

# Speldhurst News



## September 2022

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# Welcome to September

Dear Readers,

There is news in this edition of the fete (p10) and Birchwood House Summer Carnival (pp12 & 13) in June , Messy Camp on September 3rd/4th (p6) and the Flower Show on 10th (p5). Things starting to come back to life in the village, which is wonderful. As the summer holidays end, we look forward to an autumn of events at the school, the village hall and elsewhere.

And with that new era comes another. This is my last edition after ten years as editor and fifteen years involvement in Speldhurst News. It has been a wonderful experience - not least the sense of involvement in this wonderful community. With some new members on the committee - who may perhaps introduce themselves in these pages over the coming months - Speldhurst News is in safe hands. Thank you - subscribers and contributors - for your ongoing support.

I wish you all the best,

**Abi Dawson**

**For the Speldhurst News Editors:**

**Abi Dawson, Maria Turner, Sara Turner**

Please remember that copy for the **October edition** should be sent **before 10th September** to: [speldhurst.news@gmail.com](mailto:speldhurst.news@gmail.com). Word, Publisher or pdf files preferred. Thank you.

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 document attachment. The editors reserve the right to amend submissions where they feel it is appropriate.



# Diary at a Glance

## September

Sat 3rd	Penshurst Farmers Market	p.11
Sat 3rd/ Sun 4th	Messy Camp	p.6
Monday 5th	Bumps & Babes	p.4
	Full council meeting - LGVH	p.15
Mondays	Library	p.4
Tuesday eves	Walking Football	p.7
Weds 7th	Praise & Play	p.4
Fridays	Quirky Quilting Group	p.8/9
Sat 10th	Flower, Veg & Craft Show	p.5
Weds 21st	Praise & Play	p.4

# News & Announcements

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

The two groups for Under 5's in the village start up again in September now that the Summer Holidays are over.

**Bumps and Babes Fortnightly Coffee mornings** for new and expectant Mums. are held in Speldhurst Chapel, opposite the shop, on a Monday from 10.30am. It's a chance to meet up with other Mums with babies. We'll meet this month on **Mondays 5th and 19th September.**

**Praise and Play**, St Mary's Toddler Group, for all under 5's and their carers, meets fortnightly on a Wednesday morning from 9am in St Mary's Church. We have free play time at the beginning so arrive when you can, followed by stories and songs as well as an opportunity to ring the church bell which everyone enjoys before we tidy up and enjoy our refreshments together. This month the group meets on **Wednesdays 7th & 21st September.**

Just turn up for either group or message Jenny for more details on 07891318123 or [jenny50fitz@gmail.com](mailto:jenny50fitz@gmail.com)

## Speldhurst Library is open

Come and visit us at the Village Hall  
on Monday afternoons  
between 2pm and 5pm



## Bellringers

We would welcome a few more people to join the church bellringing team. If you are interested, please contact Anthony Leeves on 01892 531104 or Emma Tamkin on 07759 476912. We ring on Sunday mornings from 9.30 to 10 am and we practise on Tuesday evenings from 7.45 to around 9 or 9.15 pm, but your initial teaching will be arranged at a time to suit you.

We would particularly welcome anyone who has previously rung church bells either at Speldhurst or elsewhere.

## Anthony Leeves

### **The Speldhurst Flower, Vegetable & Craft Show** **Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> September from 2.30pm**

Whether you're a gardening enthusiast, keen crafter, dab hand in the kitchen or budding photographer there is something for everyone of all ages. Check out our Facebook page Speldhurst Flower, Vegetable & Craft Show or our website page <http://speldhurst.org/contacts/34>



# St. Mary's Church Messy Camp

## Save the Date



Saturday 3rd-  
Sunday 4th  
September 2022

Join us for some or all of the  
weekend.

