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*Published jointly by
St Thomas à Becket Church
and Framfield Parish Council*

Parish Magazine



**Framfield, Blackboys
and
Palehouse Common**

FEBRUARY - MARCH 2022

HOW TO GET IN TOUCH WITH YOUR LOCAL CHURCH

Vicar : Revd Chris Lawrence
01825 891090
(after hours 01825 890365)

Churchwardens : None at present

Secretary to PCC : Mr Barry Richardson

Treasurer : Mrs Gaynor Robson

All communications for church matters should be directed to the Church Office – 10.30 am – 5.00 pm (closed Wednesday) *

Email - revchris.framfield@gmail.com
Post - Vicarage Barn, Brookhouse Lane,
Framfield TN22 5NH
Telephone/ leave a message - 01825 891090



FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptisms:

9th January: Jack Anthony Adam Stewart

Weddings:

None

At rest:

6th January: Susan Jean White

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WHO'S WHO AT THE St THOMAS À BECKET NEWSLETTER

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For the Church: Rev. Chris Lawrence

For the Council: Mr. Keith Brandon

Co-ordinator and Advertising:

Ann Newton

Technical Editor: Barry Richardson

Treasurer: Marie Owen

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CIRCULATION:

This magazine reaches over 1100 households in the parish.

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Contact the Clerk, Ann Newton for advertising details and rates.

clerk@framfieldcouncil.org.uk

Break open your words, let the light shine out (Ps 119), Hope and Faith

Firstly, a very happy New Year to everyone in the parish.

Christmas and New Year can be a fabulous time. Time to celebrate with family and friends and look forward in hope and anticipation to a New Year. However, as Tom Hanks said in that great film Forrest Gump – 'Life is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you are going to get'. For some Christmas will be a first time celebration as a married couple; a first Christmas in a new home; a first Christmas with a baby. To others, a first Christmas without a loved one or perhaps in circumstances that you would rather not be in.

Whatever position we may be in, we can make a conscious choice to look forward in hope.

Throughout the past twenty five years words have become increasingly more important to me. Since studying the Bible and discovering the true meaning of several key words that I had either taken for granted or I had simply misunderstood became the medium through which life would become richer and more meaningful. Take for example the word 'hope'. From a worldly point of view, hope is no more than wishful thinking. Every week millions of people up and down the country buy a lottery ticket in the hope that they will be the winner of the big prize and become a millionaire. In reality the odds of winning remain at 14 million to one. So you may win or you may lose but considering the odds the expectation of winning is not that great. The mind wavers between the prospect of winning or losing and with it we lose the true meaning of hope! From a biblical point of view, hope may be defined as 'an earnest expectation of good'. The biblical definition of hope doesn't waver in potential outcome but focuses firmly on the positive, that what is hoped for will come to pass. Consider the words from Isaiah 40:29-31

He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.
³⁰ **Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall;**
³¹ **but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength.**

We all go through difficult times in life and there may be times when you are physically and emotionally worn down, but God promises that through Him you will have your strength renewed. It's not a 'maybe' it's a promise that 'you will' have your strength renewed. The reason why I can affirm the above with absolute confidence is in the fact that God has made the promise and as St Paul writes in his letter to the Corinthian church - **For no matter how many promises God has made, they are 'Yes' in Christ. And so through him the 'Amen' ('so be it') is spoken by us to the glory of God. (2 Corinthians 1:20).**

I've never tried to count them but apparently there are over 3000 promises in the Bible and as God has made the promises you can be assured that they will be fulfilled. One of the questions I am often asked is how can you be so sure that God will be faithful and fulfil his word? In essence believing in God or trusting God is an act of faith. One of the problems is that mankind would like to bring the Creator of the Universe down to our level and judge Him accordingly but **'God is not a man, that he should lie.'** Numbers 23:19.

Within any relationship there has to be a basis of trust. Without trust a relationship is going nowhere. The bottom line is: if you want to find out what God is like then you have to put yourself in a position where trust can grow; you have to give God an opportunity. Many folk think that faith is limited to the sphere of spiritual belief but in reality we all exercise faith on a daily basis without giving it a second thought. Turning on light switch, sitting on a chair, turning on a tap are all acts of faith. There is an expectation that the light will come on, the chair will hold your weight and water will flow; if you didn't have faith then you wouldn't have embarked upon the action in the first place. So if we can have faith in everyday things why do we seem to stumble when it comes to having faith in God?

