by Amberley artist Gertrude Leese 1870-1963. The note on the righthand side says, '2 p.m. This is the procession of the men's cricket team through the village, Talbot playing a pink whistle. He was the Umpire.'

The verso of the picture has a note by Quentin Stevenson. 'This is one of three sketches that celebrate the end of the war (1918) in Amberley.' It shows 'The wall of Gean Cottage garden, Amberley. Catherine Giles, leaning over it, in yellow and Hilda Leese next to her.'

Amberley processions, like the present ones at Christmas and Easter, have long been celebrated in the village. The Amberley Society archive contains several old photographs of the joyous, fancy-dress processions of the Amberley Revels summer fetes.

Gertrude Leese was a prominent British illustrator and watercolour painter and an unofficial war artist during the First World War. Her sketches, many of which are in the Imper-



A sketch of artist Edward Stott going to work in Amberley

ial War Museum, revealed the day-to-day realities of life on the Allied military base at Etaples, France. It was at the fishing port of Etaples that she studied, along with her second cousin Catherine Giles and friend Jessica Dismorr, under the American painter Max Bohm. She was well known as a book illustrator for books by George Sands and also Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* in 1909.

Gean Cottage, named after the wild sweet cherry, was the west half of what is now Pine Cottage in East Street. Another contemporary at the Bohm art school was Lily Bristow who had bought Pine and Gean cottages as a holiday home and retreat. Catherine Giles later bought Gean Cottage. She was Quentin Stevenson's mother's godmother. Gertrude lived in Alfriston but spent considerable time staying and painting in Amberley with her cousin and friends.

This painting was previously part of actor Quentin Stevenson's art collection when he later owned Pine and Gean Cottages. I recently bought it at an auction in Cambridge and have added it to other works by the artist in my collection. These include a *Robinson Crusoe* watercolour illustration and a sketch of artist Edward Stott going to work in Amberley.

**Grahame Joseph**



An illustration for Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*



**Gardens open during May under the NGS (National Garden Scheme), all within about 30- to 45-minute driving distance. For further details, refer to the NGS *Yellow Book* or visit [www.ngs.org.uk](http://www.ngs.org.uk)**

<b>May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29</b> (10am-4pm)	The Old Vicarage, The Street, Washington, RH20 4AS
<b>May 3, 13, 17, 27</b> (2pm-5pm)	Peelers Retreat, 70 Ford Road, Arundel, BN18 9EX
<b>May 7, 14</b> (2pm-5pm)	Fittleworth House, Bedham Lane, Fittleworth, RH20 1JH
<b>May 4, 5</b> (2pm-5pm)	Terwick House, Rogate, GU31 5BY
<b>May 10</b> (11am-4pm)	Cookscroft, Bookers Lane, Earnley Chichester, PO20 7JG
<b>May 11</b> (11am-5pm)	Champs Hill, Waltham Park Road, Coldwaltham RH20 1LY
<b>May 11</b> (1pm-5pm)	Hammerwood House, Iping, Midhurst, GU29 0PF
<b>May 13</b> (2pm-5pm)	Bignor Park, Bignor RH20 1HG

<b>May 16, 17</b> (6pm-8pm, Friday/11am-5pm Saturday)	The Cottage, Potts Lane, Pulborough RH20 2BT
<b>May 17</b> (11am-5pm)	Olivers, Potts Lane, Pulborough RH20 2AH
<b>May 17, 18</b> (11am-4pm)	Pigeon Mead House, Earnley Manor Close, Earnley, Chichester PO20 7JQ
<b>May 24, 25</b> (11am-5pm)	54 Elmleigh, Midhurst, GU29 9HA
<b>May 25</b> (11am-5pm)	Foxglove Cottage, 29 Orchard Road, Horsham RH13 5NF
<b>May 25, 26</b> (2pm-5pm)	Bumble Farm, Drungewick Lane, Loxwood, RH14 0RS
<b>May 25, 26</b> (11am-4pm)*	9 Puttock Way, Billingshurst RH14 9ZJ
<b>May 31</b> (10am-4pm)	The Old Rectory, 97 Barnham Road, Barnham, PO22 0EQ
<b>May 31</b> (10am-4pm)	The Shrubbery, 140 Barnham Road, Barnham, PO22 0EH
<b>May 31</b> (11 noon-5pm)	Swallow Lodge, St Leonard's Park, Horsham, RH13 6EG

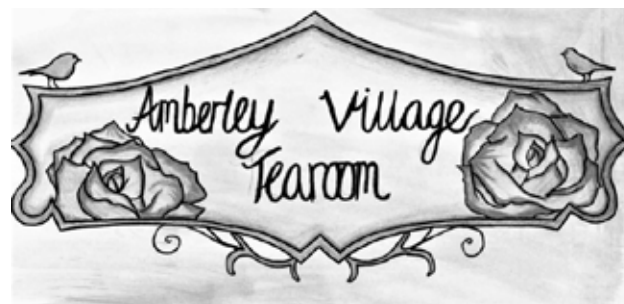
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## Know your Sussex

More facts about the county in which we live



### Windmill of your mind...

Shipley Windmill, better known today as the fictional home of the hero of the BBC Television series *Jonathan Creek*, was owned by the writer, poet, politician and historian Hilaire Belloc from 1905 until his death in 1953. He and his wife, Elodie, lived in the adjacent house, Kings Land. During his lifetime, Belloc wrote nearly 150 books, ranging from historical biographies to *The Bad Child's Book of Beasts* and *Cautionary Tales for Children*.

### Escape route

The Monarch's Way is one of the longest of all English long-distance footpaths, following the route taken by Charles II as he fled to France after his army's defeat at the Battle of Worcester in 1651 in the English Civil War. Part of the 615-mile path is between Arundel and Storrington, above Amberley, before reaching Shoreham, where he was smuggled across the Channel in a coal ship.

### A special graveyard

In St Andrew's Church, Tangmere, the graves of Commonwealth and Luftwaffe airmen killed in the 1939-45 war – many in the Battle of Britain – lie alongside each other in an area of the churchyard maintained by the War Graves Commission. All were airman – including 13 Germans – most of whom were killed during the Battle of Britain.

### Body Shop founder

A former owner of Houghton House was the successful businesswoman who founded the Body Shop, human rights activist and environmental campaigner, Anita Roddick, who died in 2007, having moved from Houghton to Slindon. She donated her entire £51 million fortune to charity. Born in Littlehampton, the daughter of an Italian immigrant couple, she opened the first Body Shop in Brighton in 1976, growing into a multi-location business with over 2,200 stores in 55 different markets. It was purchased by L'Oréal in 2006. Anita always claimed she didn't have clue how she got there!



### 161 not out...

One of the most colourful local events takes place annually at Ebernoe, a hamlet about five miles north of Petworth. On St James's Day, July 25, Ebernoe cricket team

plays a match against a visiting team on the village green. Throughout the morning a sheep from the Leconfield Estate is roasted and is served to the cricketers for lunch. At the end of the match the horns are presented to the highest scoring batsman by Lord Egremont, of Petworth House, and the *Horn Fair Song* is sung. When the match is over the rest of the day is devoted to traditional attractions: a fair, children's races, lamb roast, beer tent, various stalls and entertainment provided by Petworth Town Band. The centuries old fair – no one knows when it actually started – was revived in 1864. It's a lovely country event in a glorious setting. Ebernoe is about five miles north of Petworth on a well signposted turning off the A283.



