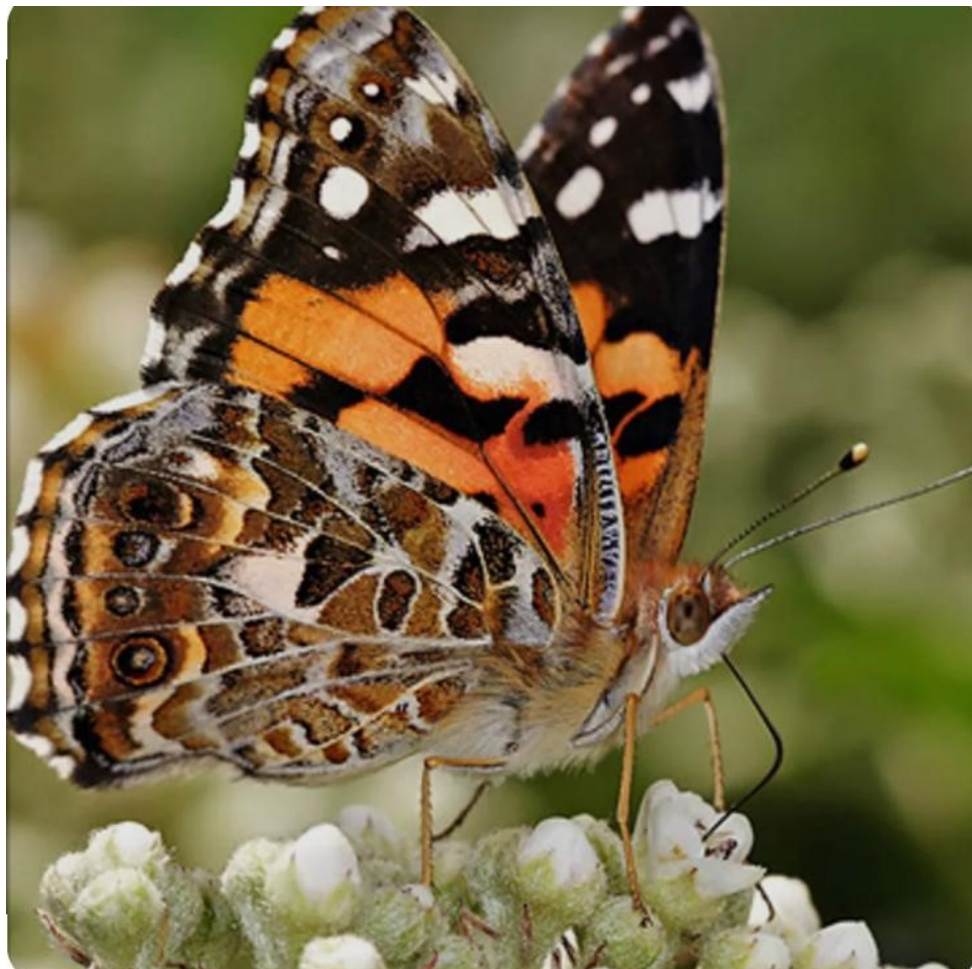




Speldhurst News

July/August 2026

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Welcome!

Dear Readers,

After a marvellous start to the summer last month with our very own Speldhurst Village Fete, we include some images from that day. Many thanks go to the incredibly hard working Fete Committee who, with their team of volunteers, made it all happen for the rest of us to enjoy.

Please note, this magazine covers both July and August, so there is plenty of time for you to send in any September news.

The very hot weather has seen a return but who knows what will happen in July and August! Be ready with those umbrellas?!

Happy holidays to all,

Maria

Please send emails before 10th August 2026 for the September issue to: speldhurst.news@gmail.com. Word, Publisher or pdf files preferred.

SPELDHURST
ART
EXHIBITION

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

THURSDAY 29th
OCTOBER - SUNDAY 1st NOVEMBER
at
SPELDHURST PRIMARY SCHOOL

PrivateView - WEDNESDAY 28TH 6 - 8

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.

News & Events



What's on in Speldhurst for the Under 5's in July/August

As the summer progresses, no doubt everyone is enjoying the warmer, dryer weather but our Under 5's groups still continue to meet.

Bumps and Babes, which enables new Mums in the village to get to know each other, meets twice a month in each other's homes, on a Monday from 10.30am,. Contact Jenny for more information.