Another area that faith and the promises of God come into play is when we are ill or infirm in some way. I don't know why but for many years I have been interested in the ministry of healing. I have personally witnessed many miracles and seen God at work bringing people back to health. Some ailments we may consider minor others where people have been in intensive care with life threatening conditions. But in response to prayer many of the 'no hopers' have recovered, left hospital and are leading normal healthy lives. God cares about the little things and the major things in our lives and seeks to provide the best for us.

At the end of Mark's Gospel Jesus said: **'Go into all the world and preach the gospel (Good News) to all creation. And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they willplace their hands on people who are ill, and they will get well.'** Mark 16:15, 17-18

Yes it does take faith but the few faltering words directed toward God is often all that is needed to release the power of God into your life. To their loss many will not even give God a chance, but to those that do, the line is crossed and you enter into the realm of true hope; the earnest expectation of good coming your way!

Blessings to everyone in the parish for 2022 – Revd Chris Lawrence



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FRAMFIELD MARKET RETURNS FOR 2022! at Framfield Memorial Hall

We're back. The dates for 2022 are detailed below, and the market will run from 10 am to 12 noon unless the situation with Covid-19 changes and new restrictions apply.

A variety of stalls, with all proceeds from the cake stall, raffle and 'café' going towards the ongoing maintenance of the Hall.

Bring/meet your friends for a coffee and a chat or have a stall.

But to be blunt – 'Use it or lose it'. A lot of effort goes into the running of the market and unless we get good footfall, the continuation of the market will be reviewed.

29th January	26th February	26th March
30th April	28th May	25th June
30th July	24th September	29th October
26th November	17th December	

Contact me for full details.

Ann Newton – clerk@framfieldcouncil.org.uk
01825 890182

Litter bins – our Parish litter bins have become targets for fly-tipping mainly of domestic waste. If anyone has any information could they please me know. Everyone is entitled to a bin collection paid through their Council Tax. No one should have to use our Parish bins for their own waste.

Diary of Church Services

Many thanks to everyone for their support over the past year. Any remaining Covid precautionary measures are in place to make your visit a safe one. The latest information is always on the Church Website: <https://www.framfieldchurch.org.uk>

FEBRUARY 2022

- 06 Fourth Sunday before Lent**
8.30 am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.00 am Parish Holy Communion (CW) with Prayer for Healing
- 13 Third Sunday before Lent**
10.00 am Family Service
- 20 Second Sunday before Lent**
8.30 am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.00 am Parish Holy Communion (CW)
- 27 Sunday next before Lent**
10.00 am Morning Praise

MARCH 2022

- 06 First Sunday of Lent**
8.30 am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.00 am Parish Holy Communion (CW) with Prayer for Healing
- 13 Second Sunday of Lent**
10.00 am Family service

20 Third Sunday of Lent
8.30 am Holy Communion (BCP)
10.00 am Parish Holy Communion (CW)

27 Mothering Sunday (Fourth Sunday of Lent)
10.00 am Morning Praise/ Family Service

BCP: Book of Common Prayer. CW: Common Worship

**COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE PLEASE
BY 10th MARCH 2022**

TO:

ANN NEWTON – 01825 890182

Please note new email address:
clerk@framfieldcouncil.org.uk

CHURCH NEWS ITEMS MAY ALSO BE SENT TO
CHRIS LAWRENCE AT THE CHURCH OFFICE –
01825 891090

**HOW TO GET IN TOUCH WITH YOUR PARISH COUNCIL –
FRAMFIELD PARISH COUNCIL**

Mrs Ann Newton (Parish Clerk)

Telephone/fax: (01825) 890182.

Please note new Email: clerk@framfieldcouncil.org.uk

Postal Address: 'Highlands', Framfield Road, Blackboys,
East Sussex TN22 5LR.

Parish Council website: www.framfieldcouncil.org.uk



Framfield & Blackboys WI

A FIRST FOR SUSSEX WI'S

ARMED POLICE UNIT SPEAK AT OUR NOVEMBER MEETING

At our November meeting, we heard a fascinating presentation by John Sheridan, Deputy Chief Firearms Instructor and Sarah Roberts, Firearms Compliance Co-ordinator, both of whom are based at Gatwick, on the role of the Police armed response teams.

To become a member of an armed response team requires a huge amount of in-depth training and continuing assessment. Procedures have been standardised throughout the country so that individual forces can mount joint operations if required.

