



# Speldhurst News

**March 2025**

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# Welcome & Contents

Dear Readers,

I happen to be the privileged keeper of a character cat, but a character in the sense that he is incredibly lazy and completely motivated by what the weather's doing. As I write this it is very grey and drizzly and he has spent several hours on the windowsill audibly grumbling at all the birds that fly past, clearly suggesting that they should come back on a better day! I hope that by the time you read this spring will be putting in an appearance and the cat will have felt able to spend some time in the outdoor world.

Thank you to all our contributors this month—please send us your news for the next issue. See details below.

Best wishes

Andrea

News Editors: Maria Turner, Andrea Burgess & Judith Malim

Please send emails before 10th March 2025 for the April Issue to: [speldhurst.news@gmail.com](mailto:speldhurst.news@gmail.com). Word, Publisher or pdf files preferred.

## Inside this month....

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SPELDHURST NEWS endeavours to include articles in addition to village, church and chapel news. These are taken in good faith and without prejudice; therefore the committee will not be held responsible for the accuracy of the content, nor will it be held responsible for any work or treatment received from the advertisers. Readers should satisfy themselves of advertisers' abilities before accepting a job quotation or undertaking a course of treatment. All articles & inclusions should be sent as a word, pdf or Publisher file. The editors reserve the right to amend submissions where they feel it is appropriate.

# Diary at a Glance

## March

Mondays	Library with Author Workshop Mon 10th	p.5
Mondays 10th & 24th	Bumps and Babes	p.3
Wed & Fri	Praise & Play (excluding school holidays)	p.3
Sat 1st	Penshurst Farmers' Market	p.10
	Blackham Village Market	p.17
	Who let the Dads out?	p.22
Mon 3rd	Speldhurst Parish Council Meeting	p.8
	Speldhurst Lunch Club	p.12
Sun 23rd	Remembrance Service	p.20
	Tonbridge Music Club	p.24
Wed 26th	Craft Workshop - Resin Flowers	p.6



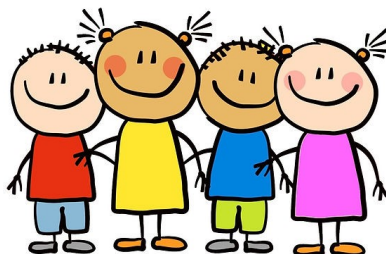
# Local News & Events

## What's on in Speldhurst for the Under 5's in March

Spring is well underway now with snowdrops, daffodils and crocuses blooming everywhere. Our groups are blooming too. Bumps and Babes is a coffee morning for new Mums. We meet fortnightly on Mondays from 10.30 am in each other's homes. This month we meet on the 10th & 24th March, so do get in touch with Jenny if you have an under 2 and would like to join us. All are welcome.

Praise and Play, the St Mary's Toddler Group, meets on Wednesdays from 9.30 –11.00am and Fridays from 9.00 - 10.30am in the church. We have great fun together. There's lots of time for free play for the children and a craft too. Towards the end of the session we gather together for a story and a sing song and also to ring the church bell, which the children love, before refreshments are served. So, if you've not joined us before do come along either day. You'd be very welcome.

Meanwhile if you are new to the village and have pre-school children, or know someone in that position, do get in touch with Jenny on 01892 541200 or 07891318123 or at [jenny50fitz@gmail.com](mailto:jenny50fitz@gmail.com)



### **Speldhurst Preschool Opening April 2025**

We are delighted to announce that following a successful OFSTED registration, Speldhurst Preschool will be opening on Tuesday 22nd April 2025 for the summer term.

Located in the Village Hall and operating on a term-time basis, the Preschool will be open from 9.00am to 3.00pm Monday to Friday, providing care and education for children from 2 years old until school age.

For more information or to register your child please contact us at [hello@speldhurstpreschool.co.uk](mailto:hello@speldhurstpreschool.co.uk) or on 07984 793 974. Alternatively, we will be at the village hall every Tuesday morning starting from 25th February, so please feel free to drop in for a chat.

We look forward to meeting you.

