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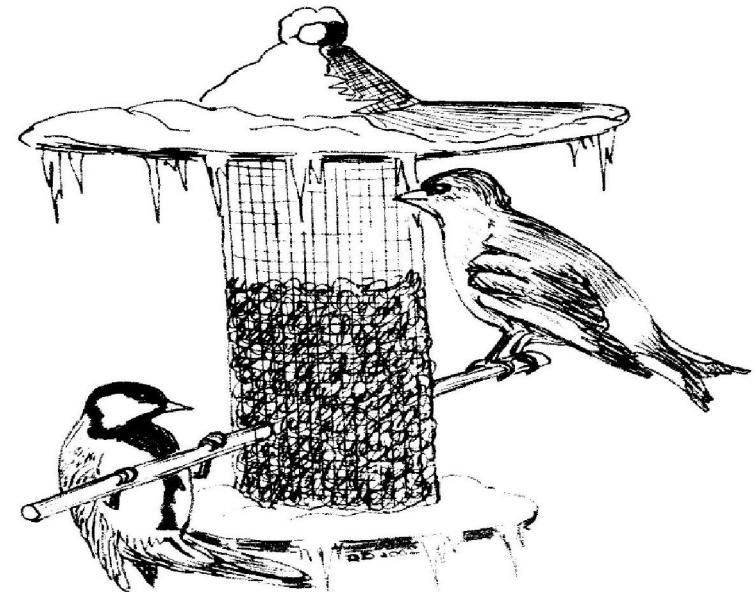
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Published jointly by  
St Thomas à Becket Church  
and Framfield Parish Council

# Parish Newsletter



Framfield, Blackboys  
and  
Palehouse Common

FEBRUARY / MARCH 2018

Oak Tree Barn, Lewes Road, Blackboys, East Sussex, TN22 5JL

**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 Peter Tomsett**

**Treasurer :**             **Mrs Patricia Marchant**

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

**Email -    rev.chris@btinternet.com**

**Post -       Vicarage Barn, Brookhouse Lane, Framfield TN22 5NH**

**Telephone/ leave a message - 01825 891090**

*From the Registers :*



**Marriages:**

**At rest: 18.1.18    Janet Joan Brill**  
**18.1.18    Derek Jenkins**

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Children and families – 0345 6080192 (see latest news above)

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Library enquiries – 0345 6080196

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Trading Standards – 0345 6080197

Waste – 0345 6080194

Switchboard – 0345 6080190

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East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service: 0303 999 1000

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## WHO'S WHO AT THE St THOMAS À BECKET NEWSLETTER

Joint Chair -

For the Church: Rev. Chris Lawrence

For the Council: Mr. Rob Newton

Co-ordinator and Advertising: Ann Newton

Technical Editor: Barry Richardson

Treasurer: Jan Riddle

Distribution: Barbara Trickey, Delia Gillies,  
and their teams of volunteers

Printers: "Print Matters"

A bi-monthly Newsletter distributed free to all  
homes within the Parish.

### **I lift my eyes up to the hills - where does my help come from? (Psalm 121)**

Firstly, Happy New Year to everyone in the parish. My hope and prayer is that we will all have a blessed, prosperous and amazing 2018!

After a long and incredible life, Moses the great man and friend of God dies and God appoints Joshua as his successor. Joshua is the one who would lead the people of Israel into the Promised Land. Naturally a daunting task and Joshua certainly has his doubts that he is up to the job. Reassurance is needed so God speaks to Joshua:-

**"No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. "Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them." (Joshua 1:5-6) . To reinforce the fact that God will be with Joshua He tells him again; Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9**

There is something of the mentality of Joshua in all of us. When the chips are down and the task looks daunting we get worried, fearful and discouraged. We are more likely to run away rather than move forward in confidence. Despite all this, Joshua's confidence comes from God's words and the promises made to him. This is going to be a joint venture not one based on human ingenuity and strength.

An area of Christian ministry that has intrigued me for at least twenty years has been the ministry of healing. There are many accounts in the Bible of Jesus bringing healing, deliverance and performing miracles. Jesus isn't on earth today but through the Holy Spirit given at Pentecost the ministry of healing continues through those who continue to believe in His word and promises i.e.

