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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 2024

HOW TO GET IN TOUCH WITH YOUR LOCAL CHURCH

All communications for church matters should be directed to the Church Office:

Email: admin@framfieldchurch.org.uk
Post: Vicarage Barn, Brookhouse Lane, Framfield TN22 5NH
Telephone: Please leave a message - 01825 891033

The Church Office is not staffed on a full-time basis. Messages may be left on the Office answerphone.

Priest-in-Charge	Revd James Vine 01825 840270
Assistant Curate	Revd Janice Bartholomew 07955 754118
Churchwarden: (for urgent matters)	Mr Graham Seldon 01825 508758
Secretary to the PCC and Church Admin:	Mr Barry Richardson
Treasurer:	Mrs Gaynor Robson



From the Church Registers:

No Funerals, Baptisms or Weddings registered

WHO'S WHO AT THE St THOMAS À BECKET NEWSLETTER

Joint Chair:
For the Church: Revd James Vine

For the Council: Mr Keith Brandon

**Co-ordinator
and Advertising:** Ann Newton
Technical Editor: Barry Richardson
Treasurer: Marie Owen

Distribution: Barbara Trickey,
Delia Gillies, and
their volunteers

Printers: Print Matters

CIRCULATION:
This magazine reaches over 1100 households in the parish.
It is therefore an ideal way to reach a wide customer area.
Contact the Clerk, Ann Newton for advertising details and rates.
clerk@framfieldcouncil.org.uk

FRAMFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

MEETING SCHEDULE 2024

At the time of issuing this notice, all meetings are to be held at the Village Hall, Blackboys, at 5.00 pm due to a regular booking in the Memorial Hall.

If there are planning applications which require the convening of a Planning Committee meeting these times may vary.

30 January

26 March

28 May

(Annual Parish Council meeting [5 pm]
and Annual Parish Assembly [6 pm] only)

30 July

24 September

26 November

Public welcome. For further details, please telephone the Parish Clerk, Ann Newton, on

01825- 890182/clerk@framfieldcouncil.org.uk

'Highlands', Blackboys TN22 5LR.

Agendas will be published on all noticeboards and the website - framfieldcouncil.org.uk

From the Vicar's desk

*And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:
"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown".*

And he replied:

*"Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God.
That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way".
So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God, trod gladly into the
night.*

*And He led me towards the hills and the breaking of day in the lone
East.*

As we begin 2024, it is exciting to wonder what God has in store for our three wonderful parishes.

To help us discern what those things may be, I have arranged for all three of our PCC's to spend a day together in the inspiring setting of Ashburnham Place near Battle.

This 'Parish Development Day' will be facilitated by the Reverend Canon Rob Dillingham, Deputy Director of Apostolic Life in the Diocese of Chichester.

Hopefully by the end of the day we will have a clear idea of our mission and ministry for the next five years and beyond.

We will need to decide what our priorities might be, and then discern whether our earthly plans resonate with our Lord's heavenly plans!

Personally, I hope and pray that our three Parishes will grow even closer together, and that we may, before the end of 2024, come together as a new United Benefice with me inducted as your Rector.

Such a move would secure the future of our three beautiful churches, and give me important 'job security' as we move forward together.

We have just celebrated a joyful Christmas in our three Churches and I am genuinely excited to discover what lies ahead of us in 2024.

Let us put our hands in God's hand and walk into this new year together in love and faith....

Yours in Christ

Revd James

Help needed in the Churchyard

Hello to all parishioners, friends and anyone who has a link of any sort to our churchyard. Such sites are fondly often referred to as "God's acre". Well in our case make that 3+ acres. Apart from inevitably getting a bit larger over the centuries, our plot would be familiar to many generations before us. Like us, they would have walked through and visited, feeling the relative peace and the timelessness of the setting.

Thank you so much to anyone who supports and encourages us in any way. We aim to keep it and care for it to acknowledge the history of the parish and those who are remembered there. Also, as a unique corner for the current and future inhabitants of our villages. Obviously, any help at any time is welcome. But I propose to have a churchyard morning on the first saturday of the month from March to October. I will be there at 9.30 and any help even just an hour would be great. The first one will be March 6th. We are all volunteers and have limited funds but support and encouragement, enthusiasm and ideas are beyond price. Please help in any way you can. Together we can really make a difference.

Kind Regards
Peter Berry.