Games, food, scripture and craft

@ Speldhurst Primary School

# *100th Birthday thanks*

Audrey would like to thank everyone for the many greetings, cards and gifts she received for her 100th birthday. She would particularly like to thank the bell ringers for the wonderful touch of 100 changes of plain bob doubles and 100 changes of grandsire doubles, which we managed to record; and the choir for the delicious cake, which didn't last long!

Audrey had a memorable day, surrounded by family and visiting friends, and was touched and delighted by everyone who made it so.

## **Speldhurst Walking Footballers**

Men and women of all ages and abilities are welcome to join Speldhurst walking footballers. It's all about getting some gentle exercise and having fun. So, whether you have ever played football, or not, do come and join us.

We meet at 7pm at the all-weather pitch on Speldhurst rec on Tuesday evenings.

Please call Brian Shilling if you would like any further information: 07940 013135



## **Speldhurst Village Website**

Our website includes a calendar of village events, a photo gallery, some village history, a selection of local walks and cycle routes, past editions of Speldhurst News and more.

Why not take a look at: [speldhurst.org](http://speldhurst.org)?



# Quirky Quilters

If you are interested in sewing, embroidery and quilting, '**Quirky Quilters**' welcomes you! We are a friendly group who meet every **Friday morning** at 10am at Speldhurst Village Hall to share our sewing, embroidery and quilting skills /knowledge as well as having a good chat, coffee and cake!

For me the group has been a sewing life-line. After my husband John's death eighteen months ago, my two daughters asked me to make a quilt from his shirts in his memory (I am also using fabrics from my daughters' childhood dresses so the quilt becomes a family legacy).

At first, it seemed quite a daunting 'ask' particularly as although I am fairly good at hand-sewing and embroidery, I had never used a sewing machine. Indeed, I was quite wary and resistant to machine-sewing. Members of the group helped me overcome my reservations, advising me on the right machine and helping me cope with its idiosyncrasies. I am now up and running, making pieces for my quilt using a technique called 'foundation paper piecing' after attending a workshop with the wonderful Dar who organises '**Quirky Quilters**'.

Making a quilt is a long journey even with the use of a machine and having the group's support is really important. Before COVID changed all our lives, 'Quirky Quilters' had a lot of members (indeed so many that the group had to move to a larger space in Speldhurst) but sadly numbers declined through lockdown. To remain viable, the group needs a few more to join the five or six of us who still meet regularly (we contribute a couple of pounds each to pay for the room at the Village Hall).

You don't have to be super-talented – there is more than enough talent to go round in the group already. But you need to enjoy sewing – we do everything from quilting (as it says in the name) to embroidery and other sewing techniques like the Japanese 'boro' stitching and there is an up-and-coming workshop to make a small bag using a Korean method.



The group is about sharing our skills, getting support from each other with projects. But we would like members who are available and happy to attend most weeks. Every Friday I learn something new or go away with a valuable tip. It is wonderful – So if you want to join see the flyer below. Hope to see you there.

**Sara Andrew**



One of Dar's quilts

### **BUCKWHEAT CHEESE PUFFS**

Despite its name Buckwheat is not a wheat and is gluten free. It has a nice sweet nutty flavour.



Oven: 190° C / 375° F / Gas MK 5  
Cooking time: Approximately 13 minutes

Makes about 40.

#### **Ingredients**

200g buckwheat flour  
100g mature Cheddar cheese – grated  
1 tsp baking powder  
1 tsp Cream of Tartar  
1 tsp smoked paprika

1 tsp dried garlic granules  
½ tsp salt  
Grind of pepper  
150g butter – chilled and diced  
1 egg

#### **Method**

- Line a large baking tray with baking paper.
- Mix all the dry ingredients together, easier in a stand mixer. Then add the butter and continue mixing.
- Add the egg, still mixing, and the batter should come together into a large ball.
- Take a small portion and roll it between your hands into a ball about the size of a large cherry and lay it on the baking tray. Do not squidge it down. Do similar with the remainder of the batter. They will not spread out much during baking.
- Place baking tray in the fridge for about 30 minutes to chill.
- Place the tray in the top half of oven and cook for about 13 minutes or so. The balls will have slumped into dome shapes and begun to crack and brown although still soft. Will firm up on cooling.