**And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; ...they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well." After the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, he was taken up into heaven and he sat at the right hand of God. Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it. Mark 16:18-20**

To this end we are having a special series of services for those who are unwell with the expectation that God will be bringing healing to those in need. Come and see!

## Morning Praise Services - 2018

*A special series for the Believing and the 'Undecided but Interested'  
(4th Sunday of the Month; 10am - All Welcome)*

### Miracles from Mark's Gospel

**28th Jan - Mark 1:21-34**

Jesus has the power and authority to drive out evil spirits and heal every disease - are you willing to let Him help you this morning?

**25th Feb - Mark 2:1-12**

Do you need healing from paralysis or do you need to receive the forgiveness of God - both are available this morning through the Spirit of Christ.

**25th March (Palm Sunday) Mark 3:1-6**

Jesus is praised for all the miracles he performed.  
Do you or someone close to you need a miracle?  
Miracles are here for those who ask this morning!

**22nd April - Mark 7:24-30**

A gentile woman from Tyre (*Lebanon*) asks Jesus to heal her daughter - she is not disappointed. Ask this morning; you won't be disappointed either!

**24th June - Mark 8:22-26**

Jesus places his hands on a blind man and his sight is restored.  
Do you need a healing touch from Jesus this morning; it is here!

**22nd July - Mark 9:14-29**

Jesus heals a boy with a deaf and mute spirit; unbelievable?  
'Everything is possible for the person who believes'  
Can you believe Jesus for your healing this morning? You certainly can!

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Blessings to One and All . *Revd Chris Lawrence*



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schools achieving first and second place in the county, being awarded at a special ceremony at Wakehurst Place. They will now be showcasing their designs in February at the Lions Conference taking place at the East Sussex National.

It has been a very busy and successful term and we look forward to more exciting learning opportunities for all the children next term. Just a reminder that if you can spare an hour or so and would like to help out hearing readers in school, please do contact the school offices. You would be very welcome.

Thanks for all your support from Graham Sullivan and Jacqueline Davies

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### Framfield and Blackboys Wives Group

By the time this goes to print we will have had our AGM which was in January. Our new programme for the coming year will have been almost finalised.

Our first meeting in February will be a talk by St Peter's and St James, hospice when we will give them a cheque as they were our main charity last year. We now have to decide on a charity to support this present year.

Our programme includes a walk, a meal out, paper quilling and a talk about Rudyard Kipling. If you would like to join us give me a ring. Val Peaty. 890677

## Diary of Church Services

### FEBRUARY 2018

#### 04 Second Sunday before Lent

8.30 am Holy Communion (BCP)  
10.00 am Parish Communion (CW) with Prayer for Healing

#### 11 Sunday next before Lent

10.00 am Family Service  
6.30 pm Evening Holy Communion (CW)

#### 18 First Sunday of Lent

8.30 am Holy Communion (BCP)  
10.00 am Parish Communion (CW)  
4.00 pm 'Messy Church' for all the family

#### 25 Second Sunday of Lent

10.00am Morning Praise (with Prayer for Healing)  
6.30 pm Evening Holy Communion (CW)

### MARCH 2018

#### 04 Third Sunday of Lent

8.30 am Holy Communion (BCP)  
10.00 am Parish Holy Communion (CW)

#### 11 Fourth Sunday of Lent

10.00 am Family Service  
6.30 pm Evening Holy Communion (CW)  
(with prayer for healing)

#### 18 Fifth Sunday of Lent

8.30 am Holy Communion (BCP)  
10.00 am Parish Holy Communion (CW)  
4.00 pm 'Messy Church' for all the family

#### 25 Palm Sunday

10.00 am Morning Praise (with Prayer for Healing)  
6.30 pm Evening Holy Communion (CW)

- 26-28** 7-7.30pm **Holy Week Meditations** (Gage Chapel)
- 29** 7.00pm **Maundy Thursday** - Evening Communion
- 30** 10.00am **Good Friday** - Churches in Uckfield, Walk of Witness (Gather at 'Cornerstone', Uckfield - Coffee & Hot Cross Buns)  
11.00am - CiU Joint Service in the Old Post Office Square
- 1 April Easter Day**  
10am Family Festival Service (*Followed by Easter Egg Hunt*)