Praise and Play, St Mary's Toddler Group, meets weekly (in term time) on a Wednesday from 9.30am and on a Friday from 9am. There will be no Praise and Play in August, but we'll be back in September. 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 07891318123 or at jen-ny50fitz@gmail.com so she can tell you more.



Blackham Village Market

SATURDAY 4TH JULY
10.00AM TO 12.15PM

*Coffee/Tea & homemade cakes
served from 10am*

*Lots of lovely produce for sale:
homemade pasties, cakes, scones,
chutneys, jams, free range eggs,
bread, bird food, honey,
handmade craft items
and lots more*



LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU !

SUMMER READING

Speldhurst Book Club Recommendations!

The Summer Book by Tove Jansson
Summer's Lease by John Mortimer
Hot Milk by Deborah Levy
Instructions for a Heatwave by Maggie O'Farrell

GOOD READING ALL!



Langton Green Festival 2026: Rotunda Theatre Returns with an Exciting Summer Programme



The Langton Green Festival is hosted by Rotunda Theatre pop=up. There are a range of events taking place at Holland's Farm, Langton Green, TN3 9SS.

Email: info@rotundatheatre.com for more information.



ALLOTMENT NEWS

Cutting Out the Cow?

Here is a question for anyone with a lawn, a vegetable patch, a flower garden and a weakness for overthinking things. Cows eat grass. The grass contains nutrients. The cow digests the grass and produces manure. Gardeners then put the manure on their vegetable beds. So why not cut out the middle cow and put the grass clippings straight onto the soil? The short answer is: you can. Grass clippings are not waste. They contain useful nutrients, especially nitrogen, and they also add organic matter to the soil as they rot down. Used sensibly, they can help feed soil life, suppress weeds and reduce evaporation in dry weather. A thin layer of clippings between rows of vegetables can be a very useful summer mulch.

But manure has some advantages. By the time it reaches the garden - ideally well-rotted, not fresh - it has already been partly broken down. The cow, and then the heap, have done some of the decomposition work.

Well-rotted manure is bulky, fibrous and relatively slow-release. It improves soil structure as well as feeding plants. On light soils it helps hold moisture; on heavy clay it helps open the soil up. In other words, it is not just plant food, but soil conditioner. Fresh grass clippings behave differently. In small amounts they are wonderful. In a thick layer they can rapidly heat, compact, exclude air and become a sour, slimy blanket.

They are also very rich in nitrogen, so they need balancing with drier, carbon-rich material such as leaves, straw, shredded prunings, cardboard or paper if added to the compost heap. And, of course, clippings from a lawn recently treated with weedkiller should not go anywhere near the vegetable plot. So perhaps the answer is not either/or. Leave some clippings on the lawn to feed it. Compost some with autumn leaves and other garden waste. Use some, thinly, as a mulch around hungry crops such as courgettes, beans and brassicas. And still welcome a load of well-rotted manure when you can get it. The cow is not essential — but it is quite a good composting machine.

Rob Kyte

RTW FANZONE IS BACK!

WHAT? WHEN? WHERE?

Enjoy all the excitement of the Wimbledon Finals Weekend on the big screen in Calverley Grounds, Tunbridge Wells!

Bring your friends and family and make a weekend of it. Watch all the live action from 11am on Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 July on our huge 6m x 3.5m screen!

There is some deck chair seating, available on a first come, first served basis. You are welcome to bring your own chairs or rugs. There will be an area for people on rugs to the front of the seated area, please note that some seating will be on the slope of The Royal Ridge to give everyone a good view of the screen.



THANK YOU!



Thank you to absolutely everyone who brought the great vibes and and happy times with them to this year's Fete.

Especially massive thanks to all the volunteers giving there time ins some hot hot heat. And especially especially massive thanks you to the the Fete committee who have paired their all into making a great event this year!

Love from Mike







Speldhurst CEP Primary School News



Welcome to Speldhurst, our 'picture perfect' school where everything is 'normal' until it isn't!! At least that's the story of 'Grossbusters – the Monster Musical' where monstrous mayhem erupts in a slime-filled adventure to show that 'different isn't dangerous.' And that's where the hero 'Normal Norman' comes in although he is hiding a 'monstrous secret'. Russet Class's end of year show performed for the rest of the school, parents and staff is always the highlight of the year and proved that 'being yourself is the bravest thing of all'. A positive message, particularly for the Year 6 students who will be moving onto secondary school in September. It is a time of change both for them and the school and as always is tinged with emotion. Certainly a few tears were shed by both parents and staff during the performance.