Dominic, Emma & Karen

Owner, Manager & Preschool Leader

### **ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION**

I am afraid that it is now time to collect our annual subscription for our village magazine .We have recently collected this sub in the autumn due to covid but we must now revert to the spring to keep our cashflow in order. We are currently keeping our annual fee at £5, having raised our advertising rates to try to cover some increased costs. We hope that you will be happy to pay your annual sub when collected in the envelope to be provided in the next edition. Your continued prompt help will be gratefully appreciated as the village newsletter is self financing with all time-editorial and other being given on a voluntary basis!

With many thanks

David Lamey

Hon treasurer for the Speldhurst News committee

Speldhurst Book Club - Author Event  
Speldhurst Village Hall  
Monday 10th March 2.00-3.00pm  
**WORKSHOP**

Local author Sarah Jane Butler discusses and reads from her recently published book - **STARLING**  
Free entry - everyone welcome!

*"A beautifully written debut. Sarah Jane Butler explores the challenges of treading lightly in this modern world, the power of community and the process of recovering from difficult mothering."*



Sarah lives in rural Sussex just over the border from where she grew up in Kent. Her novel *Starling* was published in 2022 and Judith Heneghan wrote, "Sarah Jane Butler writes with a visceral lyricism: she doesn't so much observe the natural world as plunge us into its ditches, woods and rivers." She is currently writing a non-fiction book about rivers and people through time, which will be published in 2027 by September Publishing. Her short story 'The Swimmer' appeared in *Best British Short Stories 2011*, and she has performed her work in pubs, festival tents and a disused light vessel. <https://www.sarahjanebutlerauthor.co.uk>



# CRAFTS WORKSHOP

**MAR  
26**

**RESIN  
FLOWERS**



## Where/when is it?

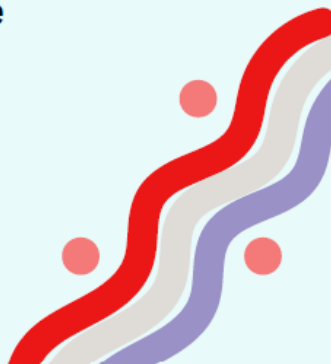
Kent cottage, Barden Road,  
Speldhurst TN3 0LE  
7.30pm - 10pm  
Maximum 6 people

## How much does it cost?

£20 - which includes 2.5 hours of tuition, coffee/tea and biscuits.  
And of course you get to take home your hand-made flowers. Lots of colours and designs to choose from

## How do I book?

**CONTACT JULIE ON  
07917 606542 OR 01892 863300**



# OF CALENDAR CRAFTS

**MAR  
26**

**RESIN FLOWERS**



**RESIN BOARD  
AND COASTERS**

**APR  
15**

**MAY  
11**

**PYROGRAPHY -  
BOX OR BOARD**



**GLASS PAINTING**

**JUN  
2**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT  
JULIE ON 07917 606542 OR 01892 863300**

## Speldhurst Brownies and Rainbows need your help!



The community is extremely fortunate to have four very successful Girl Guiding Groups meeting in the village every week.

Rainbows (girls aged 5-7. Meeting Tuesday 4.45pm - 5.45pm)

Brownies (girls aged 7-10. Meeting Tuesday 6pm - 7.30pm)

Guides and Rangers (girls aged 10 -14. Meeting Thursday 6.30pm – 8pm)

The groups meet weekly during term time working on badges, growing our skills and the girls' self-confidence, playing games and having lots of fun.

The current team of volunteers has been in place for over 25+ years. We are looking to future proof these groups with some additional help. If you value this work, we are looking for people with a passion and energy to help for a few hours on Tuesday evenings with either Rainbows and Brownies or Thursday evenings for Guides and Rangers. The girls are a lovely and lively bunch and working with them is extremely rewarding and fun.

If you are interested and would like to know more, please contact Louise Scott on [firstspeldhurstbrownies@gmail.com](mailto:firstspeldhurstbrownies@gmail.com)





## **NEWS FROM SPELDHURST PARISH COUNCIL**

### **SPELDHURST PARISH PRECEPT 2025/26**



Every year we carefully consider our finances and determine what the parish precept will be for the coming year. The precept is the portion of Council Tax you pay to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, which they collect on our behalf.