BCP: Book of Common Prayer. CW: Common Worship

**COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE PLEASE  
BY 10<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2018  
TO**

**ANN NEWTON – 01825 890182**  
[framfieldpc@gmail.com](mailto:framfieldpc@gmail.com)

**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.**  
**Email: [framfieldpc@gmail.com](mailto:framfieldpc@gmail.com)**

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

**Parish Council website: [www.framfieldcouncil.org.uk](http://www.framfieldcouncil.org.uk)**

St Thomas à Becket Church of England Federation  
Blackboys and Framfield Schools News January 2018

Happy New Year to the many members of our local communities who supported both our schools at many events leading up to Christmas. We both had very successful fayres with exciting activities for the children, many unusual stalls including live donkeys and Santa arriving on a huge tractor. These key fundraising events were very well supported so many thanks to everyone.

We had delightful KS1 nativity plays in both schools: 'It's a Baby' with the viewpoint of the innkeeper telling the story at Blackboys and we heard about a lost sheep in 'Not such a Silent Night' at Framfield. It is great to see after great teaching from all the KS1 teams these young children, some only 4 years old, confidently take on their roles to perform and sing with such confidence.

We are very grateful to Rev Chris that both schools also held their traditional carol services in the wonderful parish church setting. These two events were well supported as all the children produced some excellent presentations and singing to remind us of the true meaning of Christmas.

Back in November many children took on adult roles as part of the Children's' Commission National Takeover Day. There were a variety of new class teachers, teaching assistants as well as several impressive headteachers! Huge thanks to all the staff that supported this excellent day giving the children the chance to make decisions and experience the world of work.

We were fortunate enough to receive some entrepreneurial teaching materials from the Uckfield Lions Club and entered the Lions Roar 2017 competition for children to work together to plan useful projects for the future. This was very successful with the two



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# Quiz Night

Saturday, 10th March

7pm for 7.30 Start

Framfield Memorial Hall

Tickets: £10 each

Includes 2 Course Supper.

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Tables of 6. Tables will be made up for smaller groups

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Finally, if you have an interest in gardening, are new to the area or have lived here for years, and wish to share gardening experiences with others do join the Society - you will be warmly welcomed. For more information about the Society please contact either Fiona Fidler (01825 890719; [fhbsmail@gmail.com](mailto:fhbsmail@gmail.com)) or Trevor Hince (01435 863364; [trevor.hince@gmail.com](mailto:trevor.hince@gmail.com)).

Trevor Hince

## FRAMFIELD AND BLACKBOYS MONDAY CLUB

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| 5th February  | Boccia (Bowls) -2.30pm<br>Framfield Memorial Hall  |
| 19th February | Chairbased Activities<br>With Louise Knight - 2.30pm<br>Framfield Memorial Hall  |
| 5th March     | Speaker - Michael Harker<br>" Old Uckfield"-2.30pm<br>Framfield Memorial Hall  |
| 19th March    | Speaker - Gilly Halcrow<br>" Special Operations Executive<br>Churchills Secret Army"<br>Framfield Memorial Hall 2.30pm |

Any further information contact Sandy Rogers,  
01825 840648 - [sandyrogers77@gmail.com](mailto:sandyrogers77@gmail.com)

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**Waldron Country Market** at Holy Cross Priory, (Possingworth) (on the B2102 between Cross in Hand and Blackboys, near the Tunbridge Wells turn)

Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February, and Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> March.

For more information contact Roy Wilkinson 01435 812931





## FRAMFIELD AND BLACKBOYS HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

The Society completed its very successful 2017 programme with the AGM on 8<sup>th</sup> November. At this meeting the acting Chair Fiona Fidler was warmly thanked for all her hard work during the year in maintaining the impetus of the Society; Trevor Hince was elected as the new Chair and the Committee Members reappointed with the welcome addition of Jenny Bacon. Following the formal business the members were treated to an inspirational talk by Ben Pope, Head Gardener at a private West Sussex garden, entitled 'Moving Yet Still Frozen'. In his wonderful talk he illustrated how winter light can transform and highlight aspects of the garden such as trees and hedges and how frost on grasses and perennials, that have been left standing, can create beautiful textures and shapes. He showed that if these natural events are coupled with winter flowering bulbs and other plants the winter garden is not a place of darkness and decay but of interest and beauty.