When media headlines tell us that an armed response team attended a terrorist incident and neutralised the perpetrators, it's not always obvious that in doing so they were required to head into serious personal danger without a moments hesitation. Even their incredibly heavy protective vests are no guarantee of safety. When they passed the vests round the meeting, some of us could hardly lift them - and they have to run in them!

John told us about some of the operations he's taken part in including when they used farm machinery to remove large wrought iron gates before breaking a front door down in order to seize evidence against a gang involved in kidnap and torture.

We all left with an amazing insight into the skill and commitment involved in keeping us as safe as possible in these difficult and unpredictable times.



Sarah & John with protective vest

COMING UP NEXT

Next Meeting Friday 11th February – 2 pm Framfield Church Hall

Also, After a great deal of careful consideration, and with a heavy heart, it was agreed that the safe and right thing to do was to postpone our New Year lunch until February.

The revised date for the lunch is now Wednesday the 16th February at the Hare & Hounds.

If you would like to find out more about our WI, why not come along to one of our meetings as a visitor. Please contact

Delia Gillies on 01825 890825 or Jackie Samways on 01825 890417.

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UCKFIELD MEN'S SHED

Having re-opened in April, following the lockdown, the Uckfield Men's Shed saw a return of most of its members along with some new faces. Work started on some community projects, making planters and other goods for sale at local fetes and personal projects.



The Shed had a busy lead up to Christmas selling over 150 reindeer and snowmen and donating planters and a noticeboard for the Community Fridge, a letterbox for the Elf on a Shelf Hunt, a nativity scene for Holy Cross Church and a wooden Christmas tree for the Christmas Tree Festival.

The Shed has 25 working members at present but has space for a number more.



We are open on Mondays and Thursdays 10-4 but are hoping to open further days if our membership continues to grow. We welcome any men who have time on their hands and who would like to join a friendly and supportive group.

Men's Sheds (or Sheds) are similar to garden sheds - a place to pursue practical interests at leisure, to practice skills and enjoy making and mending. The difference is that garden sheds and their activities are often solitary in nature while Men's Sheds are the opposite. They're about social connections and friendship building, avoiding isolation, improving mental health, sharing skills and knowledge, and of course a lot of laughter.

If anyone would like to join the Shed or find out more about what it has to offer contact Chris at uckfieldmensshed@gmail.com

Supporting you during the pandemic

As a church we are committed to supporting you, the parishioners of Framfield, Blackboys and Palehouse Common. The pandemic and its effects pose a physical health risk as we all understand, but times of isolation and uncertainty can also significantly affect our mental wellbeing. If anyone would like a chat, then do please call. I'm usually in the Church Office Monday to Friday 10am-5pm (except Wednesday) on the office telephone number (01825 891090). If you get the answer machine, do please leave a message.

Supporting the Church

During the pandemic we have been looking at ways in which we may mitigate the financial loss to the church and at the very least cover our basic overheads. As lovely as they are, the upkeep of historic buildings is expensive and at the moment, we are just about covering the monthly bills. Many of our parishioners support the church financially but the use of cash has been seriously curtailed over the past year. However, we have set up an online giving page at: www.framfieldchurch.org.uk/donate.html We would be very grateful for your help – like all organisations our costs have continued, but our income has diminished significantly. If you are able to help financially and keep the church viable for the future, please donate through the 'Give a Little' icon. Thank you.



JW Ground Maintenance

New telephone: 01825 372389

New address: 73 Manor End, Uckfield, TN22 1DN

We really, really, need some additional help in the Churchyard and some financial help as well – We are very grateful to everyone who works diligently in the churchyard. At three and a half acres it is a mammoth task. However, it is greatly appreciated by us and the local community, but we really could do with more help as our current workforce is small in number and isn't getting any younger or healthier. Even if it's for the odd hour it all makes a difference.

If anyone in the local community is willing to lend a hand do please speak to Freddy Pratt (Tel: 07791 731021) as to what is required – thank you.

SPEEDING TRAFFIC IN BLACKBOYS

There are concerns amongst residents in Blackboys about speeding traffic in the High Street and on Lewes Road. Local County Councillor Chris Dowling is working with Parish Council and a community group to press East Sussex County Council and Sussex Police to review the speed limits and take action.

To help address the speed issues in the High Street, a Community Speed Watch (CSW) group of volunteers could be set-up. The CSW system is a Police project and it is robust, with speeding motorists who are 'caught' by the CSW team reported online to the Police. The system has a rising level of contacts and warnings sent to offending motorists. Motorists who offend repeatedly and are reported can face Police prosecution.