Tel Mob 07815459075

Please note that the latest notices and information are always posted on the church website. - www.framfieldchurch.org.uk.

get on with it.'

I thought 'what would be the point?'

Exciting News!

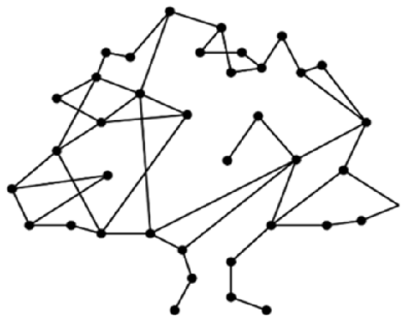
The members and leadership of New Life Church are really pleased to announce that we are welcoming a new Pastor at the beginning of February. Phil Cole - from Heathfield - who will be joining us with his wife Janet. They both come with a wonderful pastoral heart for the villages and with their combined giftings in teaching and leading worship will be an enormous asset to the church family.

(Brendan Hammond - one of the leaders of New Life Church Blackboys)

We currently meet every Sunday at Blackboys C of E Primary School 10.30am

Email : newlifechurchblackboys@gmail.com

Call: Suzanne Hammond on 07794 869384 or 01435 661054



NEWLIFE

NEW LIFE CHURCH BLACKBOYS

What's the Point?

This past month I have had some feedback from writing in the Newsletter - when someone commented that he'd read my last article, I responded with 'oh, glad you liked it!' to which he replied 'I didn't say I liked it, I said I read it' (that made me chuckle).

My aim in writing these short pieces is to get you thinking - I hope it does - *because in the words of a famous Scottish proverb 'we're a long time dead.'*

As you can imagine, being amongst my shooting friends at this time of year - the conversations often revolve around the environment, creation, and man's interference - at which I often get friendly banter challenging me about this. I find it strange that many readily accept that space is eternal and yet struggle with the concept that God is eternal (we have the same leap of faith). Many are willing to believe that nature is its own self-thinking 'being.' Someone recently said, 'as far as I am concerned, when I die the whole of humanity can die too, so nature can be left to






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

**18th February 2024
17th March 2024**

Looking for a local venue ?

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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.

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Currently it is used for Art classes, Pilates, Exercise groups, Drama, Singing, Karate Presentations, and children's birthday parties. Our rates are £12.00 per hour. For one off users (parties, wedding receptions etc), the hourly rate is £15.00.

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

Diary of Church Services

Note: The latest church service information will always be on the Church website: <https://www.framfieldchurch.org.uk>

Please note there is no service at Framfield on 11th February. There is a combined service for all three churches at Chiddingly.

FEBRUARY 2024

- 04 Second Sunday before Lent**
10.00 am Parish Eucharist (CW) (Revd James)
- 11 Sunday before Lent**
10.00 am Combined Eucharist at Chiddingly (Revd James)
No Service at Framfield
- 14 Ash Wednesday**
10.00 am Parish Eucharist with Ashes (Revd James)
- 18 First Sunday of Lent**
10.00 am Family Service (Revd Janice)
- 25 Second Sunday of Lent**
10.00 am Morning Praise (with Peter Berry)

MARCH 2024

- 03 Third Sunday of Lent**
10.00 am Eucharist (Revd James Vine)
- 10 Fourth Sunday of Lent (Mothering Sunday)**
10.00 am Combined Eucharist Service at Framfield (Revd James)
- 17 Fifth Sunday of Lent (Passion Sunday)**
10.00 am Family Service (Revd James)



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BY PAUL BARRON

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24 Palm Sunday
10.00 am Morning Praise (with Peter Berry)

Details of Holy Week services will be available on the church website in due course,

31 Easter Sunday
10.00 am Parish Eucharist (Revd Janice)

(Everyone is welcome at any of the church services)

Note: The latest church service information is always on the Church Website: <https://www.framfieldchurch.org.uk>

**COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE PLEASE
BY 10th MARCH 2024**

TO

ANN NEWTON – 01825 890182

Please note new email address:

clerk@framfieldcouncil.org.uk

**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

**CHURCH NEWS ITEMS MAY ALSO BE
EMAILED TO THE CHURCH OFFICE:**

admin@framfieldchurch.org.uk

This bi-monthly Newsletter is distributed free to all homes (around 1100)
within the Parish.