Looking to 2018 the Society has a varied programme that will interest you whether your gardening domain is a window box or rolling acres and whether your passion is for exotic plants or vegetables. The first event is the ever popular **QUIZ NIGHT on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February at Blackboys Village Hall starting at 7.30pm**. It is a fun quiz and gardening knowledge is absolutely NOT essential; team sizes are a maximum of six so do get together and form a team or if you just turn up we can fit you into a group. Coffee and nibbles are provided but bring your own refreshments (food and drink) to sustain you! The event is free to members but £3.00 for non-members. Whether you are a member or not and would like to come along please let Fiona Fidler know on 01825 890719 or at [fhbsmail@gmail.com](mailto:fhbsmail@gmail.com), the more teams the merrier the evening!

The following event, on **Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> March** (7.30pm at Blackboys Village Hall) is a talk entitled 'From City Courtyard to Seaside Sanctuary', when Geoff Stonebanks will describe the transition from his London garden to the famous and award-winning 'Driftwood' garden that he has created in Seaford. There are further talks and garden visits throughout the year, but more about these in the next issue.

## Nature Notes

I saw my first flowering celandine during the last days of December! This is amazing as these little yellow star-like flowers do not usually appear before March. I have also seen countless expanded hazel catkins during early January. If you look closely at the hazel twigs, you can see the beautiful tiny deep red female hazel flower, which, if fertilized by the wind-blown pollen from the catkins, will become a delicious hazel nut later in the year. The fact that hazel has the male and female flowers (organs) on the same plant means that they are monoecious or hermaphrodite, meaning also that they can fertilize themselves or other individual plants (trees) of the same species. Other plants such as Holly, our only native broad-leaved evergreen tree, are dioecious, meaning that they have male and female plants. Only the female holly plants (trees) bear berries, which of course contain the seeds that can go on to become new holly trees. Many birds, such as members of the thrush family, love to eat holly berries, but the birds do not digest the seed within the berry. The seed passes through the digestive system of the bird and passes out with the faecal droppings, often at night while the bird is roosting. Consequently, it is often possible to see where birds roost by finding young holly or elder seedlings a long distance from the nearest parent tree. This is known as a dispersal system that has evolved because it is a successful strategy for procreation and the colonisation of new areas.

Animals, on the other hand, have evolved their own methods of dispersal by using parts of their own bodies such as legs and wings to take them into new areas, and by doing so, often transport other organisms, not only plants but fungal spores, other animals such as lice and fleas, and also microbes such as bacteria and viruses. The upshot is that living organisms are continuing to spread throughout the world, and some thrive where they end up but others die, because they find themselves in places that are too hot or cold, or too wet or dry, or too acidic or alkaline. However, every organism that has been sexually reproduced is unique, this is due to gene mixing which generates variation. We only have to look at the wide variety of dogs (wolves) living in our homes to see just how variable one species can become.

*Martyn Stenning*

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FRAMFIELD VILLAGE MARKET  
Dates for 2018  
Memorial Hall, Framfield  
The market opens from 10 am to 12 noon.

27 January  
24 February  
24 March  
28 April  
19 May  
30 June  
28 July  
August – no market.  
29 September  
27 October  
24 November  
15 December

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### PC MEETING SCHEDULE 2018

On each date detailed below, generally two meetings will be held plus an informal Trust update.

(Planning Committee may be cancelled if not essential):

- Planning Committee – commencement time will vary (6/6.30 pm)
- Trust update - commencing at 7 pm
- Parish Council - commencing at 7.30 pm.
  
- Tuesday 30 January (PC meeting) – Village Hall, Blackboys
- Tuesday, 27 March (PC meeting) – Memorial Hall, Framfield
- Tuesday, 29 May (Annual Parish Council Meeting, and Annual Parish Meeting [8 pm]) – Village Hall, Blackboys
- Tuesday, 26 June (PC meeting) – Memorial Hall, Framfield
- Tuesday, 31 July (AGM of the Trusts) – Village Hall, Blackboys
- Tuesday, 25 September (PC meeting) – Memorial Hall, Framfield
- Tuesday, 27 November (PC meeting) – Village Hall, Blackboys

The Council were delighted to co-opt Danny Gallagher at their November meeting. Danny has lived in Framfield for several years and is keen to get involved.