Unfortunately, due to Police procedures and insurance cover, CSW cannot operate in Lewes Road.

Some residents have already stepped forward, and are undergoing training, but more are still required.

Interested and want to help with road safety in Blackboys? Please contact the Parish Clerk, Ann Newton - 01825 890182 email - clerk@framfieldcouncil.org.uk

Addendum to Little Goldsmiths dog grooming -

Telephone: 01825 890181

Email: mazbecvar1985@gmail.com

There are some beautiful Dogwoods on offer that will providing yellow, green, orange and red stems and one of my favourites is 'Midwinter fire' which glows when the sun shines on it, Dogwoods strike very easily so once in your garden, cuttings can easily be made. It is always nice to have some evergreens that you can view from the window which could be some topiary Box, clipped Yew or a Camellia which seem to do well in our soil and will provide an injection of colour in the Spring. The other way to introduce colour is with bulbs which continue to pop up year after year and will provide the opportunity to see where more can be added, nurseries have a good choice in pots or mark the spot to plant new bulbs in the autumn and they will add colour to any dull, damp day.

We are being encouraged to "Plant a Tree for the Jubilee, as part of The Queen's Green Canopy which is a unique tree planting initiative created to mark Her Majesty's Platinum Jubilee celebrations there are so many trees to choose from, whether you have a large or small garden you can add blossom, structure, shade and if you choose the right tree a wonderful Autumn display. This is the time to purchase bare root trees which are normally cheaper than pot grown and if you are looking for more than one there are special offers available from the Woodland Trust and other suppliers.

Enjoy your garden

Denise Taylor
Chair, Framfield and Blackboys Horticultural Society



FRAMFIELD PARISH COUNCIL



FIND US ON FACEBOOK: Framfield Parish Council now has a social media account with Facebook:
(www.facebook.com/framfieldparishcouncil)
where useful and pertinent information will be posted.

Churchyard machinery appeal

Unfortunately, we have had to replace one of the mowers and the 'ride-on' has had to have some major repairs in order to keep it going. As a church we only have limited resources and the Church Yard fund has all but run out. Helping with the maintenance cost does ensure that the churchyard is a pleasant place to come to when visiting the graves of loved ones. If anyone would like to give a donation or set up a small standing order it would be gratefully received - thankyou.

The churches bank details are:-

HSBC- Account name: Framfield PCC

Sort Code: 40-45-32

Account Number: 91456369 Reference - Churchyard Fund

Do you have an old cooker ?

We are in need of a floor standing cooker with ceramic hobs, that is available free for our church hall kitchen. Can collect. Offers to John Mordaunt on 01825 899443 or mobile 07989 587459

Waldron Community Market

meets at Holy Cross Priory Village , Lewes Road, Cross in Hand on the 2nd Thursday each month at 10.00am until 12.30pm. Currently we are all indoors with a wide range of quality foods and exciting crafts.

If ideas go to plan, we hope to increase our 'offer' of producers with new stalls trading outside as well as inside to create a 'virtual' High Street. Refreshments are served until midday in the elegant Boughton Lounge, so making for a relaxing and pleasurable shopping experience.
More information is available on our website:
www.facebook.com/waldroncommunitymarket/



Our Family Friendly Service is a lively short happy service, where the children are actively involved.

13th February 2022, 10.00 am
13th March 2022, 10.00 am

Looking for a local venue?

Then look no further!

Framfield Church Hall is well placed in the village next to the Church. It is ideal for regular meetings, social & business events, special occasions, keep fit, exercise groups, birthday parties and other activities.

The hall can be used as an open space or with tables / seating for up to 60 persons. There is a fitted kitchen with catering equipment & crockery etc, a large AV screen, sound system, two loos (one with disabled facilities) and two disabled parking spaces directly outside the hall.

Currently it is used for Art classes, Pilates, Exercise groups, Drama, Singing, Karate Presentations and children's' birthday parties. Our rates are £10.00 per hour.

For more details about the hall and its events please get in touch with Graham Seldon on 01825 508758. mobile 07973 685992, or email: hoss.graham@outlook.com



FRAMFIELD AND BLACKBOYS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Happy 2022

We have been working hard to get together our Events and Talks for 2022. Our committee member Jackie Argyrou is our Events co-ordinator and is putting together an exciting schedule which we will publish on our website shortly. www.framfieldandblackboys-hort-soc.com

We have also started our Summer Show Committee meetings and planning is in the pipeline for the return of our annual show after 2 years of absence. Put the date in your diary **Saturday 13th August 2022 at Framfield Recreation Ground and Memorial Hall**. We are looking forward to bringing you a fun and "spectacular" event.