Another annual highlight is the 'Millionaires Tea Party' when headteacher Mrs Hayward invites those pupils who have read over 1 million words during the school year to tea in the library. They are treated to hot chocolate with marshmallows, cake and a healthy serving of fresh fruit as they discuss with each other the books they have read/are reading. It is wonderful to see how children grow and develop during their time at Speldhurst. This term Year 3's science topic in Bramley Class was 'From Tiny Seeds to Mighty Trees' where they explored what a tree is and how it grows. (FYI all the classes are named after apple varieties). As part of the topic the class visited Bedgebury where they discovered firsthand the differences between conifers/evergreen and deciduous trees, examining amazing cones (see photo), tree rings to determine age and what trees need to grow and thrive.

Meanwhile as part of the geography curriculum, Year 5 pupils in Crispin Class visited Bore Place, a working farm near Chiddingstone where they learnt about sustainability, seasonality and cattle farming. They met the cows and planted seeds, getting a glimpse into what farm-life is like. School trips continue to be part of Speldhurst's rich curriculum and this term the Year 1 children in Jazz Class got to experience a day in the life of a farmer when they visited Blackberry farm. They had hands-on experience with the animals and nature and a chance to explore the beautiful grounds. And I hope you too have enriching experiences this summer. and enjoy the holiday wherever you go or whatever you do. I'll be back in September with the start of a new School year at Speldhurst. Until then take care. Felices fiestas, Bonnes fêtes à vous!!#

SARA ANDREW – COMMUNICATIONS GOVERNOR





As I sit staring out of my kitchen window at the stair rods falling from the sky, I can't help but wish I had already booked a summer holiday. However, last week as I picked up my umpteenth supply of strawberries from the shop, and enjoyed them in a deckchair in the garden, I am slightly confused as to what season we are in.

Delicious strawberries have been flying off of our shelves this last few weeks, thanks to the kind volunteers who drive every few days to pick them up, all fresh and plump. These will be continued for as long as they are available. We now have a regular supply of raspberries as well to satiate our red fruit appetites, both fruits go well with our ice cream, or cream, or yoghurt, which to choose?

Asparagus has also again this year been very well received by our customers, and by the time you read this I fear they will be over, but have been very successful. If you are a social media fan you may have seen the reels that are on the Speldhurst Shop website. We are very pleased to welcome Jo to our team. Jo has been using her skills to advertise everything the shop stands for, and suggesting menus and ingredients that make delicious dishes. Looking at these brings home once again how lucky we are to have this facility just around the corner. Thank you Jo!

Our social space has really been taking off. We have more people sitting in the bright space with friends or with their children after school, enjoying an ice cream or coffee and cake. We have increasing interest from local artists exhibiting their work. We are booked up until the end of August at the time of writing. Do come and see what your friends and neighbours are up to behind closed doors, and the hidden talents that they have. Some pieces are for sale as well. If you wish to display your work, do come and see the space available.

I am compelled to thank the large number of builders who are currently frequenting the shop for their daily supplies of rolls, cakes, chocolate and drinks. A valuable source of energy for them and a valuable source of income for the shop. Our front patio hosted a sale of seedlings recently which enabled proceeds to be raised for the allotment fund. Helping one another is what it is all about and the Shop is happy to do just that.

As the exam season arrives, an occasional chocolate treat may be appreciated by your hard-working offspring as they sit studying. Wimbledon is on the doorstep, with strawberries and fizz all available at the shop for your binge in front of the TV watching if you can't be there in person. Then the holidays, hopefully long days of sunshine, picnics at the beach or in the countryside. Order your rolls, pick up hams, cheeses, dips and crisps. Cakes and drink of both soft and alcoholic nature, we have it all and not one trip needed to the supermarket, bliss!

Currency for your foreign holiday is available at the Post Office. Cards for all occasions including those summer weddings. Colouring books and a small selection of games are on our shelves for bored children.