### Funeral train

Following her death on January 22, 1901, at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight, Queen Victoria's body was transported by train to London, passing through Amberley Station. The Queen, whose reign lasted some 63 years and seven months from her accession to the throne aged 18 in 1837, ruled an empire of 400 million people, covering almost a fifth of the globe in terms of area.

### Record breakers

Among the exhibits at the Tangmere Military Aviation Museum is the Hawker Hunter in which Squadron Leader Neville Duke broke the world air speed record on September 7, 1953, flying along the coast from Bognor to Littlehampton at a speed of 727.63mph. Duke was not the first to break air speed record flying from RAF Tangmere. Seven years earlier to the day, Group Captain Teddy Donaldson's Gloster Meteor set a record of 615.78mph off the coast at Rustington.

### An unusual hors d'oeuvre

The dining table at the National Trust's Uppark at South Harting is where Nelson's future lover, the beautiful Emma Hamilton, is reputedly to have once danced naked by way of an hors d'oeuvre during her tenure as Sir Harry Fetherstonhaugh's feisty mistress.

## GREATHAM CHURCH

# A beautiful, simple and little restored example of an early masonry church

*"Stunning little church"; "What a beautiful church", "Wonderful setting", "Simply wonderful", "Delightful and tranquil"*

These are some of the more recent comments to be seen in the Visitors' Book at Greatham Church. One imagines that early visitors at the time of the church's foundation would have been just as appreciative. It was founded at the period of the Saxo-Norman overlap. The exact date of construction is not known. However, the best estimate from scholars is that the church dates from the late 1000s or early 1100s. It is built from a miscellany of materials, mainly ironstone but with a mix of chalk, flint, gravel and Roman brick on a base of Pulborough sandstone.

No precise science went into the construction of this basic rectangular building. It is of extremely simple design. It reveals no structural distinction between nave and chancel. Of course, over the centuries there have been additions and subtractions. Lancet windows were inserted in the 13th century. Notably, in the 19th century a slate-hung spire was added to the roof and the southern porch was added. There was also a vestry. But this fell down some 70 years ago revealing the uncoffined remains of soldiers who had perished at the battle of Greatham Bridge during the English Civil War. The double decker pulpit is an 18th century Gothic revival whilst the crenelated communion rail is a 16th century addition.

Overall, Greatham Church remains today as it has been for nearly 1,000 years – a beautiful, simple and little restored example of an early masonry church. It fully deserves its Grade 1 listing. There are no such modern accretions as lighting, heating or running water. Lighting is by candles and oil lamps. Heating in winter comes from two ancient gas stoves. Attendance here is indeed to step back in time.

Greatham Church, unlike the majority of churches but like the church at neighbouring Wiggonholt, has no patronal saint. Whilst situated next to Greatham Manor, it has in fact no formal link to the Manor. Access is permitted down the Manor drive and across the field, but it is simply the parish church of what was once the parish of Greatham.

The name derives from the Anglo-Saxon grit for gravel. It reflects the existence of a gravel quarry in the neighbourhood. The church is certainly not great in size. It was



built as a herdsman's church where shepherds driving their flocks to market in London would stop to worship. Other members of the congregation came from what had once been the small village at Greatham, nestling beside the Arun, although that village itself has long since ceased to exist. A few strung out cottages, a farmhouse and the manor are all that remain.

Pictures: Mike Beck

Much of the history of Greatham Church remains undocumented. Unlike the adjacent Greatham Manor, it is not mentioned in the *Domesday Book* although that has little significance for a church. We do know that it was certainly in existence soon afterwards. Thus, it is recorded as a gift from the Earl of Arundel's tenant at Greatham Manor to Lewes Priory in 1121. The early graves in the churchyard are sufficiently weathered as now to be illegible and give no clue to the past. And the interior has only two plaques of remembrance. One commemorates the Chatfield family some of whose members were buried here in the 18th century. The other records the names of the three Greatham men who gave their lives in the First World War; they are remembered every year on Armistice Day.

It is fair to say that, given the size of the local population, Greatham Church was not really sustainable on its own. Indeed, from as far back as the 16th century it shared a vicar with neighbouring Wiggonholt. A curate was located at Greatham with the rector at Wiggonholt. Parish records were kept at Wiggonholt for all of Wiggonholt-cum-Greatham. Then, in the last century Greatham and Wiggonholt joined up with Parham. Finally, what is now the Wildbrooks Benefice was created with a single incumbent living in Amberley and taking services at all the outlying churches. We are, of course, part of the Diocese of Chichester.

At Greatham there are two services a month: at 9.00am, one Holy Communion and the other Matins, as well as services at the time of the major festivals of Christmas and Easter. The church provides a wonderful setting for weddings and baptisms, and many local residents have been laid to rest in the churchyard over the centuries. In keeping with the character and simplicity of the church, the *Book of Common Prayer* and the King James' version of the *Bible* are always followed. There is a small but loyal regular congregation. And all visitors are very welcome indeed.

**Robert Englehart**

● John Drinkwater's poem *Of Greatham* – see page 29





## A tale of duplicity and skulduggery

The cuckoo is one of the most eagerly anticipated of our migrating birds. Its iconic springtime status has led to a wealth of folklore and common names being adopted for other springtime wildlife whose appearance often coincides with the cuckoos arriving and calling. So to begin with I'm going to allow the cuckoo 'groupies' to take centre stage.

Let's begin with the cuckoo flower, a pretty but unobtrusive plant found in damp verges with pale pink to mauve coloured flowers. It's well known by another name - lady's smock - but also as milkmaids, May flower or fairy flower. In Sussex, indeed for much of southern England, the appearance of these flowers is not the best predictor of cuckoo arrival – they often start to flower in late-March. However, in other counties there's not a bad match between flowering dates and first arrival dates. I value this plant particularly as it is the main food plant of the lovely orange tip butterfly and you should be able to see these patrolling the hedgerows into May.

Next up is another plant – cuckoopint – which also comes with a host of alternative and rather splendid names including lords and ladies, parson in his pulpit, and devils and angels. Flies are attracted to the rather unpleasant smelling plant and are then trapped by the hairs at the base of the plant and dusted with pollen before they are released to pollinate another flower. Be warned – all parts of this plant are toxic to humans.

We could move on to talk about cuckoo spit or cuckoo bumblebees but I think it's time for our star to take the lime-light. I once read that the female cuckoo was "lazy, flirty and reprehensible" owing to her parasitism of other birds' nests, ejecting the eggs of the host species and apparently showing no parental care for her offspring. It seems like a pretty damning verdict, but the female cuckoo by no means has an easy life.

First, she has to make an epic journey to get here, flying all the way from the Congo in central Africa, making her way across the Sahara desert, over the Mediterranean, and avoiding human and other hunters on the way. Once she arrives she must find a mate – perhaps not so tricky if he's calling as his voice carries a fair distance. The female cuckoo may lay up to 25 eggs in a season – she uses all her energy to produce eggs rather than use it for nest building, incubating and rearing the chicks. But it's not as simple as finding a nest and laying one of those 25 eggs in it...this is where the hard work really begins.