Freeze well.





**The fete committee would like to say thank you** to everyone for making the fete such a great success this year.

It was a joy to see so many villagers coming together, for the first time in ages, for a day of happiness and fun. Even in the evening, the cold and wet could not dampen the spirits, with thunder and lightning only raising the night party to 'legendary' status!

Not only that but we raised long-needed funds to support the maintenance and refreshment of the recreation ground, so that the village continues to have a quality space for all.

As chair of the fete committee I've so enjoyed the many comments of gratitude this last month, but in truth I'm taking a lot of credit for a lot of other people's hard work and generosity, and I would like to pay tribute to them now. First, the to the whole committee for putting together a fantastic day and evening, also to the tea ladies for running a great Tea & Cake tent. Special recognition needs to go to Martin and the G.O.M. for all their hard work setting up the day before, and a special mention to Helga for chopping so many kilograms of onions!

I do very much want to give praise to Lynsay Bischoff (previous chair of the committee) who steered me right during this hand-over time. It is Lynsay that has guided the fete over the last decade to the wonderful event it is today, and has been an absolute rock in putting the fete back on.

Going forward we have an excellent team with tonnes of good ideas, and we're looking forward to seeing you all again next year.

Thanks for the support you give to the fete, and please know that I am always open to fresh ideas so feel free to get in touch.

**Mike Harrowing, chair of the fete committee**



*Don't miss the Farmers' Market this September  
for all the finest locally produced food & drink*



**Saturday 3rd  
September  
2022**  
**9.30 am  
to  
12.00 pm**  
**Penshurst  
Place Visitor  
Car Park**



**The nights are drawing in, schools are back and it's a busy month at Penshurst Farmers Market with several regulars back after a break and a new local egg producer joining us for the first time. With around 30 stalls, we cover everything from meat and game to fish and seafood, stone-ground flours to local vegetables. There are hand-made chutneys and jams, Groombridge honey, cakes, breads and bakes, award-winning cheeses, local gin and sparkling wine and more.**

**Special treats include new season's grass-fed lamb from Hoopers Farm, Kent plums in varieties for eating and cooking with, and a very welcome return after a summer away by Edward of Nut Farms with his glorious Kentish cobnut and local walnut products.**

**Get your knives and garden tools sharpened by Knife Ninja, buy locally grown plants and flowers and enjoy a coffee at the Porcupine Pantry.**

**Parking is plentiful, free and close by. Dogs and families welcome!**

*Find us on Facebook*

*Find us on Twitter*

*[WWW.kfma.org.uk/penshurst](http://WWW.kfma.org.uk/penshurst)*

# **All the fun of the fair at Birchwood House with Carnival-themed summer event**

**Staff and residents celebrate in style in care home's grounds**



There was a full carnival atmosphere at Birchwood House care home in late June as staff and residents spent the day celebrating in style with their very own carnival-themed summer event.

Complete with fun and accessible fairground games, food and live music, the stunning former manor house was again transformed with brightly coloured decorations giving residents a chance to enjoy all the fun of the fair.

The residents are at the heart of all planning for Birchwood House's events, one of which is held every season. The beautiful, landscaped gardens were transformed with brightly coloured balloons, bunting and decorations while staff embraced the day by dressing in traditional carnival-themed outfits for a completely immersive experience.

Residents tried their hand at classic fairground games, made accessible for all, including hook-a-duck, high striker, hoopla and a coconut shy and background music set the carnival scene which had the residents up and dancing.

Summer is the season for outdoor fun and so all who attended also dined on a carnival-themed 'banquet' which included home-cooked burgers, hot dogs and ice creams – all of which were prepared by the care home's in-house chef, Elia. The banquet table was dressed with jars of sweets and of clown noses were on offer and allowed the residents to 'clown around'. The home hired a popcorn, candy floss and doughnut stand to really set the scene.