Have you worked hard in the garden? Why not enjoy a delicious crisp white wine, chilled, from our fridge, an early evening reward as the sun goes down. We think we can offer you many necessary supplies for many events in your summer calendar, but if we don't have something you would like, do tell us. We will endeavour to help you. Of course, on the subject of help, during the holidays when we are all in need of some time off, the shop would benefit from some more volunteers, both in the shop and the garden. If you have a few hours to spare, do come and see if there are any jobs that take your fancy. You can sign up for as few sessions as once a week. Our regular staff and volunteers deserve a break as well, so let's support them.

Whilst the children are on holidays why not send all their uniforms to the dry cleaners through us? We can get them cleaned for you ready for the return to school.

Whatever you are doing, be it home or abroad, we wish you a very happy time. We hope that our service to our villagers is all you hoped for, and we thank you for your custom.



Send us your favourite strawberry recipe!



After 25 wonderful years of fun and adventures, it is now time for me to step away from Brownies at the end of June 2027. I originally became a leader after a friend told me the unit was about to close—and as a parent of two boys, I had no idea how close we were to losing it. Taking that step was the best decision I could have made; it has been an amazing time, full of so many memorable moments from outings, holidays, badge work, and incredible experiences, lots of fun and laughter. It has been a real privilege to work with these girls.

However, **the unit is now in urgent need of people to step up and volunteer to lead.** For our group to continue, new leaders must be found. **Unless people step forward now, the unit will be in danger of closing, which would be a massive loss to future girls and our local community.**

Our Brownie unit has been a staple of the community for over four decades, helping girls aged 7–10 build self-confidence, learn new skills, and make lifelong memories. To ensure we continue providing this high-quality experience, we are seeking dynamic volunteers to join our Tuesday evening team, meeting term time 6pm - 7.30pm

This is a unique opportunity to join an established, highly experienced team and bring fresh perspectives to our weekly term-time sessions. You will play a key role in helping girls earn badges, develop resilience, and build self-esteem through games, crafts, and skill-building activities.

The girls are a lovely, lively bunch, and working with them is extremely rewarding. We are also incredibly lucky to have some amazing young leaders already in place, so you will be well-supported. Furthermore, **full training and support are available, and I will be around to help guide you until the end of June 2027** (if required).

How You Can Help:

If you cannot volunteer yourself, please spread this information with friends, family, and work colleagues who you think may be interested in joining 1st Speldhurst Brownies. We need to reach as many people as possible to save our unit.

If you are interested or would like to know more about what is involved, please contact:

Louise Scott

✉ firstspeldhurstbrownies@gmail.com

Thank you for your continued support, and for helping us secure the future of 1st Speldhurst Brownies.

Best wishes,
Louise Scott

SPELDHURST PARISH COUNCIL NEWS



TIME FOR A TRIM?

With all the sunshine and rain we've had recently hedges, bushes and other vegetation are growing quickly which can cause issues with sightlines when pulling out of roads and when walking on pavements and footpaths. For those of you yet to do so, please heed our gentle reminder to schedule a cut, especially if your property borders a pavement or footpath. This is particularly important on narrow paths, where overgrown hedges can force people with pushchairs or mobility aids into the road and is the householder's responsibility.

However, when doing any trimming back, please take care during the bird nesting season (1 March to 31 August). Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, it is an offence to intentionally damage or destroy an active nest, eggs, or chicks. However, limited pruning is permitted where necessary for health and safety reasons, such as addressing immediate obstructions.

DEFIBRILLATOR AND BLEED TRAINING PLANNED



Last Month's free defibrillator training for Councillors, staff and members of the public was so successful that we are planning on holding more training in November. Ken Hopkins from Hopkins Training and Support will lead the sessions again to include specific bleed training separately. Places will be limited and offered on a first come first served basis. Watch this space and social media for more information....

The main benefit of using a defibrillator is to significantly increase the chance of survival during a sudden cardiac arrest (SCA). While CPR helps circulate oxygenated blood to the brain and vital organs, only a defibrillator can deliver a shock to a heart in a shockable rhythm, allowing the heart's normal electrical activity to restart.

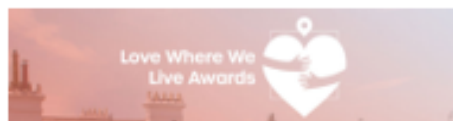
Modern defibrillators (AEDs) are designed to be used safely by members of the public and will only deliver a shock if one is needed and often, depending on the model, will talk you through what to do.