**The female cuckoo: once described, unjustly, as "lazy, flirty and reprehensible"**

She must first find a suitable nest, and it can't be just any nest. It must be the nest of the same species of bird that she was raised by – reed warblers, dunnocks and meadow pipits are the main species that are duped by cuckoos. To help ensure that her egg survives to hatching stage it must be a perfect mimic of the eggs laid by the host species and the patterning of the eggs is passed from female to female.

Now she has identified the right kind of bird, for example a reed warbler, and located their nest (which is rather tricky as any bird watchers will know) she must time things perfectly. If she is seen near the nest or laying an egg the reed warblers will be uneasy and may

well abandon the whole nest and start again rather than risk their own brood. So the cuckoo has to be sneaky and speedy.

She must not lay the first egg in the nest – the female reed warbler would wonder where it had appeared from and eject it – but she shouldn't wait for the clutch to be completed either. She must only eject one egg from the nest and replace it with her own to dupe the potential foster parents. On hatching the cuckoo chick will eject any unhatched eggs and rival chicks from the nest and then monopolise its poor harassed 'parents' who must provide food for their growing chick, who is often significantly larger than they are.

Our female cuckoo will then have to start the process all over again with her next egg. So I'd refute the claim that she's lazy. So what about reprehensible? Well, she's doing her best to ensure that her eggs and hatchlings and, indeed, her species survive. And flirty? Perhaps. As she does not need the male to help build a nest or raise the chicks perhaps she would choose a different father for each of her chicks. However, there's little chance of this as cuckoos have suffered huge declines in number over the past 20 years.

So, if the sun is shining, get out for a walk and listen out for a cuckoo 'cuckoo-ing' and see if you can spot some of those cuckoo-themed wildflowers, too. **Anna Allum**  
Visitor Experience Manager, RSPB Wiggonholt

● *Enjoy the dawn chorus on a guided walk at the RSPB, Wiggonholt. From 4.30am until 7.30am on Saturday, May 3. Price: £31-£36, which includes tea, coffee and a light breakfast. On the Bank Holiday Monday (May 5), there is a more civilised start time of 7.30am, ending at 10am, priced from £21.90-£26. For more details, and information on other events during May, visit <https://events.rspb.org.uk/events/103172>*



## Great crested grebes: heroes of wildlife recovery

At the Great Exhibition of 1876, the beautiful plumage and pelts of this fascinating water bird were exhibited by a firm of furriers, Robert Clarke and Sons, as an alternative to furs and boas. As a result, these stunning creatures were persecuted almost to extinction, their numbers being reduced to only 32 recorded breeding pairs by the latter part of the 19th century.

The RSPB website now reveals that In 1889, Emily Williamson created the Society for the Protection of Birds with one core aim – to fight a fashion for feathers and exotic plumes that were driving birds including little egrets, great crested grebes and birds of paradise towards extinction. The 'all lady' movement grew in popularity and influence. So much so, that in 1904 the society was awarded a Royal Charter, making it the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

By 2016 the British Trust for Ornithology estimated over 4,900 breeding pairs in the UK – a huge success for wildlife recovery. It just goes to show what just one individual can achieve.

My own fascination and desire to photograph these amazing birds has evolved over many years. Intrigued by the variety of postures, breeding rituals and behavioral activities, I have witnessed and photographed their early pairing, bonding, courtship displays and weed presentation rituals. These activities may be observed from early December to March in the following year. Protection of territory and mates can lead to ferocious battles.

These secretive birds will often nest deep in reed beds or under thick canopies of foliage to protect their chicks from predators including gulls, herons, magpies, pike and foxes. Mating takes place on the nest, which is uncommon

in most UK water birds. Up to six eggs, but usually four, are laid in late April or May and take around 28 days to incubate. Brooding and incubation duties are undertaken by both adults who alternate sitting, leaving the nest every 30-45 minutes to feed. As is the case with many water birds, the wet underside of the returning bird helps to create the correct humidity and moistens the constantly rotated eggs, thus essentially assisting the hatching of chicks.

The young hatch with black and white fluffy plumage and remain camouflaged on the parents' backs for several weeks, emerging only to receive food. Parents share

feeding duties and care of chicks, which become independent at around 8-10 weeks, but can still be seen demanding food from their parents. Grebes have huge lobed toes which enable them to move rapidly under water in pursuit of fish. Their diet also includes frogs, newts, small crustaceans, and larvae.

**Richard Sharman**



### March rainfall

It may come as a surprise after what appears to have been a dull, dreary and damp winter that the rainfall in February was less than half than during the corresponding month in 2024 – 73.7mm (3in) compared with 173.5mm (6 7/8 in). Despite the reduction in the amount this year, there were nevertheless 16 wet or damp days and 12 dry ones, and a distinct lack of sunshine.

*Figures compiled by Peter Daughtrey*





## Helping to conserve swifts, swallows and house martins

Paul Stevens, an acknowledged expert on swifts, swallows and house martins, will be familiar to many readers having given a talk on the subject in Amberley last summer. He has worked closely for some time with the village project advising on suitable nest sites and installing nest boxes and callers.

Swifts and house martins have now been 'red listed' in the UK due to a 50 per cent decline in their populations in the last 30 years. In the southeast of England this is likely to be as much as 70 per cent for house martins.

Climate change is causing unusual weather patterns that affect the migration and spring and summer breeding of these birds and, in turn, the availability of insects here in the UK and in Africa where these species over winter. Habitat loss causes further declines in insects and mud availability for nest building.

Loss of nesting sites when older properties are renovated so blocking up traditional nest sites, barns being converted or mud nest cups removed when decorating the external walls and soffits add further problems.

The combined issues have led to their declines including many other species. So, what can we do about this in the UK?

Due to diminishing numbers of our swifts, swallows and house martins throughout the UK, I have been using my expertise to help with their conservation. By identifying existing colonies and installing nest boxes and nest cups it is possible to turn around the fortunes of these summer visitors which are so ingrained in our culture and history.

Our current generation need to experience the presence of these summer visitors so that they, too, can conserve them in the future. Local projects that I am involved with include the Storrington group of the Sussex Wildlife Trust, fitting swift boxes in Amberley, Storrington, Pulborough and Billingshurst.

The Arundel 'Bring Back our Birds' project, surveying and identifying populations of swift, swallow and house martins, scoping potential properties for hosting nest boxes and installing around 50 nest cups and boxes in early 2024. New initiatives in Climping, Shipley, Fittleworth, Horsted Keynes and Easebourne are now underway with many other towns and villages across Sussex and the UK having similar projects.

Protecting and providing secure nesting sites is just one aspect of their conservation. Can you provide more habitat in your garden or on your land? By encouraging our native nectar and food plants for insects you are directly helping feed our insectivorous summer visitors as well as a whole host of other wildlife.



**A swallow feeding its chick on the back of a garden chair**

Can you provide a muddy patch for swallows and house martins (also song thrushes) to build their nests?