The precept for 2025/26 was agreed at our Full Council meeting on the 4th of January when councillors approved a total precept of £245,361. Compared to 2024/25, this is an increase of £19,681 or 8.5% for a band D property in Speldhurst parish.

As always, councillors try to keep increases as low as possible and extract value for money from all the services we provide. Despite our best efforts, our cost base is increasing, and this is reflected in our decision to increase the precept.

To provide some transparency on how your precept will be spent, here is a breakdown of costs:

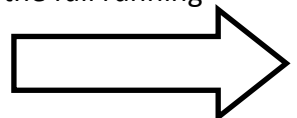
We will spend about £36,000 on the repayment of loans for the parish office building, and the Speldhurst chapel site which we have purchased to safeguard the long-term future of Speldhurst Community Shop and Post Office (read more about this loan at [www.speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk) ).

We will spend £97,000 on personnel costs for the 4 part-time staff we employ, and a further £24,000 on running the parish office.

After covering these fixed costs, we will primarily use the remainder of the precept for various services that benefit the parish and to maintain parish council-owned green spaces.

We will award various grants to local organisations and groups with a connection to the parish.

We subsidize the pavilion at Langton Green Recreation Ground, where Langton Community Hub and Langton Green Community Sports Association are based, as hire income does not cover the full running costs of the building. For 2025/26 we have budgeted just under £14,000 for this.



We maintain some reserves\* for capital works or unplanned expenditures such as the replacement of equipment in the children's playground. A single item can easily exceed £20,000 and the recent replacement of the rubber matting surface cost over £10,000.

\*These reserves have decreased over the past few years as we have drawn on them to keep precept increases as low as possible.

Would you like to know more about the precept and how it is spent? Our Clerk Katie Neve will happily answer your questions (contact info. below).

#### PLANNING APPLICATIONS – STAY UP TO DATE

A reminder that Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (TWBC) no longer writes to notify you when a neighbour submits a planning application. Instead, they post planning application notices on telegraph posts, fences, or gates near the relevant property. However, these fliers are not always posted in the most visible places, and they can come loose and fall off. So, the most reliable way to stay up to date is by signing up for planning notifications on the TWBC website:

<https://tunbridgewells.gov.uk/planning/applications/notifications>

#### FULL COUNCIL MEETING – EVERYONE WELCOME

7.30 pm, Monday 3rd March, Palmer Room, Langton Green Village Hall  
TO CONTACT THE PARISH COUNCIL:

Call the Clerk, Katie Neve on 01892 862927/07760 769513 or email [clerk@speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**Penhurst Farmers' Market will be on  
Saturday 1st March 9.30am—12.00pm**

# Speldhurst Chapel Project

## Update

As I am sure you know from last month's article in the Speldhurst News, the future of the village shop and post office has been secured. Wonderful news but now it's all systems go to renovate the Chapel as the shop's new purpose-built home.

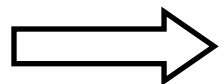


But as important as structural surveys and technical drawings are, the first call to action was to clear the hall last month. The Speldhurst Chapel Committee opened its doors on a bright sunny Saturday morning to what can only be described as one of the biggest and most unusual second-hand sales the village has ever known.

Everything had to go – including the kitchen sink!

The curtains were sold, music speakers found new homes, and a beaten up old wooden plant stand destined for firewood now stands cleaned and beautifully polished in a cottage in Leigh. Real 'Money for Nothing' moments of recycling, although not quite for 'nothing' as all the proceeds are going towards the renovation. A total of more than £500 was raised with the bonus that the Chapel's unwanted items found a new lease of life, benefiting other organisations in the village from the fete committee to the George and Dragon, the Village Hall, and even Penshurst Place. A hidden treasure was also discovered. It was not a Rembrandt sadly but a beautiful old arched iron fireplace revealed behind some panelling and plans are for it to be restored to take pride of place in the new renovation.

Meanwhile exploratory holes have been dug inside the building in preparation for the works which are due to start this month (March) whilst outside the keen gardeners amongst the Committee and other volunteers have been busy. Overgrown greenery has been removed and two sentinel yews have been chopped back in the hope that they will become beautiful examples of yew



bushes with new healthy growth - surviving reminders of the old Chapel garden. Neighbours are also delighted that they now have unobscured views over the valley towards Bidborough. Volunteers are also on standby to clear the rockery of perennial weeds and Committee member Debbie Cambridge who is leading the working parties said: 'We hope to get this all done before the building work starts – weather permitting. A big thank you to everyone who has helped so far and offered to help.'