Nature Notes (Reprint)

This article is reprinted from the December January issue, as I managed to mess up all the degree symbols. Apologies to all, and to Martyn. [BR – Technical Editor]

At 7 pm on 10th November, the temperature outside was 6.6°Celsius. It was pitch dark since before 5pm. Next morning it was 2°C. at 08:00 h. Frost decorated both garden and car. In New Zealand, folk were experiencing daytime temperatures of c. 23°Celsius. Their days are lengthening and warming and ours shortening and cooling as the globe tilts them further south towards the sun. Winter is surely upon us. Also, we are experiencing low pressure fronts swinging in from the Atlantic Ocean across these islands and giving us a frequent drenching. All this affects the living natural world in many ways. Humans are part of this, and many homes have been flooded already in parts of these islands. Homes of animals will have flooded too. Hibernating hedgehogs and lizards will have been disturbed. Many invertebrates will have drowned and be washed away as they hibernate for winter. Most birds will have been able to fly to dryer areas but will desperately look for food in new places to keep their tiny bodies warm through metabolic heat generation.

Fundamentally, there are 2 types of animals when it comes to keeping warm. These are 1. Endothermic animals like us and most other mammals, who keep their bodies warm by eating and 'burning' calories to maintain body temperature as we do at c. 36.8° Celsius. The body temperature of other endothermic animals may be different, for example, many birds maintain a temperature of around 40° C. The other type are 2. the poikilothermic (or exothermic) animals, whose body temperature is regulated by the external temperature. These are the invertebrates and primitive vertebrates such as fish, amphibians and most reptiles.

Animals that hibernate allow their body temperature to drop and fall into a kind of sleep, more accurately described as suspended animation, this includes some mammals such as dormice (dormir, French for to sleep). There are many dormice within the countryside around Uckfield. I used to monitor them in Lake Wood for many years. Even when they are sleeping, they sometimes squeak if they are disturbed, and can also be heard to snore on occasion. I know of no birds that hibernate, these little feathered animals must find extra food to keep them warm in winter. That is where we can assist by providing feeders and water in our gardens.

Martyn Stenning



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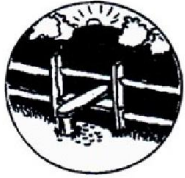
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We are very grateful to those volunteers who have recently come forward to fill vacancies for delivery of the Parish magazines.



Framfield & Blackboys WI

CHEERFUL START TO 2024

We kicked off the New Year with our traditional January lunch at the Hare & Hounds. Everyone enjoyed the post Christmas catch-up over a delicious lunch in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. As ever, Lorraine and her team did us proud.



COMING UP SOON

On March, 8th, we will have a talk from David Abrahams on Michelham Priory, a Tudor house and former home to the Augustinian order of friars. Built in 1229 it is reputed to be the most haunted house in England.

On 12th April we have Brian Gee, who is a retired Scenes Of Crime Officer. A SOCO is a UK forensic investigator who investigates and collates evidence for the police at crime scenes.

SAVE THE DATE

Friday 27th September **QUIZ NIGHT** Framfield Memorial Hall

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Friday, 9th February 2 pm Framfield Church Hall

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 07950 954827.

Follow us on Facebook or Google Framfield & Blackboys WI

Nature likes to redress an imbalance. If a tree falls over, a dozen or so young ones will compete to replace it. If you cut off the branch of a tree, a new one will grow quite quickly. If a female blue tit loses her mate to a sparrowhawk, a new young floating male will often move in to take his place. If you plough up a meadow, the plants are replaced by opportunist weeds of cultivation unless they are controlled by a weedkiller and a crop is planted instead. Any change generated by humans will generate a natural response. Even the monoculture crop will generate an influx of organisms wanting to consume it. To get the crop, these arrivals will have to be controlled by pesticides, that will also be lethal to other organisms.

Nature is also attempting to redress the imbalance caused by human induced (anthropogenic) climate and other changes in some most extraordinary ways. For example. We are burning more fossil fuel now than ever before, especially due to the global number of vehicles being driven increasing daily. A consequence of this is that the carbon dioxide produced is acting like a greenhouse and heating up the atmosphere and global surface. More ocean is being exposed as the ice caps are melting.