If you want to help our summer visiting swifts, swallows and martins please get in touch at [paulnatterjack@gmail.com](mailto:paulnatterjack@gmail.com)

Also check out these links: <https://housemartinconservation.com>; and [swift-conservation.org](https://swift-conservation.org)

## Talks on hedgehogs and swifts

### Hedgehogs: June 6, 7pm (St Michael's Church Hall)

With Hugh Warwick, an ecologist and author, who is also the spokesperson for the British Hedgehog Preservation Society. Advice on how to protect them and how to improve and connect hedgehog habitats. To find out more, visit <https://www.hughwarwick.com/contact/>

### Swifts, June 20, 7pm (St Michael's Church Hall)

With Edward Mayer, head of the Swift Conservation Group. He works to preserving the future of swifts, supporting them and educating people on how enhance their habitats. Learn more about these fascinating birds and find out what you can do to help them. He will be accompanied by Alison Ingram, who rehabilitates injured swifts in West Sussex, and will be displaying an exhibition of her artwork as well as answering questions about her work.

Amberley's swift project, run by Pam Keeble and Cathy Briggs, is part of Sussex Wildlife Trust's regional group, which has provided free swift boxes for the past two years plus three free swift callers that have been lent to residents. Paul Stevens, Arundel-based swift and hirundine expert, has been closely involved advising on suitable nest locations and installing callers and nest boxes.

The cost for each talk is £5 to cover costs and includes a glass of wine. To book either talk contact Cathy Briggs ([catherine.briggs@geodime.co.uk](mailto:catherine.briggs@geodime.co.uk))



## EDITORIAL

### Time for action

The latest tragedy on the B2139 – two serious accidents on the same day (March 30 which happened to be Mothering Sunday) including the death of a motorcyclist – once again highlights just how much more dangerous the road is becoming. It is not just the speed of traffic, but the volume and sheer size of vehicles. Of course, the larger HGVs are not, according to their satnavs, supposed to use the road, which as we all know is a rat-run between the A27 and A24. But the fact is they do – the biggest unable to pass each other on the narrowest stretch at Houghton.

The more irresponsible motorcyclists continue to use the straight section that extends eastwards past the football field as a racetrack, many exceeding not only the speed limit but the legal noise level as they open up the throttle.

All of which suggests that Parham Parish Council's latest plea for a reduction in the speed limit beyond the already extended 40mph section at Amberley should be implemented. While I would be reluctant to see it extended all the way from Whiteways to Storrington (as has been imposed on the A283 from Storrington to Pulborough) it may now be inevitable.

According to Parham PC, from December 2020 to December 2024 there were 17 accidents between Amberley's football field and New Town Road, Storrington, with four of these being serious. There have been other fatalities over the years, including at least one close to the junction of School Road.

A decision by West Sussex County Council and the police should now be a priority, ignoring the absurd self-imposed limit on Road Traffic Orders (RTOs) which can be processed in a year. Let's hope common sense prevails before there is another fatality or serious injury.

By the same token, the chaos caused in Amberley following the first accident on that Sunday merely emphasised the unsuitability of access through the village for any proposed extra housing on the East Street Farm fields. Amberley became totally gridlocked as diverted traffic in both directions attempted to find their way through the village.

**Mike Toynbee**

**Deadline for the June issue**

**Friday, May 16**

**Contributions should be sent to  
The Editor, Brooklands, East Street,  
Amberley, BN18 9NN**

**or e-mail [mike@brooklandsamberley.com](mailto:mike@brooklandsamberley.com)**

### Of Greatham

For peace, than knowledge more desirable,

Into your Sussex quietness I came,

When summer's green and gold and azure fell

Over the world in flame.

And peace upon your pasture lands I found,

Where grazing flocks drift on continually,

As little clouds that travel with no sound

Across a windless sky.

Out of your oaks the birds call to their mates

That brood among the pines, where hidden deep

From curious eyes a world's adventure waits

In columned choirs of sleep.

Under the calm ascension of the night

We heard the mellow lapsing and return

Of night-owls purring in their groundless flight

Through lanes of darkling fern.

Unbroken peace when all the stars were drawn

Back to their lairs of light, and ranked along

From shire to shire the downs out of the dawn

Were risen in golden song.

. . . . .

I sing of peace who have known the large unrest

Of men bewildered in their travelling,

And I have known the bridal earth unblest

By the brigades of spring.

I have known that loss. And now the broken thought

Of nations marketing in death I know,

The very winds to threnodies are wrought

That on your downlands blow.

I sing of peace. Was it but yesterday

I came among your roses and your corn?

Then momentarily amid this wrath I pray

For yesterday reborn

**John Drinkwater**



## Property Watch

### Homes for sale and to rent locally



#### Amberley

**New Barn Road** 6-bedroom detached house with swimming pool  
(Jackson-Stops, Chichester) **£2,495,000**

**High Street** 4-bedroom detached house  
(GL&Co, Storrington) **£1,850,000**

**Church Street** 4-bedroom detached house  
(Hamptons, Chichester) **£1,795,000**

**East Street** 4-bedroom detached house  
(GL&Co, Storrington) **£1,225,000**

**School Road** 2-bedroom house  
(Sims Williams, Arundel) **£895,000**

**Church Street** Grade II listed 2-bedroom cottage  
(GL&Co, Storrington) **£825,000**

**Rackham Road** 3-bedroom semi detached house  
(King & Chasemore, Storrington) **£650,000**

**Hurst Cottages, East Street** 3-bedroom bungalow  
(Joe Graham Property Sales, Bognor) **£550,000**

#### Houghton Bridge

**Riverside** Four 2-bedroom lodges (sold separately)  
(Parkmove, nationwide) **£175,000-£185,000**

**New Barn Road** 4-bedroom detached house  
(King & Chasemore, Storrington) **£650,000**

#### Houghton

**Off B2139** 5-bedroom detached house  
(Sims Williams, Arundel) **£1,200,000**

**Off B2139** 4-bedroom detached house  
(GL&Co, Storrington/Jackson-Stops, Chichester) **£1,100,000**

**B2139** 3-bedroom semi detached barn conversion  
(Henry Adams, Storrington) **£695,000**

#### Rackham

**Off Rackham Road** 5-bedroom period farmhouse with 15 acres  
(Strutt & Parker, Chichester) **£2,300,000**

**Rackham Street** 3-bedroom detached house  
(Jackson-Stops, Chichester) **£1,250,000**

### To Rent

#### Parham

**Parham Estate** 5-bedroom former farmhouse  
(GL&Co, Storrington) **£4,250pcm**

**Parham Estate** 3-/4-bedroom first floor apartment  
(GL & Co, Storrington) **£2,100pcm**

#### Houghton

**Off B2139** 3-bedroom house  
(Crossmeads, Chichester) **£1,675pcm**

### Amberley CC 2025 fixtures

<b>May 25</b>	Nuthurst (away)
<b>June 8</b>	Gully (away)
<b>15</b>	Slindon (away)
<b>22</b>	Lavant (home)
<b>29</b>	Southwater (away)
<b>July 6</b>	Crawley (home)
<b>13</b>	Yellow Stump (home)
<b>20</b>	Bury and West Burton (home)
<b>27</b>	12th Men (home)

See monthly calendar in this magazine for updates and any additional matches

<b>August 10</b>	West Chiltington & Thakeham (away)
<b>17</b>	Southwick Wanderers (home)
<b>24</b>	Arundel Grasshoppers (home)
<b>25</b>	BHM (home)
<b>31</b>	Bolney (away)

**September 7** Gully (home)  
**14** Zambuca Tigers (home)

All matches start at 1.30pm



## LOCAL INFORMATION

### Refuse & Recycling Calendar - May

Household refuse collections (**Amberley/Crossgates/Rackham, Mill Lane, High Titten, New Barn Road, Houghton Bridge, North Stoke, Rackham, Greatham and Wiggonholt**): non-recyclable waste will be collected on **Tuesdays, May 6 and 20**. Collections for mixed dry recyclable waste (blue top bins) and garden waste (brown top bins for registered users only) will be on **Tuesdays, May 13 and 27**.