The plan is to document the work with regular photographs as a historic record so we will keep you updated.

And what about the kitchen sink?

Well that went to Speldhurst school for the children's 'muddy play' area.



### SPELDHURST LUNCH CLUB

Lunch club meets in the Village Hall for good company and a delicious, hot, two-course meal with tea or coffee on the first Monday of the month from noon until about 1.30pm at a cost of £8.

If you would like to come along, ring Jan on 07808 299628 or 01892 863 931 who will give you more information.



Did you know that Chocolate's 4000 year history began in what is present day Mexico where the first cacao plants were found? The Olmec, one of the earliest civilisations in Latin America, drank chocolate during rituals and used it as medicine. Now it is one of the world's favourite sweet treats - not to mention its popularity amongst our Speldhurst children – and this term Year 6 pupils will be learning more (and making their own chocs) at Temper Temper's chocolate experience in Tunbridge Wells.

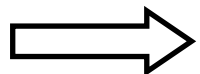
This school visit is all part of Russet Class's Mexican theme which embraces the history and culture of the country and its people and included making these wonderful masks.



Nearer to home another school trip offered Year 4 children in Empire Class the opportunity to step back in time and be a Viking for a day in a themed experience at the Kent Life living museum. In this full day of hands-on workshops and demonstrations, children visit a Viking market and make beautiful jewellery. They also discover how the Vikings fared in their life at sea, what they got up to as fearsome raiders of coastal communities and much, much more!

Meanwhile back at school, nothing frees the mind and imagination more than stories and the written word and that's what World Book Day on March 6<sup>th</sup> is all about – inspiring a love of reading. The children enjoy nothing more than dressing up as characters from their favourite books to take part in a range of activities from 'stop, drop and read' to seeing their teachers and support staff act out the story of a much-loved book.

Also closer to home the School's younger Year 1 children in Jazz class went on a special walk, navigating their way around the village and jotting down landmarks and things they saw on the way. Back in class they created their own maps from what



they'd seen, noting the importance of observing the world around us to navigate their way – and there wasn't a Google map in sight!

The village roads also provide the location for the cycle training programme which the final year pupils in Russet class do every year, before they head off to secondary school. Bikeability provides children with a life skill that has long-lasting benefits including a way of staying fit and healthy whilst enjoying sustainable transport which supports the culture, ethos and environment of a healthy school and even key areas of learning such as literacy, maths, science and geography. Yet I am reliably informed that only 2% of the UK population use a bicycle for their journeys. So it is hoped this certificate will be a passport to a future that encourages more sustainable travel.



Music at Speldhurst has also always been a much-loved part of school life with its own small orchestral group and peripatetic music teachers visiting the school to provide lessons on a wide array of instruments. This term the current group of learners came together to perform to their parents and carers - a wonderful afternoon showcasing musical talent.

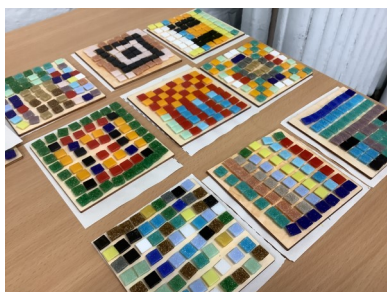
The support of parents is really important not only to the children but to the school, particularly the PTA who rounded off last term by organising a Valentine disco. Both KS1 and KS2 enjoyed bopping along to the latest tunes and helped raising much needed funds towards upgrading classroom technology for the pupils including iPads. Our fabulous PTA also hosted an Online Auction of all manner of exciting treats and experiences from a photography session to babysitting, a classroom party hosted by the teachers to a chance 'to be school caretaker for a day' – surprisingly one of the most popular lots.

Monies raised by the PTA all go to make the School the best it can possibly be - and their fund-raising efforts recently helped pay for a new



play enrichment scheme called OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning). The award winning mentored programme ensures that each child in the school has had an amazing hour of high-quality play every day ‘cos as the saying goes “all work and no play.....”