Each resident was handed a 'ticket of admission' before accessing the carnival themed event and prizes on offer included 'fake' goldfish in bags, harking back to the old carnival days.

Birchwood House hosts a number of events annually and continued to do so successfully throughout the pandemic, including a Mad Hatter's



Tea Party and, most recently, a 1940s Tea Dance with the theme completely chosen by the residents.

Claire Tye, deputy manager of Birchwood House, comments: "Here at Birchwood House, we're always planning our events to ensure the residents enjoy fun and exciting seasonal activities

that allow them to stay active and socialise. We have some extremely competitive residents and staff here, so we all enjoyed putting our skills to the test during the fairground games! It was also a perfect excuse to get our dancing shoes on and dance the afternoon away."

She added, "We love to celebrate our events here at Birchwood House and are enormously proud to have again pulled out all the stops for this year's summer carnival-themed event. It's lovely to see the residents having such fun and being able to socialise again after the pandemic - it was a thoroughly enjoyable day for the residents. The carnival event may be finished but the memories will last forever."

**Georgia Christley**



As life returns to busy normality after the summer break, here is a reminder of how to report issues in Speldhurst. We hope you find it useful and remember, you can also find this information on our website, [www.speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk). Do look and sign up for news alerts if you haven't already.

### **HOW TO REPORT A CRIME**

To report a crime in Speldhurst parish, call 101 – this ensures you receive a crime number. Our local PCSO, Gemma Gilbert, will also want to hear about it so let her know at [Gemma.Gilbert@kent.police.uk](mailto:Gemma.Gilbert@kent.police.uk). Please note, Gemma works part-time so copy TW Community Safety Unit, [csu.tunbridge.wells@kent.police.uk](mailto:csu.tunbridge.wells@kent.police.uk) in on your email too. *In an emergency call 999.* In addition you can visit Gemma and her colleague Crime Prevention Officer Miles Booth at their monthly drop-in clinics in the parish (for forthcoming clinic dates, sign up for news alerts on our website).



**HOW TO REPORT FLY-TIPPING** This is a criminal offence, punishable by a fine of up to £50,000 or 12-months imprisonment if convicted. It is also anti-social, unsightly, harmful to wildlife...the list goes on. To report fly-tipping (and everything else from abandoned vehicles to missed bins) visit [tun-bridgewells.gov.uk](http://tun-bridgewells.gov.uk) 'Report It' page.

**HOW TO REPORT A ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENT** If you or anyone you know is involved in a road traffic accident in Ashurst, Langton Green, Old Groombridge or Speldhurst, please do tell us about it once you are able to (contact details at the bottom of the page).

We appreciate there are many things you will need to do first, from calling emergency services, road recovery and insurers, to receiving any necessary medical care. But it is vital that we have up-to-date information about road

traffic accidents in Speldhurst Parish, so we can use the evidence when approaching Kent County Council Highways about implementing traffic calming measures.

**HOW TO REPORT A HIGHWAYS FAULT** KCC Highways are the authority responsible for roads in our parish. To report a highways issue - including pot-holes, drainage issues and overgrown verges - please visit the [kent.gov.uk](https://kent.gov.uk) 'report a problem on a road or pavement' webpage. This is a quick and efficient way for you to help keep our roads in working order.

**PLEASE CONTACT THE CLERK'S OFFICE** If you do not have access to the internet and there is no one who can help you report your issue, or you would like help reporting something that isn't listed above.

**AIR TRAFFIC UPDATE – GATWICK AIRPORT & NIGHT FLIGHTS** Gatwick Airport is involved in a country-wide review of airspace, looking at the airspace that serves it and what it should look like for the future. As yet, there is nothing for us (council or residents) to do, but once Gatwick has developed some proposals, these will be subject to extensive public consultation. We will be active on this, and we would also encourage residents to make their voices heard if and where appropriate.