We are always looking for volunteers to help with the planning, setting up and running the show so please do contact me if you are able to help in any way. Keep an eye on our website and Facebook page for updates www.facebook.com/Framfieldandblackboysshow

Gardening Hints and Tips from Jenny Bacon

With Spring just around the corner this is an exciting time in the gardener's diary. If you haven't already done so, it is the perfect time to buy and sow seeds in preparation for the summer ahead. This can be either flowers, vegetables or both and if you have not done so before it can be very rewarding and will save you a small fortune on plants. Sweet peas can be sown now and a great introduction to gardening for those new to seed sowing and children as the seeds are large and can be planted in pots and placed somewhere sheltered, just remember to protect them from mice....large seeds make a very tasty snack.

The garden can seem a bleak place over the winter months so why not introduce some winter flowering spice such as a Witch Hazel that will provide colour and fragrance. 'Wisley Supreme' flowers early and has prolific yellow blooms, 'Orangey-Red Rubin' holds a RHS Award of Garden Merit, or tangerine 'Gingerbread' can be more low growing...the choice is yours.

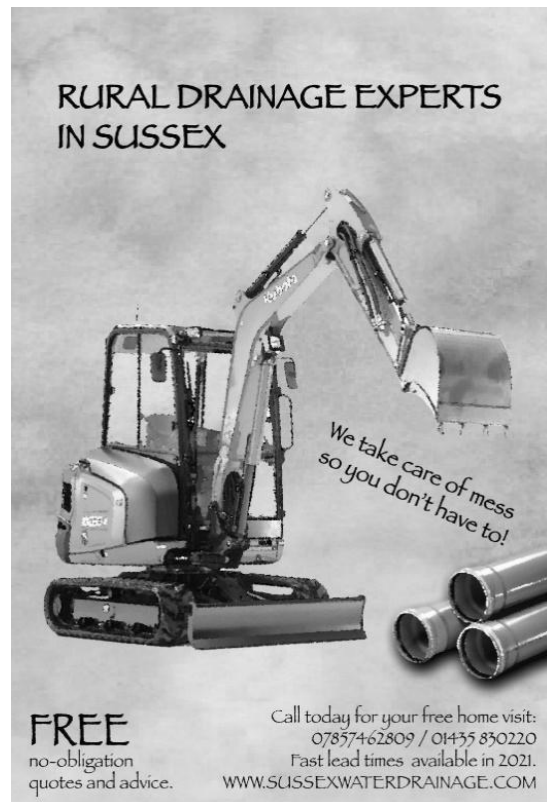
As always, the schools are keen on sport. In early January a team from Framfield won a netball tournament at Uckfield College and at Blackboys the children enjoy gym and dance lessons from specialist teacher Miss Zara Breeze. There has already been plenty of opportunities to get active in 2022.

Don't forget: if you would like to stay up to date with what is going on in both our Parish schools, you can follow both on Twitter: @framfieldcep and @blackboysschool

Best wishes

Mrs Lisa Pestell, Headteacher Framfield School

Mr Graham Sullivan, Headteacher Blackboys School



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Nature Notes

“In the bleak mid-winter frosty wind made moan”. The poet Christina Rossetti (1830 – 1894) wrote these words accurately describing this challenging time of year. All life is challenged by winter, but most living forms have adaptations that allow them to survive the cold. Cold blooded (poikilothermic) animals hibernate meaning they put their lives on hold and go into torpor. Many mammals grow a thicker coat of hair/fur/wool. Many birds migrate from cold regions where food becomes scarce, and fly to warmer places where food is more abundant. The general idea is to adapt and survive.

Plants have also adapted to live in regions where their growth and reproduction is optimal. If you plant a tropical plant in your garden, it will probably die when the frosts come. Likewise, if you try planting bluebells in a tropical country, they will probably die of heat exhaustion.