Now before I leave you dear reader, I want to share with you my favourite photos of pupil’s creative work in class this term. Year 3 in their quest to find out more about how people lived in ancient Rome created their own mosaics whilst year 5 in Crispin Class furthered their understanding of Greek architecture by using their engineering skills to build very convincing replicas of Corinthian columns out of the most rudimentary of materials.



And finally, I want you to turn your minds to that distant memory of summer – the hazy hot sun on the cricket ground, the sound of leather against willow – and to local hero Francis Booth who manages Speldhurst Cricket Club. Once again he will be coming into school to introduce this wonderful sport to the children and hopefully encourage a future generation of Nat Siver-Brunts or Ben Stokes. If you are interested in learning more about this local village club please do contact Francis at [speldhurstcricketclub@gmail.com](mailto:speldhurstcricketclub@gmail.com) **In the meantime roll on Summer.**

**SARA ANDREW COMMUNICATIONS GOVERNOR.**



# Allotment & Gardening News



## Seed Sowing...Yes or No?

It can be very tempting to go to the garden centre and buy plants already started, in their pots and pretty much ready to plant into the ground. Or even to buy tiny plug plants that need to be potted on, which can be particularly successful for flowers.

Whist that isn't entirely fool-proof as the plants purchased may not be hardened off and can be easily damaged by a late frost, it's certainly a strategy that takes a step or two out of the vegetable, fruit or flower growing process.

But with vegetables, the issue is that there is little choice on variety. And that can be a problem when particular features or characteristics are wanted. For example, I don't recall ever seeing yellow courgettes, white-seeded runner beans or clubroot resistant cabbage (kilaton being a favourite) to buy from a garden centre as a plant. So the only way to ensure growing the varieties wanted are to buy seed and sow them yourself. Though even that is not guaranteed as I have not yet been able to buy kilaton cabbage seeds.

The prospect of buying and sowing seeds may sound daunting or tedious – or full of anticipation and exciting. But it's often highly rewarding and satisfactory. And fun for children too, who are fascinated by sowing seeds and seeing them grow.

Providing they are not old, seeds are bursting to germinate. And by following the instructions on the packet and given the right conditions – which aren't difficult to achieve – they will reward a little care by shooting (often prolifically, so it may be necessary to be careful how many seed are sown).

Charles Dowding recommends sowing seeds after St Valentine's Day because it's far easier to wait until February and results will be similar if not better from sowing slightly later. And in spring, later sowings catch up.

Perhaps you have already begun seed sowing. Or maybe like me (as I write this) you have yet to start. Whichever, these things are for sure:

- Every year is an adventure
- Results are not guaranteed
- Outcomes are highly rewarding
- There is nothing better than eating your own grown, fresh fruit and veg

If you are interested in these topics / types of discussions, there is a Facebook page where we go into this type of stuff. It is called Speldhurst Allotmenters & Gardeners and the web address is:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/305824050847755>.

Hope to see you there.

kytehouse@stepex.co.uk.

**Rob Kyte**



# Nature Watch

Now is the month of March. If the weather lets the sun shine, spring will get a move on with birds building nests. The Bumble Bee Queens will also be looking for nest sites and species of Butterfly that have overwintered as adults, such as Peacock, Comma, Brimstones, Small Tortoiseshell and Red Admiral which now overwinter in Britain are the main butterflies we first see. The Orange Tip will be around next month.

The first Amphibians, Frogs and Toads will be spawning in our ponds - frogs' eggs in clumps and toads' eggs in long strands wrapped around plant stems. Newts will also be pairing up but they lay a little later, each egg being laid on leaves underwater one at a time. They are much more difficult to find compared to Frogs and Toads.

I have been lucky enough to have had a male Blackcap visiting the feeder this winter, usually thought of as a summer visitor, some now will overwinter. According to the B.T.O. , it is one of the few birds that has done well in the last 20 years with numbers well up. For comparison the Females have a Brown cap on the head while the Male has a Black cap; the rest of the bird looks a grey colour.

In a win for wildlife the Government has refused to allow the emergency use of a banned pesticide on sugar beet to protect butterflies, bees and other pollinators. We too should stop using all pesticides to protect the food source of many of our garden birds and Dragonflies.