For **Church Street and Hog Lane**: collections for mixed dry recyclable waste (blue top bins) will be on **Wednesdays, May 7 and 21**. Garden waste (brown top bins for registered users only) will be collected on **Mondays, May 12 and 26**. Collections for non-recyclable waste will be on **Wednesdays, May 14 and 28**.

### Amenity Tip Opening Times

**Billingshurst: Newbridge Road, RH14 9HZ**  
9am-6pm (closed Thursday and Friday)

**Bognor: Shripney Road, PO22 9SX**  
9am-6pm (closed Thursday and Friday)

**Chichester: Coach Road, Westhampnett, PO18 0NX**  
9am-6pm (closed Tuesday)

**Littlehampton: Mill Lane, Wick, BN17 7PH**  
9am-6pm (closed Tuesday and Wednesday). No trailers

Appointments are now required at all local recycling sites. Bookings can be made at any time online by visiting [www.westsussex.gov.uk/BookToRecycle](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/BookToRecycle) or by calling the Customer Service Centre on (01243) 642106. Proof of residency (ie driving licence, valid bus pass or current utility bill) is required at all WSCC recycling centres.

### Village Bus Timetable

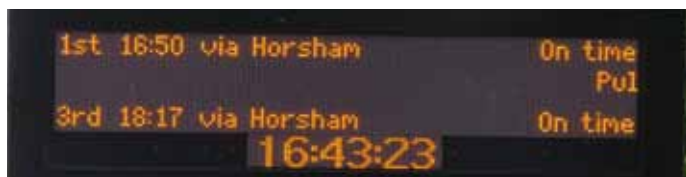
On Monday, Wednesday and Thursday every week (plus the first Tuesday each month), the Amberley and Slindon Village Bus can take you to various destinations thanks to our team of volunteer drivers. We routinely stop at a range of places in Amberley, but as this is a 'hail-and-ride' service the driver will pick up and set down at your door on request (especially useful when you are returning home with shopping), or anywhere else en route. The fare is a flat-rate £3 per return journey (£2 single fare) and Bus Pass Holders, and children under 16 travel free. Wheelchair users are welcome, but always ring ahead. To arrange a pick-up from your home, use of the bus for other community activity, or to discuss becoming a volunteer driver, please call Phil Greenwood on (01798) 831 803.

The full bus timetable can also be found on the Amberley Parish Council website: [www.amberley-pc.org.uk/](http://www.amberley-pc.org.uk/)

Amberley and Slindon Bus timetable 2024									
Monday AM		Monday PM		First Tuesday of the Month		Wednesday		Thursday	
Pulborough/Storrington		Bognor		Worthing		Chichester		Rustington	
Out		Out		Out		Out		Out	
Amberley Square	10.15	Rackham Street	12.35	Havenwood	9.15	Rackham Street	9.35	Rackham Street	9.35
Hurst Cottages	10.18	The Sportsman	12.38	(via Shellbridge Road)		The Sportsman	9.38	The Sportsman	9.38
The Sportsman	10.20	Hurst Cottages	12.39	Slindon Coronation Hall	9.20	Hurst Cottages	9.39	Hurst Cottages	9.39
Rackham Street	10.23	Amberley Square	12.41	Top Road/Church Hill	9.23	Amberley Square	9.41	Amberley Square	9.41
Storrington	10.35	Bridge Inn	12.43	Houghton	9.33	Bridge Inn	9.43	Bridge Inn	9.43
Pulborough (Sainsburys)	11.00	Houghton	12.45	Bridge Inn	9.35	Houghton	9.45	Houghton	9.45
		Slindon Coronation Hall	12.52	Amberley Square	9.37	Slindon Coronation Hall	9.52	Slindon Coronation Hall	9.52
		Top Road/Church Hill	12.54	Hurst Cottages	9.40	Top Road/Church Hill	9.54	Top Road/Church Hill	9.54
		Havenwood Park	13.01	The Sportsman	9.42	Havenwood Park	10.01	Fontwell Village	9.57
		Arundel Road, Fontwell Village	13.07	Rackham Street	9.45	Arundel Road, Fontwell Village	10.04	Havenwood Park	10.00
		Bognor Regis (Morrisons)	13.25	Worthing - South Street	10.15	Chichester Market	10.18	Queens Street Arundel	10.05
				Haskins Garden Centre	10.30	Chichester Cathedral	10.23	Littlehampton	10.20
								Rustington (Waitrose)	10.30
Return		Return		Return		Return		Return	
Pulborough	12.03	Bognor Regis (Morrisons)	15.30	Haskins Garden Centre	12.50	Chichester Cathedral	13.30	Rustington (Waitrose)	12.15
Pulborough Tesco	12.05	Arundel Road, Fontwell Village	15.41	Worthing (Sea front, M&S)	13.05	Arundel Road, Fontwell Village	13.45	Littlehampton	12.25
Storrington	12.25	Havenwood Park	15.46	Rackham Street	13.30	Havenwood Park	13.48	Queens Street Arundel	12.40
Rackham Street	12.35	Slindon Coronation Hall	15.52	The Sportsman	13.33	Slindon Coronation Hall	13.58	Havenwood Park	12.45
		Top Road/Church Hill	15.56	Hurst Cottages	13.35	Top Road/Church Hill	14.00	Fontwell Village	12.50
		Houghton	16.06	Amberley Square	13.37	Houghton	14.10	Slindon Coronation Hall	12.53
		Bridge Inn	16.08	Bridge Inn	13.40	Bridge Inn	14.12	Top Road/Church Hill	12.55
		Rackham Street	16.13	Houghton	13.42	Rackham Street	14.17	Houghton	13.05
		Sportsman	16.17	Slindon Coronation Hall	14.00	The Sportsman	14.20	Bridge Inn	13.07
		Hurst Cottages	16.18	Top Road/Church Hill	14.02	Hurst Cottages	14.21	Rackham Street	13.12
		Amberley Square	16.20	(via Shellbridge Road)		Amberley Square	14.23	The Sportsman	13.15
				Havenwood	14.09			Hurst Cottages	13.16
								Amberley Square	13.18



## LOCAL INFORMATION



## Southern Trains Timetable (from December 15, 2024)

### Monday-Friday

**From Amberley to London (Victoria except here shown):** 05.55 and then at 18 and 48 minutes past the hour until 21.48 then 23.05 (change at Three Bridges).