Councillors have agreed in line with previous years not to accept any financial benefit for carrying out their duties under the ‘Members’ Allowances’ scheme.

Wealdlink Saturday bus service. The Council agreed to continue to make a contribution to this joint venture to enable the service to continue for the rest of the year.

Framfield Memorial Hall hire rates. There have been some changes made to the hire rates at the Hall. Local and charitable rates remain unchanged but emphasis has been placed on increasing the rates for commercial or business use particularly from users outside of the Parish. This helps subsidise the costs for the local users.

Allotments. The Council agreed to increase the price of an allotment by £5.00 to £25.00 for the 2018/19 year. This is the first increase in five years. The renewals will be sent out in March. Spare plots are available.

Parish Magazine. Advert renewal letters will be sent out in January; prompt payment would be appreciated. Anyone interested in placing an advertisement should contact me.

Framfield Village Market (usually the last Saturday in the month) – please do come along and have a look at local craft wares and produce and have a cup of coffee. All proceeds go towards the Memorial Hall. Doors open at 10 am. Dates for next year are detailed elsewhere in the magazine.

Recreation grounds, play areas etc. If anyone believes they have discovered a fault or problem with in particular one of the play areas, could they please contact me immediately. Although the areas are inspected on a weekly basis by one of our contractors, 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.

Ann Newton (Parish Clerk): 01825 890182.

Email: [framfieldpc@gmail.com](mailto:framfieldpc@gmail.com).

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## Let's Get Cracking!

by Michael Blencowe of the Sussex Wildlife Trust

Each winter the big freeze consumes northern Europe and our island's mild maritime climate provides a refuge and a lifeline to birds whose regular food sources lie buried under snow and ice. Blackbirds, bramblings, bitterns, starlings, sanderlings, smew and many other species head here to survive. But this year the winter visitor everyone is hoping to see is the hawfinch.

You probably won't be familiar with the hawfinch so I'll give you a few key identification features...aw, forget it. Just look at that massive beak! You can't miss it. It's like someone crossbred a chaffinch with a puffin. I'm amazed it can stand up – you'd half expect that ridiculous beak to send it tottering face-first to the floor. This pair of monstrous mandibles combined with powerful jaw muscles can exert a whopping 150 pounds per square inch of pressure and are designed to crack its favoured food; fruit stones and seeds. You know how horrible it is when you bite down on an olive and find there's a stone inside? Hawfinches would shatter that stone without batting an eyelid.

This winter Britain seems to have been the holiday destination for hungry hordes of hawfinches. There's an estimated 14 times as many here than usual. It's a once-in-a-lifetime invasion – the result of a successful breeding year for continental hawfinches followed by a drastic shortage of food; an equation that sends them flocking across Europe in search of seeds and stones.

We have a few pairs of resident hawfinches breeding in Sussex but we don't know exactly how many because, despite being a bulky-billed bird of bulky build, it is famously hard to observe. Back in 1938 Sussex ornithologist Walpole-Bond remarked that the hawfinch was "the very incarnation of all that is wary and shy" and commented on their propensity to roam far and wide. 'Inclined to vagabondage' as he put it. A wonderful phrase even though these days it sounds like something you'd read on a Tinder dating profile.

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## Valerie Letley

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01435 817222

Sadly for one winter wanderer his travels would end in Sussex. I recently received a call from a lady who reported a hawfinch had collided with her patio window. Considering that powerful beak, I was surprised that the window wasn't the victim here, but sadly the bird dropped dead. It was tenderly wrapped and laid to rest alongside some fish-fingers, its journey to escape the big freeze ending in a big freezer. I was asked if I had any use for a frozen hawfinch. Plans for creating a novelty nutcracker or a tin-opener sprung to mind but this hawfinch has not died in vain. His body will be donated to science and will contribute to current research into the diet and movements of these birds. His death hopefully aiding the conservation of his big-beaked brothers in the future.