The picture is of 2 male Mute swans taken at Bough Beech reservoir last month. The males have a black bump on the top of their bills to tell them apart from the females.

**Alan Ford**



# March 2025



St. Mary's Church, Speldhurst | St. John's Church, Groombridge | St. Martin's Church, Ashurst

## **2<sup>nd</sup> March**

10 am

Holy Communion at St. Mary's, Speldhurst

11 am

Matins at St. John's, Groombridge

## **5<sup>th</sup> March**

8pm

Ash Wednesday Holy Communion at St Mary's, Speldhurst (shared with All Saints, Langton Green)

## **9<sup>th</sup> March**

10 am

Morning Worship at St Mary's, Speldhurst

11 am

Holy Communion (BCP) at St John's, Groombridge

## **16<sup>th</sup> March**

8 am

Holy Communion (BCP) at St Mary's, Speldhurst

10 am

Holy Communion (CW) at St Mary's, Speldhurst

10 am

Matins at St Martin's, Ashurst

## **23<sup>rd</sup> March**

10am

Morning Worship at St Mary's, Speldhurst

11 am

Holy Communion at St Martin's, Ashurst

6pm

Remembrance Service at St Mary's, Speldhurst

## **30<sup>th</sup> March**

9am

Family Service (Mothering Sunday) at St Martin's, Ashurst

10am

All Age Holy Communion (Mothering Sunday) at St Mary's, Speldhurst

The Church Office can be contacted on 07960296027

or [admin@speldhurstchurch.org](mailto:admin@speldhurstchurch.org)

See our website: [www.speldhurstchurch.org](http://www.speldhurstchurch.org)

St Mary's Facebook page: [facebook.com/StMarysSpeldhurst/](https://facebook.com/StMarysSpeldhurst/)

## From the Church Registers



### **Funeral:**

17th February Roy Mills, at St Mary's, Speldhurst

### **Interment of Ashes:**

7th February Eliza Alexandra Jane Stuart at St Martin's, Ashurst

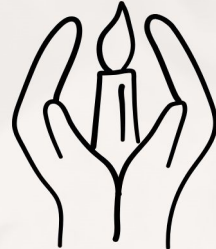
# Remembrance Service

**Sunday 23rd March 3pm**

St Mary's church  
Speldhurst

A gentle service will take place at **St Mary's, Speldhurst on Sunday 23rd March at 3pm.**

This will be a time for those across the parish of St Mary's, Speldhurst, St John's Groombridge, St Martin's, Ashurst and All Saints, Langton Green to remember and give thanks for loved ones who have died. There will be the opportunity, for those who wish, to light a candle for each person being remembered. There will be light refreshments afterwards for those who can stay. If this would be helpful to you, then do please come.



If you would like the name of your loved one who has died to be read at the service, then please contact either:

Rachael Foster in the church office  
([admin@speldhurstchurch.org](mailto:admin@speldhurstchurch.org)) or  
Sarah Bullett ([sarah.bullett@btinternet.com](mailto:sarah.bullett@btinternet.com)).

[www.speldhurstchurch.org](http://www.speldhurstchurch.org)



# A Letter from St Mary's



March 2025

Dear Readers,

## New Life

Daffodils, narcissi, tulips, veg seedlings and perennial plants showing new growth and the leaves and blossom opening on the trees... lots to hope for from garden and roadside and so much to celebrate. It's easy to find joy in seeing new life around us. Perhaps you will have the joy of seeing lambs in the fields or the joy of hearing children playing outside after such a long wet and cold time cooped up indoors.

There is of course other new life to be celebrated. Jesus came to give us life in all its fulness<sup>1</sup> – in other words the best life designed especially for the way he made us<sup>2</sup> – wow, a full life just for me to suit me! There is no one else just like me (what a relief, you might be saying) and equally there is no one just like you! God created you with a purpose in mind and finding the connection to unlock that purpose brings new life and real joy. Many people miss out, I think they find it too hard to acknowledge that they are not self sufficient when it comes to finding this purpose even though it can easily be found in the privacy of one's own home. It helps to have a 'Why Jesus?' booklet from just inside St Mary's church on the left but the idea is just to say in prayer something like this...