*Typical journey time to London Victoria 1hr 27mins*

**From London Victoria to Amberley:** 05.54, 06.35, and then at 05 and 35 minutes past the hour until 22.35.

*Typical journey time from London Victoria 1hr 23mins*

**From Amberley to Arundel and beyond (all Bognor Regis except as shown):** 06.42 (PH), 07.13, 07.58 and then at 28 and 58 minutes past the hour until 22.28 then 22.51 (P&S), 23.28, 23.53 (C).

PH – Portsmouth Harbour; P&S – Portsmouth & Southsea;

C – Chichester

### Saturday

**From Amberley to London:** 06.29, 06.48 and then at 18 and 48 minutes past the hour until 21.48 then 23.04 (change at Gatwick Airport).

*Typical journey time to London Victoria 1hr 27mins*

**From London Victoria to Amberley:** 06.05, 06.35 and then at 05 and 35 minutes past the hour until 20.35 then 21.05, 21.35, 22.05, 22.35.

*Typical journey time from London Victoria 1hr 23mins*

**From Amberley to Arundel and beyond (all Bognor Regis except as shown):** 06.43 (PH), 07.28, 07.58 and then 28 and 58 minutes past the hour until 22.28 then 22.51 (P&S), 23.28, 23.53 (C).

PH – Portsmouth Harbour; P&S – Portsmouth & Southsea;

C – Chichester

### Sunday

**From Amberley to London Victoria:** 07.58, and then at 58 minutes past the hour until 21.58.

*Typical journey time to London Victoria 1hr 24mins*

**From London Victoria to Amberley:** 07.32, 08.32, 09.35 and then at 35 minutes past the hour until 22.35.

*Typical journey time from London Victoria 1hr 20mins*

**From Amberley to Arundel and beyond (all Bognor Regis and Portsmouth Harbour (divides at Barnham) except as shown):** 09.02B, 09.58PH 10.58 and then 55 minutes past the hour until 22.56B and 23.55B.

B – Bognor Regis; PH – Portsmouth Harbour.

Compiled by Malcolm Phasey



## The Post Office is now your local bank

No need to drive miles to your nearest branch

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### NEW OPENING HOURS

● Monday & Friday 9am-1pm ● Closed Wednesday

● Tuesday 1pm-4pm ● Thursday 1pm-5pm

### BANKING

Banking available for all major banks ie cash withdrawals, paying in cash and cheques etc

### FOREIGN CURRENCY

Euros on demand. All other currencies can be ordered and received within 24 hours

## Local Farmers' Markets

### Storrington Community Market

Village Hall, West Street      **Fridays (9.45am-11.15am)**

### Chichester

East and North Streets      **First and third Fridays (9am-2pm)**

### Ford

Ford Airfield      **First Saturday (7.30am-2pm)**

### Steyning

High Street Car Park      **First Saturday (9am-1pm)**

### Arundel

Town Centre      **Third Saturday (9am-1pm)**

### Pulborough Village Market

Village Hall      **Fourth Saturday (9am-12.30pm)**

### Petworth

Leconfield Hall and Square      **Fourth Saturday (9am-1pm)**



## DIVERSIONS - MAY

1. Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* was written to celebrate the defeat of Napoleon in which city?
2. Which well known singer wrote Sinead O'Connor's hit *Nothing Compares 2U*?
3. What breed of spaniel has been selected as Best in Show more times than any other?
4. What were lost by King John, melted down by Oliver Cromwell and almost stolen by Thomas Blood?
5. With which film would you most associate the famous quote "Rosebud"?
6. What was unusual about the 1912 Boat Race?
7. What is the maximum number of horses allowed to run in the Grand National?
8. Which is the largest country in the world with only one time zone?
9. On what side of the road do the Japanese drive?
10. What was the name of the ship that hit a reef in Alaska in 1989 and caused a major oil spill?
11. Which stately home was used for the filming of *Downton Abbey*?
12. Who was the last governor of Hong Kong?
13. On which Scottish river does Inverness stand?
14. Of which US state is Topeka the capital?
15. Which actress spoke the line "Play it Sam... play As Time Goes By" in *Casablanca*?
16. What are Grey Dagger, Forester and Dingy Footman species of?
17. What was the original name of the Royal Air Force?
18. What is measured on the Mohs scale?
19. Which football team has the nickname The Blades?
20. Who had a hit with *24 Hours from Tulsa* in 1963?
21. What depth is a fathom?
22. *The Black Pig* was a ship belonging to which fictional character?
23. What is the musical term for 'quick' or 'lively'? Clue: it was also the name of a car
24. Who wrote *The Constant Gardener*?
25. What is nori, the traditional wrapping of sushi, made from? (a) Seaweed (b) Soy Paper (c) Rice paper (d) Bamboo leaves
26. Whose old man was a dustman? What did he wear and where did he live?

Answers on page 35

### Quick crossword

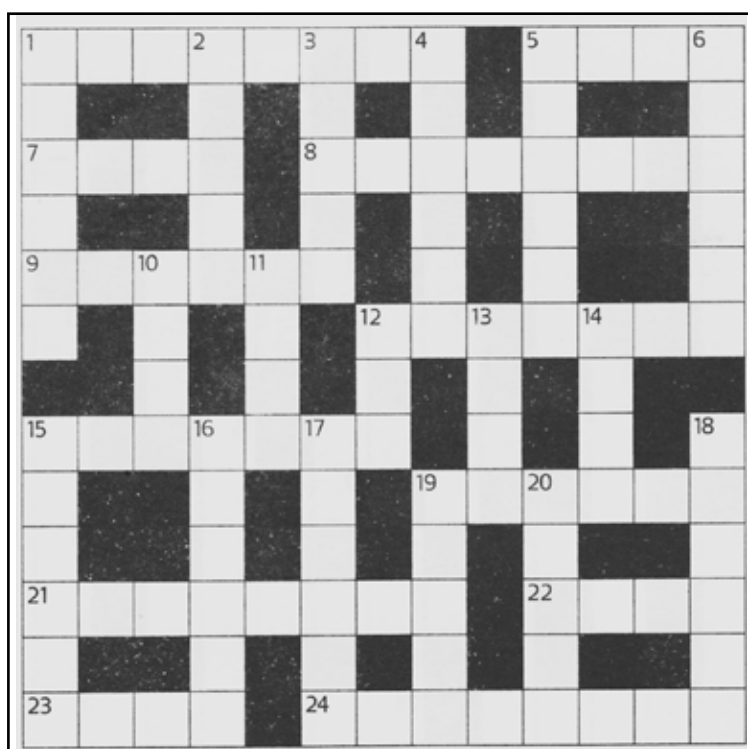
#### Across

- |                               |                              |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Base for a statue (8)      | 4. Clothes cupboard (6)      |
| 5. Yarn (4)                   | 5. Top of a tank (6)         |
| 7. Mud (4)                    | 6. Absolve (6)               |
| 8. Exact (8)                  | 10. Portable shelter (4)     |
| 9. Livestock (6)              | 11. Entice (4)               |
| 12. Guard (7)                 | 12. Female swan (3)          |
| 15. Motif (7)                 | 13. Stare lecherously (4)    |
| 19. Period of instruction (6) | 14. Greek God of Love (4)    |
| 21. Wealthy (8)               | 15. Malayan jungle knife (6) |
| 22. Wheelspindle (4)          | 16. Pill (6)                 |
| 23. Oversupply (4)            | 17. Second showing (6)       |
| 24. At his pen [anag](8)      | 18. Wartime detainee (6)     |