Badgers have adapted their reproductive behaviour to fit in with the annual cycle of weather in Britain. They make their maternity nests in the late summer or early autumn when the weather is still quite mild. Badgers do not hibernate, but they feed up on earth worms, frogs and other small animals, nuts and fruit during the autumn time of plenty and their activity is reduced during the cold months. Badgers can mate at any time of the year, but the fertile embryos delay implantation in the womb until December, then after about 49 days of embryo development, the babies are usually born underground during mid-February, often from multiple fathers as they tend to be promiscuous all year round. Litters can be from 2 – 6 young. The babies emerge from the sett during the night after about 8 weeks (c. mid-April) of being fed on their mother's milk below ground. By this time, cold weather is less likely and days are getting longer and food more abundant. The female may continue to suckle the cubs for several weeks beyond then, but they will be learning about finding food for themselves during these outings. This way, young badgers have all spring and summer to feed up, grow and mature.

Living in a seasonal habitat is always going to be challenging, but in the tropics, seasons are less well defined by daylength and temperature, they are more defined by the amount of rainfall they get.

Martyn Stenning

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With immediate effect, if anyone is wishing to hire one of our halls, please note that we now have a single point of contact for all of them:

Email clerk@framfieldcouncil.org.uk

Or

Phone (Office Hours) **01825 890182**

(Please leave a message on answerphone with your contact details)

St Thomas a Becket Church of England Federation, Blackboys and Framfield Schools News

Happy New Year to all readers of the Parish Magazine from everyone at Framfield and Blackboys Schools. We hope you all had a relaxing Christmas and we all have our fingers crossed for some normality in 2022.

The year ended with the traditional excitement of Christmas. There isn't anything quite like a primary school Christmas! Despite some restrictions, the children enjoyed Christmas parties, nativity plays, carol concerts and the all-important Christmas dinner. Such is the spirit in our 2 schools, that the children had a great time, but never lost sight of the true meaning of Christmas. Our Religious Education Subject Leader, Mrs Hannah Sullivan ensures that lessons have a focus on the Christmas Story and children use bibles to read and compare the different gospel accounts. We are also indebted to Rev Chris and the team at St Thomas a Becket who provide such a lovely backdrop for our carol concerts.

2022 has started with a bang, and although both schools have had covid-forced absences, the future looks brighter. At Blackboys children have got stuck into their new learning. Our youngest pupils are enjoying a Geography themed topic called "Let it snow" and are finding out what it is like in the polar regions. Lots of excitement finding out about penguins and in time the children will learn about the race to the South Pole between Scott and Amundsen. At Framfield the oldest pupils are loving their History learning about the Ancient Greeks. With so much rich storytelling (Trojan Horse, Greek myths etc) we are sure that the topic will spill into their English work too, with some exciting stories being developed.

NEWS FROM YOUR WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Housing numbers – the Leader and I met with Michael Gove MP, Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, in December and he assured us that a paper is to be issued early in the New Year with legislation following later in the spring which will hopefully review the way in which housing numbers are calculated.

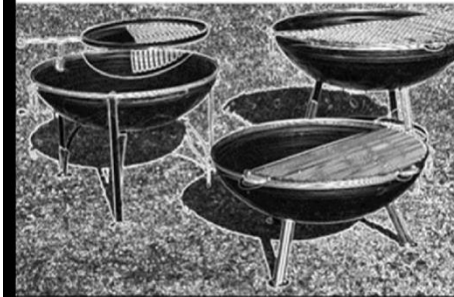
Street Learning is a partnership project providing access to a range of free courses designed to help residents develop new skills and enhance existing ones and are provided in venues in the local community and online. There are practical courses like family cooking and sewing, arts and crafts courses to help with wellbeing and recovery. Those that will help parents connect with your child through maths as well as those designed to help with career progression. New courses are being added online on a regular basis: Visit: www.wealden.gov.uk/streetlearning
Or email: streetlearning@wealden.gov.uk

Omicron grants – applications from businesses that are eligible for the Omicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant are now being accepted by WDC. This grant is designed to support businesses that offer in-person services, where the main service and activity takes place in a fixed Business Rates premises within the hospitality, leisure and accommodation sectors. Applications close at midnight on 14 February 2022. In addition there are a number of Discretionary Grant Schemes to support other business sectors. You can apply for the grant by visiting:
<https://wealden.grantapproval.co.uk>

As always, please don't hesitate to me with any queries.

Contact details – Ann Newton, 'Highlands', Blackboys, TN22 5LR.
Telephone - 01825 890103.
Email – aenewton1965@gmail.com

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- Improved Movement
- Reduction of Chronic Pain



Queen’s Platinum Jubilee – the Parish Council have agreed to offer both Parish halls for organised Jubilee celebrations. Please contact the Clerk if you have any plans which could form a public village party to celebrate the day.