Lord Jesus, I don't know you, but please will you help me to find the real purpose you made me for so that I know what life in all its fulness means and I find the joy that you offer. Amen.

Having started praying it's easy to keep it going – a sentence at a time is enough – or try The Lord's Prayer; then, if you'd like to, there's always someone around to talk to – names on the board in the church porch.

May God bless all of you

Sheila

01892 863239 or [sheilaperkins123@gmail.com](mailto:sheilaperkins123@gmail.com)

<sup>1</sup> John chapter 10 verse 10

<sup>2</sup> Jeremiah chapter 29 verse 11



*Dad's, Uncles and Grandads you are all invited  
to bring your children (aged 0-7) to  
Who Let the Dads Out  
Based in St Mary's Church from 9-10.30am  
£2 per family per session.*

**Bacon  
Rolls**

**Toys**



*Saturday  
March 1st*

**Craft**

**Tea and Coffee**

**Blackham Country Players**  
and  
**Penshurst Amateur Dramatic Society**  
present

King Lear  
by William  
Shakespeare

A Bunch of Amateurs  
By Ian Hislop and Nick  
Newman

HOLLYWOOD



Penshurst Village Hall  
22<sup>nd</sup> 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> May  
£10 or £18 with fish and chip supper

Doors open 6.30pm Curtain up 7.30pm

Tickets: info coming soon  
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TMC continues its increasingly popular series of Sunday morning concerts with one given by our Chair, Pat Gane.

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In her concert, Pat will show her audience how key composers who are also 'influencers' – such as Claude Debussy, Duke Ellington, Eric Satie and Charles Ives - 'shift the gears' of musical language, echoing the culture of their time.

Pat's entire career has been involved with music. She plays both the piano and the viola and has performed professionally. She has also been significantly involved with secondary music education. She taught Music Education at Middlesex University for many years and was involved with Ofsted inspections. She was Director of Music at Benenden School in the late 1990s and became the Chair of TMC in 2018.

If you would like to come to the concert, the TMC team would be delighted to see you. Tickets cost £15 and £5 for under-18s. They are available on the TMC website ([www.tmc.org.uk](http://www.tmc.org.uk)) and can also be bought on the door, if seats are still available. But, it is always safer to buy ahead!

We look forward to seeing you at the concert.

## CAGNE - AN UPDATE

**What's the situation with Gatwick's new runway, airspace change, and what is the impact for us?**



Here is a quick summary of the current situation. For more information, please visit [www.cagne.org](http://www.cagne.org).

The Committee on Climate Change was clear in its report to Parliament in 2024 – there should be no airport expansions until a national framework is in place to control the growth of aviation emissions.

**Gatwick Airport applied for a new runway** using the planning process of a Development Consent Order (DCO) – the hearings for this took place last year. The recommendation by the Planning Inspectorate is now with the Secretary of State for Transport (Heidi Alexander MP) for her consideration. The airport and stakeholders had until 17<sup>th</sup> January to respond to further queries. The SoS is due to make her decision on 27<sup>th</sup> February. However, as Luton Airport's decision (with fewer changes) has been delayed until April, CAGNE hopes Gatwick's decision will also be delayed, giving time for more fundraising.

Thanks to generous donations, CAGNE has put together a strong legal team of a senior climate change Kings Counsel, planning barrister, and qualified experts in surface transport, aviation noise and air quality. It was imperative to have a sufficiently qualified team to challenge Gatwick at the hearings and through submissions.

Gatwick's lengthy documents for the new runway were somewhat disingenuous with the facts, as with the misinterpretation of government policy 'to make best use of existing runway'. All had to be challenged – this is a new runway by the backdoor, with none of the financial commitments that Heathrow is having to offer with a new runway.

If it is a Yes from the Labour government, our legal team is ready, as there are so many reasons to challenge with a Judicial Review – not least, the planet's wellbeing and that of residents of Sussex, Surrey and Kent.

*More information can be found on the website.*

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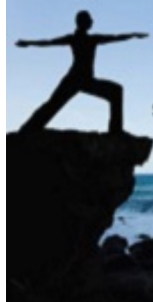
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