More immediately, the aviation industry is currently struggling with lack of staff. Given the Government's furlough scheme it is hard to see how the industry can have lost so many people that it cannot operate properly. The relevance here is that the Secretary of State for Transport has suggested it may be appropriate to waive night flight restrictions to help the airlines carry more passengers. This is unacceptable. Please write to the secretary of state to object to this potential indiscriminate intrusion on our night times and please copy in our MP Greg Clark. We already suffer with night-time overflights, let's not allow this to become extensive and unrestricted.

**PUBLIC MEETINGS** Full Council Meeting 7.30pm, Monday 5<sup>th</sup> September, Langton Green Village Hall, Palmer Room  
[We reserve the right to ask you to book a seat in advance.](#)

### **HOW TO CONTACT THE COUNCIL OFFICE**

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

For helpful info, visit [www.speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk) and sign up for alerts, or follow 'Speldhurst Parish Council' on Facebook.



## **News from TWB Cllr Matthew Sankey**

I can't quite believe summer is almost over as I type this basking in the glorious sunshine overlooking the Speldhurst Serengeti. Political stuff tends to calm down over the summer, but not here, oh no....

### **Free Parking?**

With a huge deficit to tackle, the Borough Partnership has had its work cut out to make the necessary changes in order to balance the books. The Liberal Democrat leader and then Finance Portfolio holder (he quit after we tackled him) thought they had solved the problem by abolishing the free parking in a number of car parks in the borough – Paddock Wood, Southborough & on Dunorlan Park.

I and my colleagues in the Alliance have challenged this - we do not think it's right. Bit odd though, members of the administration questions its own decisions. Well I did promise you all that I would look after your interests over anything else.

With the cost of living crisis growing, I can think of nothing worse than having to charge for parking where it was free. We need to allow business to thrive not choke it.

This is an ongoing issue and there is of course a consultation: please pop to the council's website where you will find it on the home page.

### **Ward Work**

I've been kept busy by many emails from residents; I thought I would make a list so you can see what kind of things people ask me for help with:

Bins – lots of emails about bins

Yellow Lines.

Parking tickets, or lack of.

Dead Trees

Overgrown hedges

Ukrainian guests

Broadband issues, mainly failures

Planning questions, enforcement issues & objections

Roadworks

Parish Council problems (not Speldhurst, they are good as gold)

Lack of children's menu at a local pub, this actual happened.

Bus services

The Cinema Site

Road & footpath repairs

Gatwick and planes



## Work as Small Business Champion

I have been working with the head of Economic Development in this role to start to build a better relationship between local businesses and the local authority. Our brand-new webpage dedicated to the business services the council offer is being built with contact details at its heart. No more hiding behind unmanned email aliases!

Together with the cabinet members for the town centre and leisure we are working with Local & Live to create a magical free music festival and secure it for years to come.

Plus a brand new market for the Five Ways area is also being discussed, we hope to launch this early next year.

## Bus Services

You will all have heard about the KCC cuts that put our 230 school service at risk. Thankfully the operator, AutoCar, and KCC have been able to come to an agreement to continue it for the next school year. Discussions are ongoing about its future so please do not let up telling the KCC councillors your thoughts: [james.mcinroy@kent.gov.uk](mailto:james.mcinroy@kent.gov.uk)

Thank you to everyone who has written to him and to me so far.

## 2024 – It's all change

The other big thing that's causing havoc amongst the political class are the new boundary changes. Currently there are 49 councillors in 20 wards. Our ward is currently Speldhurst & Bidborough, named after the two parish councils within it. The area also includes Langton Green and Ashurst.

The proposals being put forward by the Boundaries Commission are as follows: 39 councillors, 13 wards. Bidborough to join Southborough, Speldhurst merges with Rusthall.

Of course there is a consultation which can be found on the TWBC home page.