**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 guide book, *Discovering Wildlife*. It's easy to join online at [www.sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk/join](http://www.sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk/join) or over the phone on 01273 497532.**

[www.sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk](http://www.sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk)

## PLASTIC MILK BOTTLE TOPS

Please collect all plastic milk bottle tops.

They can be handed in at the following locations/venues:

Framfield & Blackboys Monday Club

Framfield Market

Green Acres, Halland Park Farm

Grange Evangelical Church, Uckfield

They all go to The Hurstwood Park Neurosciences League of Friends,  
Haywards Heath.

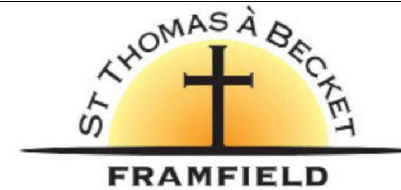
## NEWS FROM YOUR WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

On-street car parking enforcement - Cabinet agreed to postpone responding to East Sussex County Council's business case for introducing on-street car parking enforcement in order to consider more fully a wide range of information about the different options proposed. Cabinet members wanted to make sure local Wealden District Councillors were fully aware of the options before Cabinet made its response. If on-street car parking enforcement is introduced, it will take two-to-three years to implement.

Council tax proposal - Cabinet has recommended a council tax increase of £5 a year for Band D properties, with proportional increases for other bands. The Council faces challenging times ahead with central government grants disappearing, the Council's budget will be under pressure and it will have to use some of its reserves to balance the books over the next 12 months. The Council continues to make savings but is also having to factor in additional costs in readiness for the new waste and recycling contract and increased inflation risks.

Universal Credit is being rolled out to Hailsham, Polegate and Heathfield this January. It was introduced in Wadhurst, Pevensey, Willingdon and East Dean last year and will come into effect in Crowborough and Forest Row in March, and finally Uckfield in June 2018. It may take five weeks before people receive their first payment and can also affect public and private sector landlords whose tenants receive benefits. WDC is able to provide advice to people affected and assist people who are having difficulty applying online. The WDC website is also a good source of information, visit [www.wealden.gov.uk/universalcredit](http://www.wealden.gov.uk/universalcredit). East Sussex Credit Union provides a free and friendly drop-in service for money advice at WDC's Vicarage Lane offices every Monday from 13.30 to 15.30 hours. No appointment is necessary- see [www.eastsussexcu.org.uk](http://www.eastsussexcu.org.uk) or call 0300 303 3188 for further details.

Contact details – Ann Newton, 'Highlands', Blackboys, TN22 5LR.  
Telephone - 01825 890103.  
Email – [aenewton1965@gmail.com](mailto:aenewton1965@gmail.com)



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

**Sunday 11th February 10.00 am**  
**Sunday 11th March 10.00 am**



Details and video  
on our website



**Sunday 18th February**  
**Sunday 18th March**

**Messy craft activities, followed by a short bible story, a song & then the delicious afternoon tea!**

**STARTS @ 4 PM**



The Friends of Framfield Church invite you to a

**SPRING CONCERT**

presented by the

**ASHDOWN SINGERS**

at

**St Thomas à Becket Church, Framfield**

**Saturday, 28 April 2018 at 7.30pm**

This talented and popular group of local singers will present a varied programme of music with something for everyone to enjoy

**Tickets £10, available from:  
John Mordaunt (01825 890443)**

**Ann Newton (01825 890103) or Pat Herbert (01825 890247)**

**For information on the Ashdown Singers see  
<http://ashdownsingers.org.uk>**



Blackboys Pre-School  
The Village Hall, Gun Road  
Blackboys, East Sussex TN22 5JL  
Tel: 01825 891113  
email: [enquiries@blackboyspreschool.org](mailto:enquiries@blackboyspreschool.org)  
Twitter: @BlackboysPreSch  
[www.blackboyspreschool.org.uk](http://www.blackboyspreschool.org.uk)

We are a non-profit making pre-school registered with Ofsted.

Open Monday to Friday from 7.45am to 6pm, we welcome children between 2 to 5 years old in the preschool and those between 2 to 11 years old in our Breakfast, After School and Holiday Clubs.