OTHER NEWS

Public Transport: Cllr Sharratt is investigating whether local bus operators will participate in the free travel scheme for 2–15 year olds during August.

Grants: The Ashurst Community Bus Services has currently stalled and if the scheme doesn't proceed, the funds may be redirected to other community projects so if you have a local project in mind and need funding in the near future, please contact Kent County Council Borough Councillor John Moreland: john.moreland@kent.gov.uk



Community Awards:

Nominations are open for the Love Where We Live Awards 2026, closing 2 August. The

annual community awards celebrate the people who make the borough a great place to live and work. So, with ten categories to choose from, which one will you choose first? There's an award for everyone and every group! Make your nominations now: [Love Where We Live Awards](#)

SUBBUTEO RETURNS HOME TO LANGTON GREEN



Langton Green is set to welcome back a much-loved piece of local sporting history as Subbuteo returns to its spiritual home. Langton's Cafe, Sports & Community Hub is delighted to be hosting the prestigious English Masters Subbuteo Tournament on Sunday 16th August, attracting players and enthusiasts from across the world.

In addition, a new Subbuteo Club will be launching on Wednesday 29th July, with sessions continuing fortnightly on Wednesdays thereafter. The club is open to both experienced players and those who would like to discover (or rediscover) this classic tabletop football game. Subbuteo has deep roots in Langton Green, where the game was originally created, making this an exciting opportunity to celebrate an important part of the village's heritage while bringing together people of all ages through sport and community. For further information or to register your interest, please contact Natalina on 07368 570975.

FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS – EVERYONE WELCOME

Monday 6th July 2026 7.30pm - Ashurst Village Hall
Monday 3rd August 7.30pm – Langton Green Villa



TO CONTACT THE PARISH COUNCIL

Call the Clerk, Helen [Chater](mailto:h.chater@speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk) : 01892 862927/07760 769513 or email clerk@speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk

For helpful information, visit www.speldhurstparishcouncil.gov.uk

Speldhurst parish covers the villages of Ashurst, Langton Green, Old Groombridge and Speldhurst. The councillors representing these villages are:

Paul Curry (Chair); Jade Dickens (Vice-Chair); [Kristi Bains](#); Neil Barrington-Johnson; Hugh Cleaver; Richard Ellery; James Farley; Rebecca Leach; Giles Littlefield; Simon Norton; Domenico Tarricone; John Turne





Summer Services 2026

**Come and join us this summer at St Mary's Church, Speldhurst
as we do things a little differently.**

Celebrating both at St Mary's church and in Speldhurst School

2nd August

10am

All Age Holy Communion (CW)
at St Mary's Church

9th August

10am

Cafe Church
at Speldhurst School

16th August

10am

All Age Holy Communion (CW)
at St Mary's Church

23rd August

10am

Cafe Church
at Speldhurst School

30th August

10am

All Age Holiday Club Service
at St Mary's Church

www.speldhurstchurch.org

Visit our What's On Page to keep up to date with everything.



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

July 2026

5th July

10am Holy Communion (CW) at St Mary's, Speldhurst
11am Matins at St John's, Groombridge

12th July

10am Morning Worship at St Mary's, Speldhurst
11am Holy Communion (BCP) at St John's, Groombridge

19th July

8am Holy Communion (BCP) at St Mary's, Speldhurst
10am Holy Communion (CW) at St Mary's, Speldhurst
11.30am Monthly Prayer Meet at St Mary's, Speldhurst
4pm Evensong at St Martin's, Ashurst

26th July

10am All Age Worship at St Mary's, Speldhurst
11am St Martin's Day Service with Holy Communion at St Martin's, Ashurst

Priest in Charge: Reverend Rob Hindmarch

The Church Office can be contacted on 07960296027

or admin@speldhurstchurch.org

www.speldhurstchurch.org

facebook.com/StMarysSpeldhurst/



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

August 2026

2nd August

10am All Age Holy Communion at St Mary's, Speldhurst
11am Matins at St John's, Groombridge

9th August

10am Cafe Church for St Mary's at Speldhurst School
11am Holy Communion (BCP) at St John's, Groombridge

16th August

10am All Age Holy Communion at St Mary's, Speldhurst
11.30am Monthly Prayer Meet at St Mary's, Speldhurst
11am Morning Service at St Martin's, Ashurst

23rd August

10am Cafe Church at Speldhurst School
11am Holy Communion at St Martin's, Ashurst

30th August

10am All Age Holiday Club service at St Mary's, Speldhurst
11am Morning Service at St Martin's, Ashurst

Priest in Charge: Reverend Rob Hindmarch
The Church Office can be contacted on 07960296027
or admin@speldhurstchurch.org
www.speldhurstchurch.org
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Letter from St Mary's



Who is the GOAT?