This also means a huge all-out election in 2024 where residents will be asked to vote for all 3 of their Councillors in one go. There's going to be a lot of door knocking. I've got my signs at the ready!

### Your Borough Councillors

	Contact Details	Re-Election Date
Cllr Matthew Sankey (Alliance)	07881 674 310 <a href="mailto:matthew.sankey@tunbridgewells.gov.uk">matthew.sankey@tunbridgewells.gov.uk</a>	May 2024
Cllr Lucy Willis (Alliance)	07958 634 185 <a href="mailto:lucy.willis@tunbridgewells.gov.uk">lucy.willis@tunbridgewells.gov.uk</a>	May 2023
Cllr Harry Allen (Conservative)	07523 005 178 <a href="mailto:harry.allen@tunbridgewells.gov.uk">harry.allen@tunbridgewells.gov.uk</a>	May 2024



## BACK TO SCHOOL ESSENTIALS

As August comes to a close, it's time to start thinking about returning to school. We have all the back-to-school essentials you can think of: pens, pencils, rubbers, paper pads, revision cards, plastic wallets, clear pencil cases and even the compact maths tin set!

Whilst you're here, you could take a look at our magazine collection too. Teen Breathe promotes mindfulness for a happier, healthier, more fulfilled teenage life and covers subjects like social media, sport, and meditation.



[speldhurstcommunityshop@gmail.com](mailto:speldhurstcommunityshop@gmail.com)

Interested in volunteering? Contact Jo Eames on 07896932716



**SPELDHURST'S**  
EST. **SHOP** 2019



## **DON'T FORGET...**

The Speldhurst Flower, Vegetable and Craft Show is taking place on Saturday 10 September at the village hall. You can pick up the booklet and entry forms from the shop. Completed forms and fees can also be delivered to us too.

Why not have a go at baking some Speldhurst Slices with the kids or try your hand at making a lemon drizzle cake? We have all the ingredients you need for the recipe.

The shop and Post Office opening times can be found under the 'Local Info' section.

[speldhurstcommunityshop@gmail.com](mailto:speldhurstcommunityshop@gmail.com)

Interested in volunteering? Contact Jo Eames on 07896932716



# ~ Allotment News ~



## Public Enemy Number 1

Gardeners have been combatting slugs for many years. They seem to enjoy munching on our prized and often most succulent plants – seedlings, lettuces, hostas seem to be particular favourites.

Loath them or like them, slugs are the kind of garden pest that our beloved plants can't allow us to ignore. We have to be tough on slugs. Tough on slime. Tough on the causes of slime. There are some monster slugs roaming our gardens these days and combating those – amongst all the others – can be a challenging matter, But before any of that, here are some slug facts (courtesy of Sarah Ford):



- Speed:** 0.007mph - There's no running away. No wonder they hide during the day!
- Lifespan:** 2-6 years. Maybe when we see some together they are having a birthday party?!
- Population:** An average garden can contain approx. 200 slugs. We are surrounded!!
- Reproduction:** A slug can produce up to 36 eggs, several times a year. No wonder there are so many slugs around.
- Appetite:** In a season, each slug can eat up to 0.8kg of plants. Wow. That's 160kg of plants by the 200 slugs in the average garden!!  
Also it can eat double its own body weight in a day, greedy creatures. No wonder some plants are decimated in no time at all.
- Teeth:** A slug has 27,000 teeth. I see a new career looming as a slug dentist – it would take all day to floss those.

Whilst there are over 5,000 species of slugs around the world, the John Innes

website specifies that there are approximately 40 species of slug currently found in the UK, with only a small number of these considered as pest species. It adds, it has been estimated that these pest species cause approximately £8 million in damage to agricultural crops each year. But apparently, there are only four that cause damage to gardeners in temperate climates: garden slug, field slug, keel slug, black slug.

I was going to describe them all. But it seemed to me that any slug infestation would be an issue. So no matter what they slug is...we probably want to zap it somehow.