Now, 71% of the global surface is water. The amount of water leaving the oceans and entering the atmosphere as vapour is proportional to the temperature, so global warming is causing much more water to be held within the atmosphere. The more water vapour there is in the sky, the more clouds form which also store energy that can be manifest as lightning and wind. The consequence of this is more powerful storms and heavier rainfall. This rainfall causes erosion of our tarmac roads, often by freeze and thaw of water in cracks and fissures. Also, by simple flow erosion. This in turn causes pot-holes. In turn, the pot-holes cause damage to the tyres and structure of vehicles, and while those are off the road, they are not burning fossil fuels. Nature tries redressing an imbalance. Meanwhile, car owners rush to get their vehicles repaired or replaced and so the cycle goes on. Man has become a geological force of nature. This has caused geologists to suggest renaming the epoch that we are living through as the **Anthropocene** (*human new*) epoch. Officially, we are in the **Holocene** (meaning *wholly new*) epoch.

Martyn Stenning

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

On behalf of the St Thomas a Becket Church of England Federation, Blackboys and Framfield Schools, we would like to wish everyone in the parish a Happy New Year.

2023 ended with the usual excitement of a primary school's Christmas! Both schools collaborated to provide a choir for an excellent parish carol service at the beginning of December. Parish stalwart and friend of the schools, John Mordant, did a super job galvanising adult and children's choirs and it was super to see the church so busy. Both schools also held their individual carol services at St Thomas a Becket Church. Aply assisted by Father James and his festive address, the services provided an opportunity to celebrate and reflect during the busy festive period.

Fun was also to be had via Christmas parties at Blackboys, including a visit from Father Christmas, and a pantomime at Framfield. Both schools' PTAs ran festive events adding important fundraising to the calendar. Thank you to all involved and to residents of both villages for coming and supporting.

The New Year is an equally exciting time in school as the children return for new learning opportunities and experiences. Both schools have 'Courage' as their Christian Value of the Term, to encourage pupils to make that first step in having a New Year's resolution. We have exciting trips planned for our classes with Brighton Museum for a 'mummification workshop' high on the agenda! There are also plenty of sporting opportunities with an upcoming tag rugby tournament and netball tournaments. Both schools also wait with baited breath to see the draw for the second round of the Sussex Chess Cup. Chess is thriving in our schools with many keen players, especially in the younger age groups.

On Friday 9th February, Blackboys are holding a 'Careers Fair' for our Key Stage 2 children. We are therefore looking for local businesses or individuals who would be prepared to have a stall explaining their



As we move into 2024 we are delighted to be celebrating our 25th anniversary of providing outstanding care and support for the profoundly disabled adults of Bevern View.

To commemorate this significant occasion, we would love to welcome you to our first event of the year – The Bevern Trust Annual Dinner & Auction. Hosted by our patron, Natasha Kaplinsky and special guests, the evening will be an opportunity to hear more about our work and exciting future plans!

The journey has been a testament to the unwavering support from our dedicated staff, compassionate families and our incredible residents who have made Bevern View their home. We are immensely proud to have been part of so many lives and we look forward to continuing our mission of enhancing the wellbeing and happiness of our residents.

7pm on Friday 8th March 2024

Barcombe Village Hall

Tickets are available from beverntrust.org

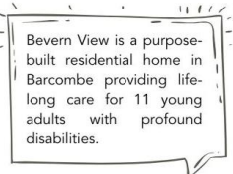


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FRAMFIELD PARISH COUNCIL – REPORT

Gun Road Bridge, Blackboys - there is a full update elsewhere in the magazine.

Lewes Road, Blackboys – there has been a significant delay at ESCC with the design/costings for the reduction in speed limit on the B2192 between Hollow Lane and Brownings Farm. It had been anticipated that the works would be completed in the 2023/24 financial year. The Parish Council has been awarded Community Match Funding for the works whereby up to 50% of the cost is borne by ESCC.

Parish Streetlighting – since ESCC have a new contractor for all highway works, new procedures have been put in place and are still in the process of being agreed with the Parish Council. The Parish Council owns the Parish streetlights but contracts ESCC to maintain them. Whilst this continues only minor repairs will be carried out.

Claimed footpath 67b/68c – ESCC have decided not to make any changes to the footpath network in this area.

Budget - the budget required for the 2024/25 financial year is £81,805, this is a £8,805 (12%) increase on the previous year's costs but a £12,805 increase from last year's precept as the Council had agreed to use reserves to fund the shortfall last year. The increase will assist in covering the costs of the works to the streetlights.