#### Down

- |                             |                        |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Porous volcanic rock (6) | 19. Liquid measure (5) |
| 2. Throw out (5)            | 20. Bog (5)            |
| 3. Commerce (5)             |                        |

Solution on page 35





## CALENDAR OF EVENTS / TIDE TIMETABLE

### 1st Thursday

**Cookery Masterclass**, Parham House,  
10am\*

### 4th Sunday

**Pressed Flower & Embroidery  
Exhibition**, Parham House,  
12pm- 5pm (until May 11)

### 5th Monday

**White Stork and Nature Revival  
Festival**, Chanctonbury Leisure Centre,  
Storrington, from 10.30am

**Motorcycle Day**, Amberley Museum,  
from 10am

### 6th Tuesday

**Talk:** Paul Cézanne The Arts Society  
West Sussex, Fittleworth Village  
Hall, 2pm

### 7th Wednesday

**Talk:** Elisabeth-Louise Vigée Le  
Brun, The Arts Society South  
Downs, Fittleworth Village Hall,  
10.45am

### 8th Thursday

**Amberley Parish Council meeting**,  
St Michael's Church Hall, 7.30pm

### 10th Saturday

**Eco Hub & Repair Cafe**, St Michael's  
Church Hall, 10am-12.30pm

### 11th Sunday

**Southern Classics Car Show**, Amberley  
Museum, from 10am

### 12th Monday

**Quiz night**, The Sportsman, 7.30pm

### 13th Tuesday

**Parham Parish Council meeting**,  
Old School, Rackham, 7.30pm

### 14th Wednesday

**Film: Conclave**, Sullington Hall,  
Storrington, 7.30pm

### 17th Saturday

**Goodwoof**, Goodwood, from 9.30am

**Home Front Weekend**, Amberley  
Museum, from 10am

Littlehampton Tide Timetable – May						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 <sup>st</sup> High 02.13 Low 08.18 High 14.43 Low 20.40	2 <sup>nd</sup> High 02.58 Low 09.06 High 15.33 Low 21.31	3 <sup>rd</sup> High 03.48 Low 09.58 High 16.28 Low 22.27
4 <sup>th</sup> High 04.48 Low 11.01 High 17.34 Low 23.42	5 <sup>th</sup> High 05.58 Low 12.24 High 18.49	6 <sup>th</sup> Low 01.09 High 07.22 Low 13.42 High 20.11	7 <sup>th</sup> Low 02.18 High 08.42 Low 14.43 High 21.13	8 <sup>th</sup> Low 03.13 High 09.38 Low 15.31 High 22.02	9 <sup>th</sup> Low 03.57 High 10.22 Low 16.13 High 22.41	10 <sup>th</sup> Low 04.34 High 11.01 Low 16.50 High 23.18
11 <sup>th</sup> Low 05.11 High 11.36 Low 17.26 High 23.51	12 <sup>th</sup> Low 05.44 High 12.08 Low 18.00	13 <sup>th</sup> High 00.20 Low 06.18 High 12.39 Low 18.34	14 <sup>th</sup> High 00.48 Low 06.51 High 13.08 Low 19.07	15 <sup>th</sup> High 01.17 Low 07.24 High 13.39 Low 19.39	16 <sup>th</sup> High 01.47 Low 07.55 High 14.13 Low 20.12	17 <sup>th</sup> High 02.21 Low 08.30 High 14.49 Low 20.49
18 <sup>th</sup> High 03.00 Low 09.10 High 15.33 Low 21.36	19 <sup>th</sup> High 03.47 Low 10.01 High 16.28 Low 22.34	20 <sup>th</sup> High 04.49 Low 11.03 High 17.40 Low 23.47	21 <sup>st</sup> High 06.10 Low 12.18 High 19.01	22 <sup>nd</sup> Low 01.04 High 07.31 Low 13.33 High 20.08	23 <sup>rd</sup> Low 02.12 High 08.35 Low 14.37 High 21.05	24 <sup>th</sup> Low 03.10 High 09.31 Low 15.32 High 21.58
25 <sup>th</sup> Low 04.01 High 10.22 Low 16.23 High 22.46	26 <sup>th</sup> Low 04.49 High 11.12 Low 17.12 High 23.35	27 <sup>th</sup> Low 05.39 High 12.04 Low 18.01	28 <sup>th</sup> High 00.23 Low 06.27 High 12.55 Low 18.50	29 <sup>th</sup> High 01.13 Low 07.16 High 13.45 Low 19.39	30 <sup>th</sup> High 02.01 Low 08.06 High 14.36 Low 20.29	31 <sup>st</sup> High 02.49 Low 08.55 High 15.26 Low 21.20

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### 18th Sunday

**Goodwoof**, Goodwood, from 9.30am

**Home Front Weekend**, Amberley  
Museum, from 10am

### 21st Wednesday

**Association of Sussex Artists'  
Exhibition**, Parham House,  
12 noon-5pm (until June 8)

### 24th Saturday

**Amberley Revival**, from 9am

### 25th Sunday

**James Bond Day**, Amberley  
Museum, from 10am

### 25th Sunday

**Cricket:** Amberley CC v Nuthurst  
(away)

### 28th Wednesday

**Half-term activities**, Amberley  
Museum (until Friday), daily from  
10am

### Dates for the diary

Talk on hedgehogs (Church Hall)  
**June 6**

Action Medical Research Plant Sale  
**June 14**

Sussex Day at Parham House  
**June 15**

Talk on swifts (Church Hall)  
**June 20**

Amberley Roving Supper  
**June 28**

Plant Fairs Roadshow, Parham  
**July 6**

Sussex Steam Fair, Parham  
**July 12-13**

Village Picnic, Millennium Green  
**August 23**



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To advertise in these columns, contact Mike Toynbee on 01798 831 114 or e-mail [mike@brooklandsamberley.com](mailto:mike@brooklandsamberley.com)

## Answers to Diversions (see page 33)

1. Moscow 2. Prince 3. English cocker spaniel (seven times) 4. The Crown Jewels 5. *Citizen Kane* 6. Both crews sank and the race was held again 7. 34 (reduced last year from 40) 8. China (it spans five zones) 9. Left 10. *Exxon Valdez* 11. Highclere Castle in Hampshire 12. Chris Patten 13. The River Ness 14. Kansas 15. Ingrid Bergman 16. Moths 17. Royal Flying Corps 18. The hardness of minerals 19. Sheffield United 20. Gene Pitney 21. The Admiralty defined a fathom to be a thousandth of an imperial nautical mile (which was 6,080ft) ie 6.08ft. In practice, the fathom was always regarded as exactly 6ft 22. Captain Pugwash 23. Allegro (Austin Allegro). From the Italian meaning cheerful 24. John Le Carre 25. Seaweed 26. Lonnie Donegan. He wore 'cor blimey trousers and lived in a council flat