It's hard to consider that slugs have any positive purpose in life. But apparently, they do as the following comment by Charles Dowding illustrates:

*'Except in extreme weather, slugs do not randomly eat any old (or young plant), because their role is to recycle decaying and weak leaves.'*

That may be so. But we still have to consider what to do about them. Slug pellets are convenient. Apparently some 400 billion are sprinkled every year on British gardens. But as they contain substances that are poisonous to slugs, there are also hazards to other animals. Slug pellet-related deaths in cats and dogs are reported by vets every year. Wildlife can be affected too – birds, frogs, toads, hedgehogs, etc.

So what's to be done for those of us who are being bullied by molluscs sliming around our gardens and allotments munching through our precious plants – especially if we are worried about using slug pellets.

Well...according to a very handy book by Sarah Ford, we can take a stand against slugs with 50 alternative, organic, natural, chemical and humane solutions to our slug problems which can help us to stop slugs in their slimy tracks. But be prepared, as Ms Ford's book recommends that we are ourselves with: poker, sharp stick, vinegar, spade, catapult, salt, washing line, bucket, grapefruit, torch, bran, chop sticks, spray gun, beer, hoe, eggshells, hair clippings, copper tape, chickens. The list is almost endless.

**Rob Kyte**

### **And finally:**

1. If you are interested in acquiring an allotment, please contact Mark Oddy on 01892 862746.
2. If there is any topic you would like to address relating to matters gardening or horticultural, please send an email to [kytehouse@stepex.co.uk](mailto:kytehouse@stepex.co.uk).
3. If you would like to submit something for this article, please also email it to [kytehouse@stepex.co.uk](mailto:kytehouse@stepex.co.uk).



# Nature Watch

It's been a very good summer for those that like the heat - particularly moths and butterflies.

Gatekeepers or Hedge Browns are a small butterfly with a bright orangey brown colour and they have done very well. They are named after their preference for liking hedgerows and as we walk through gates we often see them. As I am writing this I am hoping that the autumn butterflies such as Peacock, Small Tortoiseshell, Brimstone, Comma and Red Admiral will be seen in good numbers on Buddleia and other late flowering plants. We also may be lucky and migrants such as Painted lady and Clouded Yellow might venture inland to our gardens, fingers crossed.

I have been busy with the moth lure one night a week and on the hottest night of the year I identified 82 different species of moths. There must have been 200+ moths that night but that does not count the ones that fly out before and when I empty the box.

A surprise to dormice surveyors was that over 50 records of common toads were found in surveys of Hazel dormice nest boxes (located 1.5m above ground) and tree cavities usually used by bats. The highest record of a toad up a tree was 3m. The surveys don't regularly involve looking in tree hollows much higher but there's a chance that toads might be venturing even further up.

**Alan Ford**



**A black arches/nun moth**

# A Letter from St Mary's



September 2022

Dear Friends,

I do hope that you had a good summer. I had an excellent time on my sabbatical and then enjoyed sunny August.

Between May and July, I did three things: I read *The Matter with Things* by Iain McGilchrist, which I was really pleased to have done since it is quite dense and very long. I find his mix of very detailed scientific research in the field of psychology and philosophy really stimulating. I visited three Christian communities that were doing church differently; they were in Poole, rural Suffolk and Deal. Finally, I walked one of the Camino routes to Santiago de Compostela in Spain which went well; just a few small blisters, no problems finding accommodation each night and 490 miles covered. I had a few days when it was 35C but I was usually at my destination by lunchtime on those days, having started before dawn. It took me thirty-one days walking plus one day in Leon and three in Santiago. It was different from my previous pilgrimage as I spent much more time on my own, which gave me greater flexibility and more time to pray and reflect. What did I learn?

- That people from around the world are genuinely curious about and open to exploring life that is more than what we can see and touch – what I call the spiritual.
- The importance of intuition, imagination and metaphor for a healthy life and society.
- That God delights to share our life's journey and hearing from us about it.
- That relationships trump organisation.
- That there are genuinely fresh ways of doing age-old church.