Ann Newton (Parish Clerk): 01825 890182
Email: clerk@framfieldcouncil.org.uk.
Website: www.framfieldcouncil.org.uk.

job role at this brand new event. Focussing on encouraging ambition and aspiration, if you feel you would like to help and contribute, please contact the school office on office@blackboys.e-sussex.sch.uk

Thank you for continuing to have an interest in the parish's two schools. For more updates please check out our X (formerly Twitter) feeds @framfieldcep and @blackboyschool

Keiran Bradbeer, Headteacher, Framfield
Graham Sullivan, Headteacher, Blackboys

FRAMFIELD VILLAGE MARKET 2024 Memorial Hall, Framfield

The market opens from 10 am to 12 noon.

27 January
24 February
23 March
27 April
25 May
29 June
27 July
August – no market
28 September
26 October
30 November
21 December

Please contact Ann Newton with any queries
01825 890182 or email clerk@framfieldcouncil.org.uk

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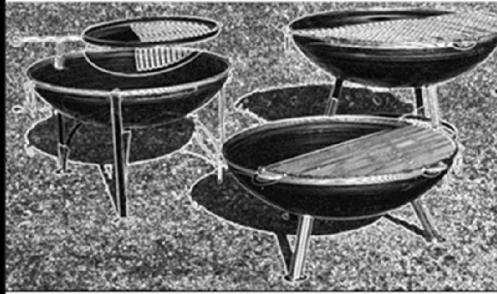
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NEWS FROM YOUR WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Local Plan – by the time this magazine hits the doorstep the Local Plan will have been published and it is anticipated will go out for consultation in early March. This is the Regulation 18 part of the Plan and is very much only a draft. Regulation 19 which becomes the final document could be issued later in the year.

Rural England Prosperity Fund – Rural Business Grants Scheme – this capital business grants scheme was launched on Friday, 12 January 2024. The programme will support rural businesses to grow, increase productivity and make improvements. £500,000 is available until March 2025 with grants of between £2,500 and £50,000, with some match funding required from the business. WDC are working in partnership with Rother District Council although ESCC will deliver the funding as they have experience of delivering successful grant schemes.

If anyone would like to meet up to discuss any District-related matters please do not hesitate to contact me. Wealden District Council covers many subjects – Council Tax, Housing, Benefits, Planning, Licencing, Environmental Health to name but a few. I don't always have specific information to hand but can always find someone who would.

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

We will provide further detail on the Parish Council website and our social media page nearer the time.

The works are going to necessitate the removal of up to 200 tonnes of hardcore and clay soil, with approximately 20% being hardcore. If there are any land owners nearby that would possibly be interested in having this (delivered free of charge), please can you contact the Parish Council, and we will put you in touch with a member of the project team. Please note that this offer is to take the entire load. Contact clerk@framfieldcouncil.org.uk

Once we have more detail, we will update you again, hopefully with further positive news.

Thank you,
Cllr Keith Brandon

British Legion
Poppy Appeal



I am pleased to write to you with a summary of donations for the Poppy Appeal 2023.

We are very lucky in our Parish to have generous volunteers prepared to donate their time to carry out house to house collections, many areas have not been able to continue with this tradition. Furthermore, this year was particularly challenging due to the awful weather over the launch weekend which continued into the following week. Luckily Remembrance Sunday stayed dry for the service.

Despite the weather and the ever-increasing cashless society, I am delighted to announce the total amount we raised for the Parish was £1,680, which is even slightly up from last year.

Thank you everyone for your continued support.

Dawn Lacey

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e:service@taxplus.org.uk

Toad-in-the-hole by Michael Blencowe for Sussex Wildlife Trust

Once upon a time, the British people were divided. Impassioned debates raged throughout the land, truth and common sense became distorted, and the public rose up and demanded an answer. How did that toad get inside that rock?

In 1898, two burly workmen in a chalk quarry near Lewes cracked open a hollow chunk of flint. The solid rock, formed 85 million years ago, split open to reveal an airtight cavity at its core. To the quarrymen's amazement, entombed within the ancient flint was a dead toad.

'Toad-in-the-hole' hysteria soon hit the headlines. It seemed like every month the newspapers reported how someone had split open a rock and found a toad inside. Some of these toads had already croaked but others would inexplicably still be alive and hopping. The Victorian world was thrown into theological and philosophical panic. Clergymen preached that the Creator had placed the eternal amphibians in rocks at the dawn of time. Subscribers to Darwin's new theory of evolution were perplexed. Charles Dickens wrote of his bewilderment, while others believed it was simply sorcery. Scientists began burying living toads in sealed boxes to investigate the unfortunate animal's longevity.