As I write this the FIFA World Cup has just kicked off and love it or loath it, we will be watching or talking about football until the final on 19th July.

So, who is the GOAT? Who is the greatest of all time? Who is the greatest player? Pele, Maradona, Ronaldo, or Messi? Who is the greatest team? Are you part of a sweepstake and picked a dodgy team or a dream team?

Whoever you think is the best player or the best team, what's clear is that if you're a Christian footballer, you will know that Jesus Christ is *the* GOAT. He's the ultimate *Captain*, he's the ultimate *substitute*, and he's the ultimate *penalty-taker*. And what's great to see is more Christian footballers talking about and demonstrating their faith on and off the pitch. You can tell a footballer of faith because after they score, they always look up and give God the glory; not themselves. And what about Christian goalkeepers, you ask? Well, they definitely believe in the God who saves.

Over the next few weeks, an estimated six billion viewers worldwide will tune in to watch the World Cup and almost two-thirds of the population plan to watch. Football is still *the beautiful game* and it's a wonderful opportunity to get a glimpse of the diversity of God's kingdom – nations, tribes, and tongues gathering together – as we watch and enjoy this global event.

I wish you a joyful and sunny summer and pray that you enjoy any opportunity you have to gather; whether that's to watch the football or avoid it. Enjoy!

With my best wishes,

Rev Rob Hindmarch

Opening Hours & Local Information

Buses	Timetables for bus 285 Speldhurst to Tun Wells - Hams Travel 01580 879629 For info: https://hamstravel.com/services
George & Dragon PH:	Mon - Fri 12pm - 11pm Sat 12pm - 12pm Sun 12pm - 8pm 01892 280494
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GP:	Mon - Fri 8am-6pm Tel: 01892 863040
Dispensary:	Mon - Fri 8.30am -1pm; 2.30pm - 6pm (dispensary calls 8.30am -11.30 only)
Library (village hall):	Monday 2.00 - 4.30pm.
Speldhurst Shop:	Mon-Fri 7.30am - 5.00pm Sat 8.00am -1.00pm Sun 9.00am -11.00am
Post Office:	Mon-Fri 9.00am - 5.00pm Sat 9.00am -1.00pm; Sun Closed

SPELDHURST VILLAGE CLUBS & ORGANISATIONS

Age UK Lunch	Jan Mann	863931
Allotments	Phil Hall	
	speldhurstallotments@gmail.com	
Beavers	Jo Smith	518706
Bowls Club	Debbie Moon	861317
Bridge Club	Heather Hughes	863367
Brownies	Louise Scott	
	firstspeldhurstbrownies@gmail.com	
Bumps and Babes	Jenny Fitzsimmons	541200
Cricket Club	Ed Wesson	07799 731247
Junior Cricket section	Francis Booth	07738474144
Cubs	Karol Leeves	531104
Flower Show	Iain Fenn	864908
Football: Speldhurst Rangers	Ollie Crees	07919467576
GP Surgery		863040
Guides	Sybil Oddy	862746
Library	Pat Carter	861646
Men on Wednesday	John Perkins	863239
Mothers' Union	Christine Baker	540793
Mothers & Toddlers	Jenny Fitzsimmons	541200
Nursery School		07984 793 974
Parish Council: Chair	Paul Curry	07515 938765
Vice Chair	Jade Dickens	
Clerk	Helen Chater	862927
Parish Councillors	Richard Ellery	864077
Police Community Support Officer	Lisa Whitehead	101/ 999
Primary School	Stephanie Hayward	863044
Rainbows	Julia Constable	
	speldhurstainbows@gmail.com	
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Speldhurst Association of Men	Brian Tasker	862301
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		07810 048599
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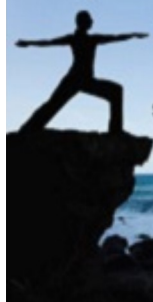
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