Speed limits in Blackboys. The Parish Council and residents continue to put pressure on ESCC to reduce the speed limits on the B2102 and B2192 in Blackboys.

Palehouse Common – issues with HGV’s. The Council is still waiting for the costings to erect some new signs to discourage HGV’s from entering Palehouse from the western end.

The Parish Council has met with **ESCC Streetlighting** over the issues in the Parish. A full structural test is to be carried out on the lights with the view to potentially removing any obsolete lights but also enhancing areas which need better lighting.

Planning applications – residents are no longer being sent letters by Wealden District Council (WDC) as part of the consultation process, only advice notices will be on sites/households – this is all part of WDC’s ‘Drive to Digital’. If any anyone, whether the applicant in an application or an interested party wishing to make representation to the PC, please contact me at the earliest opportunity. The Parish Council receives weekly lists of applications which can also be accessed on the WDC website so I can easily pinpoint if an application has been submitted.

http://www.wealden.gov.uk/Wealden/Residents/Planning_and_Building_Control/Leaflets_And_Publications/Weekly_List_of_Planning_Applications/Planning_Weekly_List.aspx

Budget/precept 2022/23. At their November meeting the Parish Council agreed to increase the precept by £2,020 to £68,700 per annum. This is an increase of 9.3% or £6.10 per year to a Band D property. This will go towards the works required from the street lighting review.

Parish Magazine adverts. Advertisers will be contacted very shortly with a view to re-advertising in the magazine. Advertising is the lifeline of the magazine so anyone wishing to advertise please make contact with the Clerk.



Sexton beetle© Photo by Derek Middleton, Sussex Wildlife Trust

Sussex Wildlife Trust is an independent charity caring for wildlife and habitats throughout Sussex. Founded in 1961, we have worked with local people for over half a century to make Sussex richer in wildlife.

We rely on the support of our members to help protect our rich natural heritage. Please consider supporting our work. As a member you will be invited to join Michael Blencowe on our regular wildlife walks and also enjoy free events, discounts on wildlife courses, Wildlife magazine and our Sussex guidebook, Discovering Wildlife. It’s easy to join online at sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk/join



10 Year Anniversary in February!

Did you know that the parish has a local Facebook group? This group is for the community of Blackboys, Framfield & Palehouse Common to share local news, photos, stories and events.



Click the QR code, or visit:

www.facebook.com/groups/Blackboysandframfield

Sexton beetles: subterranean corpse-disposal blues

by Michael Blencowe of the Sussex Wildlife Trust

"Now, you got a corpse in a car, minus a head...take me to it." In Quentin Tarantino's movie *Pulp Fiction*, Winston Wolf provides a professional clean-up service for two incompetent hitmen when they have a little 'problem' that needs solving urgently. Hopefully, illicit corpse disposal isn't a regular dilemma for readers of this magazine - but in the natural world death, disposal, decay and decomposition are vital, constant processes which recycle the nutrients that keep our planet functioning. This clean-up duty is undertaken by a cast of unsung underworld characters. Bacteria and blow-flies, fungi and foxes, worms and woodlice all put their tendrils, talons, mandibles and molars to the task. But if you want a corpse removed efficiently and cleanly you had better call in the professionals: the sexton beetles.

The sextons are members of the family Silphidae. At about 3cm long they are amongst the heavyweights of our county's 3,000 beetle species. Some sextons can be identified by their lurid orange wing-cases; a hi-vis jacket befitting a worker at the scene of a tragedy. Now, let's say you've got a dead blue tit in the back yard. Its little soul will have winged its way to that great peanut feeder in the sky and now it's time to return its earthly body back to the soil. Sextons, armed with super-sensitive chemoreceptors in their clubbed antennae, can detect the sweet smell of death from a mile away.

The male flies in first and assesses the scene. First job - call for backup. He secretes a stink from his rear end to lure in a female and his partner arrives. Next job - secure the corpse. The beetles start beetling around the blue tit, stripping off the feathers. But - phew-wee! That smell will soon be luring in every fly in the neighbourhood and the sextons don't want to draw attention to their work. So, they baste the body with their antibacterial and antifungal chemicals, slowing down the decay and preventing the pong. Now the sextons live up to their name. Working together, they dig a grave and line it with feathers. The corpse is tenderly lowered down into the earth. It's here, in this cosy crypt, that the sextons will raise their family. Eggs are laid and develop into hungry larvae which, unusually for an insect, 'beg' for food and are fed by their devoted parents. The bird's body is slowly stripped of flesh and reduced to a simple skeleton. After pupation, new sexton beetles emerge from the soil and fly away, perhaps to find their own corpse or to become food for birds themselves. No eulogy, no flowers, yet it's still a dignified, life-affirming send off. So, when it's my time to go, just drag me into the garden and let the sextons do their job.