Our friendly staff are trained in Montessori and Forest School principles and we have an allotment located just next door to the pre-school, where our chickens are kept. We also use this space for our forest school activities. Our excellent After School Club runs from 3.30pm to 6pm during term time, with a pick-up service available from local primary schools.

Our Christmas raffle raised £265 - a special thank you to all the local companies who donated wonderful prizes, including FunAbounds, Staverton's, Little Kickers, The Blackboys Inn, Horam Manor Farm and Heathfield Deli.

This term we are running our excellent Holiday club from 12-16th February. Open from 7:45am until 6pm, each day will be packed full of fun forest school activities.

For more details, organise a visit or book for our half term Holiday Club, please contact us:

Call Jenny on: 01825 891113 / 01825 749820

Or email: [enquiries@blackboyspreschool.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@blackboyspreschool.org.uk)

## LIVING WITH FUR AND FEATHER

### BEST LAID PLANS.

In my last article I wrote about Chloe and the very risky operation she had. She gradually improved and miraculously in a very short time she was fit and really enjoying life again.

Once Chloe was better my thoughts turned to Christmas. I was determined everything would be done in good time so the festivities would be relaxing and enjoyable. The Christmas cake was made, with Chloe bringing me all the ingredients, including six eggs in a little basket. I always worry in case she drops them! Presents were wrapped, cards sent and the last big shop was done. I congratulated myself on being so organised and relaxed while leisurely making out the festive menus. My mouth watered thinking how I was looking forward to the tasty meals with all the trimmings and Christmas pudding with lashings of double cream.

That night I felt very ill. I felt the bed was violently spinning first one way then the other. I had been a bit giddy in the past but this was terrifying. Eventually it subsided so I tried to sit up. Immediately the room spun round and round, first one way then the other. Eventually, feeling very sick, I made it to the bathroom and then staggered back to bed. My husband looked after me and later I tottered nervously down stairs, terrified I would fall down at any moment. Being just before the bank holiday the doctor's surgery was closing and a relation from London was due to arrive the next day. Feeling a bit better I optimistically thought the symptoms would just vanish, so we decided to just carry on with our Christmas plans.

With hindsight it was not a good idea. Feeling nauseous and very shaky most of the time was horrible; also the giddy attacks were very sneaky. They would suddenly attack without warning and fling me onto the floor. I was not safe trying to cook. My long suffering husband had the job of cooking the Christmas lunch which he had never done before. Our son, who came for Christmas day, also helped. I sat at the table with my handy menu and wrote careful instructions and times for cooking everything. The meal was a great success, thanks for my talented husband. He continued to do all the

cooking over the holiday. Sadly, I could not eat any of the festive fare I had been anticipating.

I continued to have giddy spells and would suddenly fall over. On one occasion I was in the kitchen and remember grasping a handful of Chloe's fur on the top of her head as I fell. Luckily, it broke my fall. Sitting on the floor recovering, she quietly lay beside me as I stroked her ears, which was very comforting. A day or so later I decided I could attempt a careful walk with her round our little fields. As usual she brought me my wellington boots. As she gave one to me it fell over. I did not dare bend over to pick it up as I realised that could trigger yet another giddy turn, no problem, Chloe carefully stood it up for me. We enjoyed our little walk. I warily kept away from any hazardous hard objects, such as the tractor. It came on to rain before we made it back indoors. I carefully dried her back then without thinking bent over to dry her dripping wet tummy. Crash! I had done it again. This time I was aware of the glass panes in the door coming towards me. Instinctively I clutched at Chloe who stood rock still. If she had reacted by quickly moving away I would have hit the glass. During this difficult time she was invaluable in fetching carrying and most useful picking up anything I dropped. The only downside of having a large hairy Newfoundland as a "carer" is the amount of mud and water she brings in. At least she helps by putting the pile of soggy towels in the washing machine

After the holiday I did get to see a doctor and found it was an inner ear problem. I am writing this just after New Year's Day as I can now sit at the computer. Thinking ahead I wonder if I should ask my husband to do the Christmas cooking next December?

Hazel Carter 01825 830477  
info@hazel-carter.co.uk  
www.hazel-carter.co.uk