## Crossword solution

**Across:** 1. Pedestal 5. Tale 7. Mire 8. Accurate 9. Cattle 12. Protect 15. Pattern 19. Lesson 21. Affluent 22. Axle 23. Glut 24. Thespian

**Down:** 1. Pumice 2. Eject 3. Trade 4. Locker 5. Turret 6. Exempt 10. Tent 11. Lure 12. Pen 13. Ogle 14. Eros 15. Parang 16. Tablet 17. Repeat 18. Intern 19. Litre 20. Swamp



## PARISH DIRECTORY

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Home Safety Checks	West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service.....	03458729719
Member of Parliament	Andrew Griffith (andrew.griffith.mp@parliament.uk).....	0207 219 4557
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Parham Parish Council Clerk	Vicky Spiers (clerk@parham-pc.org.uk).....	01903 20894
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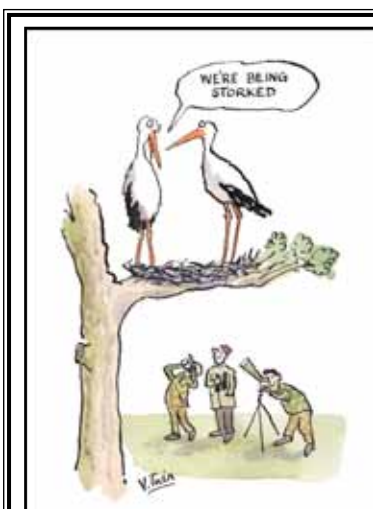


## It's a bun-derful life!

Bystander enjoyed Buns in the Square – St Michael's Church 'pop-up' cafe on Good Friday as part of the Easter celebrations (bun for the road, please). The only disappointment was there was not a stitch of lycra in sight ... until it was pointed out that's an altogether different gathering of buns – perhaps one of those is needed, though, to get rid of those muffin tops! (All buns intended.)

## Bunny on a bus

While on the subject of Bun-nies, there was an unusual Easter passenger on the new village bus to Chichester. Mike Attard's naughty cat had bitten the bunny's foot and the bunny was hitching a ride to the vet. Good to know the new bus is already welcoming a diverse mix of passengers ... although Bystander thought rabbits normally travel by hareplane. (Enough puns! - Ed)



V. Twin's (aka Grahame Joseph) latest cartoon, a timely reminder that there is a White Stork and Nature Revival Festival taking place in Storrington this coming Bank Holiday Monday (May 5). It's a local celebration of the successful reintroduction of the white stork and to mark their return after their remarkable migratory journey across Africa and Europe. For more details, see page 19



Pictured left enjoying hot cross buns and coffee (from left to right) Hazel Allinson, Ros and Tim Simpson, and Emma and Graham Elliott. Pictured above (from left to right) Pam Keeble, Sue Adams and her grandson Matthijs, Sarah Fish, Jill Adams and Susan Watson.

## In robust defence of 'ladies of experience'

Inveterate letter writer Sue Pheasey was moved to put pen to paper (or rather, fingers to keyboard) and write to *The Times* last month taking to task renowned neurosurgeon Henry Marsh for stereotyping grannies (ie older women) in a jaw droppingly crass and patronising remark. Ageism against women is one of the last socially acceptable prejudices and Bystander congratulates Sue for robustly defending 'ladies of experience' in such a prominent platform as *The Times*!

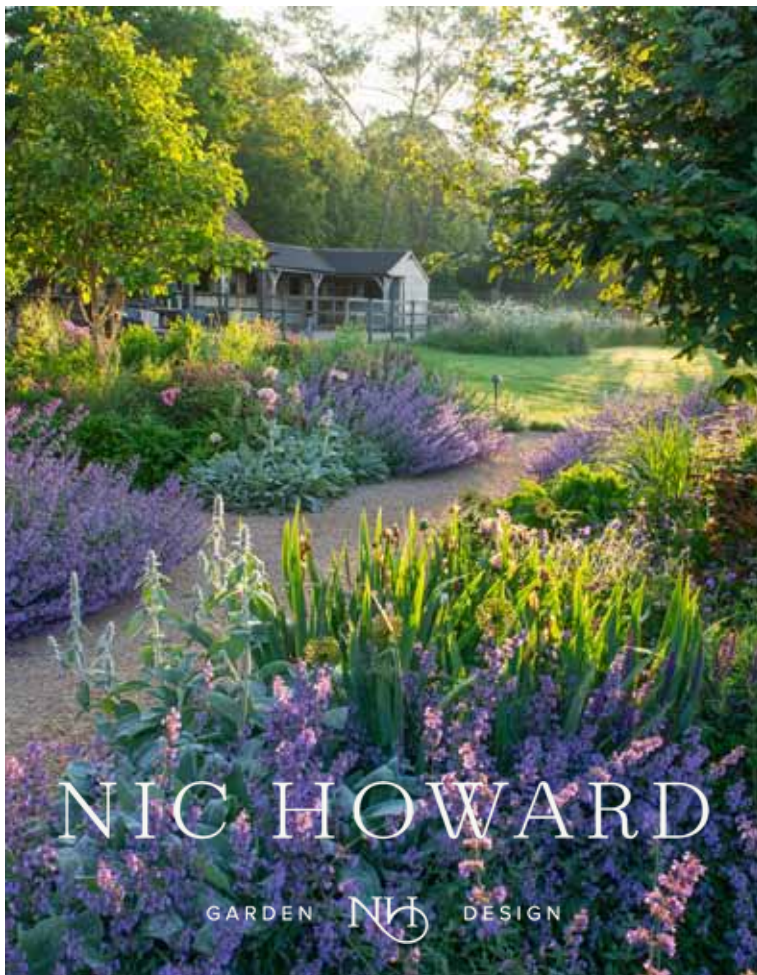
It's the latest in a long line of letters (37 in fact) that Sue has had published in *The Times*, *Sunday Times* and the *Saturday* magazine in the last 25 years or so, many occupying the coveted 'bottom right' slot on *The Times*' Letters page. Sue has written on a variety of topics as diverse as the importance of expensive shoes, mangled surnames, address protocol in Costa Rica and the perils of Ozempic.

It works out at an average of one letter a year, although there were some years when Sue was too busy to bother and "*the iPad makes it much easier than finding pen, paper, envelope and stamp. To say nothing of walking to a letter box. I do slightly miss the days when one's postal address was published as the letters in green ink which arrived a few days later were most amusing*".

Only the most elegant and succinct letters are published in *The Times* – 37 letters must be approaching a record. Bystander is impressed!

## That first cuckoo

And while on the subject of letters to *The Times* ... It may be a myth that they publish letters on the first cuckoo call of spring ... but the cheery Gaggles from Sue Haynes, Janet Aidin and Malcolm Pheasey are too good to miss – if not *The Times*, then Wildbrooks! There is something deeply comforting about the return of our migrant birds. They've made it again / Which means the globe's still working' as Ted Hughes wrote.



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