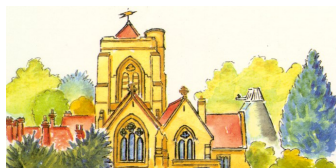
If you want to know more, get in touch.

Douglas

PS I can be contacted at [douglas.wren12@gmail.com](mailto:douglas.wren12@gmail.com) or on 01892 862821 or at The Rectory, Southfields, Speldhurst, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 0PD



# September 2022



## **4th September**

- 10 am Messy Communion at Speldhurst School *followed by*  
Bring and Share BBQ
- 10 am Online Worship available via  
<http://youtube.com/StMarysSpeldhurst>

## **11th September**

- 10 am Morning Worship

*Friday 16th September*

- 3 pm Wedding

*Saturday 17th September*

- 11.30 am Wedding  
2.30 pm Wedding

## **18th September**

- 10 am Communion
- 10 am Online Worship available via  
<http://youtube.com/StMarysSpeldhurst>

## **25th September**

- 10 am Morning Worship



## **Baptisms**

- 3rd July Seraphina Grace Hazel Tozzi  
Clementine Florence Mary Tozzi

## **Weddings**

- 16th July Oliver Cook and Lucy Scovell  
30th July James Flemington and Louisa Johns

## **Funeral**

- 22nd June Jancis Clare MacDonald

The Church Office can be contacted on 861187 or  
[speldhurst.church@btopenworld.com](mailto:speldhurst.church@btopenworld.com)

Normal office hours: 9 am to 12.30 pm

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

St Mary's Facebook page:

[facebook.com/StMarysSpeldhurst/](https://facebook.com/StMarysSpeldhurst/)

## Churchyard Strimming

Hi to all churchyard strimming enthusiasts, past, present and future.

Here is my annual call for assistance.

As most of you already know, part of the churchyard grass is left uncut during the year as a nature conservation area and the grass is only cut once in the autumn.

Last year spreading the strimming work over a longer two week period with smaller groups worked well, so the plan is to do the same again this year with two Friday/Saturday sessions the first on **23 & 24<sup>th</sup> September** and the second **30<sup>th</sup> September & 1<sup>st</sup> October**.

I will arrange for Anthony Hare's trailer to be there for the second session for loading up. Previous weeks strimmings will be piled near the Barden Road gate to load the following week.

The grass is very thick this year but at present it is dry and easier to cut when so I've had a go already and will be adding in another earlier strimming date in nearer the time to get ahead of the game, if that suits some of you.

We have 2 church strimming machines and PPE but if you have any useful additional tools of your own which you can bring ( strimmer, rakes, shears, barrows, gloves, loppers, secateurs ) that would be useful.

Refreshments will be provided.

If you are able to help for a few hours, please confirm your availability by phone or e mail which will then help me to put a rota together.

Your efforts in past years have been very much appreciated and make a big difference to our churchyard tidiness also helping to reduce maintenance costs, so I look forward to seeing you there for as much time as you can offer.

Many thanks,  
John Fitzsimmons for St Mary's Church

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Mothers & Toddlers	Jenny Fitzsimmons	541200
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Speldhurst News Advertising	Eric Roughley	863222
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• Your home may be repossessed if you do not keep up repayments on your mortgage.

• Mother Goose Mortgages Ltd is an appointed representative of First Complete Ltd, which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.  
• We charge a fee for mortgage advice of between 0% and 2% of the mortgage amount - payable at application. The exact amount we will charge is dependant on the amount of research and administration that is required.



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## OPENING HOURS

Monday to Friday 7AM - 5PM  
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Saturday 8AM - 1PM  
(Post Office 9AM - 12PM)

Sunday 8AM - 11AM  
(Post Office CLOSED)

CALL US ON 01892 863158 FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO PLACE AN ORDER

Cover image: Speldhurst sunrise September 2021, Abi Dawson

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