Allotments – tenancy agreements will be sent out as usual for the new year April 2022-March 2023. At Blackboys all plots are taken but some are obviously not being used. There is now a waiting list of residents requiring plots. Tenants will be given notice and tenancies not renewed unless the plots are being actively worked on. Please look out for the tenancy renewals which will be sent out by email in March.

It seems as though many **emails** from the Clerk go into spam – if you are expecting an email or reply please check your spam boxes.

Recreation grounds, play areas etc - If anyone believes they have discovered a fault or problem with play equipment at one of the play areas, could they please contact me immediately. Although the areas are inspected on a weekly basis, any additional notification is important to the Council.

All **agendas** are put on the village noticeboards and website. The full minutes of all meetings are also on the website. Please do not rely on the contents of this magazine for meeting dates etc.

PLEASE NOTE that we have been experiencing technical issues with our website recently, and it may not be updated as often as we normally do it.

Ann Newton (Parish Clerk): 01825 890182

Email: clerk@framfieldcouncil.org.uk

Postal Address: 'Highlands', Blackboys, TN22 5LR.

Website: www.framfieldcouncil.org.uk

Dog waste – the Parish has once again become a common place for dog waste. Some is left unbagged, and some is left very inconveniently bagged!! The Parish Council provides dog bins for the very same stuff. Please use them. The problem has become epidemic around School Lane, Blackboys, where children/parents are accessing the School – not a happy thought to walk that through the School!

Clean up after your dogs – don't let the dogs get the blame! And there is a hefty fine if caught – the Wealden Street Scene Officers have been informed.

MY LIFE WITH FUR AND FEATHER

AN UNUSUAL JOB

I hope you all had a good Christmas. We had a very quiet Christmas, just the two of us, but kept in touch with all the family by email, phone and Skype.

As I write at the beginning of the New Year it is dark, gloomy and very wet. These conditions reminded me of an unusual journey many years ago. I worked at a poultry unit and had a caravan to live in so I was on site to look after all the chicks. Another girl also worked there and she also was provided with a caravan. We got on really well and would often cook for each other that was fun. I had my Golden Retriever Crispin and she had a whippet. Jane then married and I was often invited over for a meal. By then they had two whippets, a horse, donkey and other livestock. Crispin loved these visits and would try and keep up with the two Whippets who raced at great speed round the fields.

Sometime later they decided to move up north but there was a problem. They were taking the horse and donkey who now had a foal. They had a horse box but their car was not suitable to tow with. My husband had a suitable car with a tow bar and he was quite used to towing gliders but had never towed life stock. He optimistically offered to drive to their new house. However there was another problem as Jane and John would not be there until the following day, as there were complications about the new owners who were buying their old house!

The animals were loaded and we set off with a list of instructions including directions to the house, unloading the livestock where the stables were, feeding etcetera and importantly keys to the house. In those days there were no mobile phones or sat nav.

We set off for a long drive up north with Crispin curled up on the back seat and the horse, donkey and foal quite happy in the horse box. About half way we stopped briefly at a service station and heard a strange banging coming from the horse box. The mare getting rather bored was kicking the side of the horse box we thought any minute she would break through the side. My husband banged on the side of the horse box and told her in a firm voice to be quiet.

She immediately did as she was told that was funny as my husband hardly knew one end of a horse from the other!

By the time we arrived it was pitch black. It was strange and a bit creepy arriving at an isolated dark house and peering through the darkness to locate the stable block. We very carefully unloaded our livestock and were very relieved to get them settled, fed and watered without any mishap; we then let ourselves into the strange house that felt very odd not having a clue where anything was. However, everything went well except for one thing we had in adversely switched off the power to the deep freeze that was full of food!

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Is your septic tank compliant to the latest rules?

Under the new General Binding Rules, if you have a septic tank that discharges directly to surface water, ie, a water ditch, stream, river, etc, you must upgrade or replace your septic tank to a full sewage treatment plant system by 1st January 2020, or sooner if you plan to sell your property before this date. These rules are designed to reduce the level of pollution from sewage in the nation's watercourses.

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