The Lewes toad of 1898 is the world's only surviving artefact of the entombed toad craze. It now resides in Brighton's incredible Booth Museum of Natural History – one of my favourite places in the whole world. Amongst the many awe-inspiring exhibits at The Booth, you'll find a special cabinet dedicated to curiosities. In it, lying reverentially on a bed of maroon felt, there is 'Probably the most famous toad in the world'. Admittedly when it comes to world-famous toads it's not a particularly crowded field, with only Toad of Toad Hall to contest the title. Alongside the original oval of cleft flint sits the shrivelled body of the infamous amphibian. The whole surreal exhibit is like a Kinder Surprise designed by Hieronymus Bosch.

But this cracked up flint isn't all it's cracked up to be. The Lewes toad was originally presented to the Brighton and Hove Natural History

A further update to the Gun Road Bridge works

Following a meeting on Monday 15th with the Parish Council, County Council and Balfour Beatty, we now have a bit more detail in respect to the bridge replacement. ESCC have again apologised for the delays caused, some of which have been out of their control as mentioned in previous updates.

The Environmental Agency have now issued a permit, and a programme of works has been put in place. Procurement has already begun, and manufacturing is already underway.

The key dates that most people will want to hear is that site works are due to start 12th February, with a completion date of the 9th May 2024. To begin with there will be lots of staging works required, as well as hedge removal works to be done. A large crane is to be positioned in the adjacent field ready to lift the precast blocks into place. There will be a dam installed upstream, and a diversionary route put in that spans around the worksite, to allow a controlled flow of the water and assist migratory fish.

Site traffic will be from the northern end of Gun Road. There are going to be significant HGV movements in the area. The route will be monitored by ESCC for any damage caused by the project vehicles and make good road surfaces, if and where necessary.

There are still some risks to the programme, with one of the biggest being the weather. If there is a significant downpour that causes stress to the stream and/or its tributaries, there may be no option other than to release the dam until the volume reduces again. This is all being carried out to strict

Environmental Agency requirements.

There will be a temporary bridge offset to one side for pedestrians throughout the work, although there will be some further temporary full closures at times for short periods, i.e. when the crane is lifting. Crane operations are likely to take 2-4 days. The bridge will be open to pedestrian traffic only, but strictly no horses. The bridge will be suitable for wheelchair and buggy access, although there will be a small ramp to negotiate.

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.

The Parish Council would like to see a CSW set up in the Parish again, but a group of volunteers is needed - approximately 6 people. Training, equipment and support is provided.


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

and Philosophical Society by Charles Dawson. That's the same Charles Dawson who would soon be sticking some Orangutan teeth on a human skull and declaring he had discovered the 'missing link' at Piltown, near Uckfield. In 1953, Dawson would be unmasked as a fraudster and the whole 'toad-in-the-hole' phenomenon would come crashing down, dismissed as poppycock.

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MY LIFE WITH FUR AND FEATHER

HAND SIGNALS

When we have a puppy, we hope it will always be fit and healthy, but as time goes on we might notice a change in its behaviour. Perhaps it is not coming when told or there are other changes in its behaviour. It is possible that these changes are due to the dog gradually losing its sight or going deaf.

It is quite usual to train our dogs to respond to our voice, but it is a good idea to teach it to respond to hand signals as well so you can still communicate with your dog. Ideally teach your dog to respond to both hand signals and voice.

Of course, it might be us with communication problems, for example losing our voice or going deaf. Many years ago I had golden retrievers. The lanes were very quiet then, so I had the dogs loose and I would listen out for the occasional car. If I heard one I would shout get in and the dogs would immediately get on the verge and stand still till I called to them to go on again when it was safe. Colleen the youngest one was very quick to get into the side. This worked well until I had problems with my ears and was for a while quite deaf and could not hear the cars. However, Colleen had excellent hearing and when she heard a car she immediately got into the side, so my problem was solved as all I had to do was to watch her and get myself into the side of the lane when I saw her get in! Do not do this nowadays.

I had a miniature Dachshund for over seventeen years who loved her walks but when she was getting old she was reluctant to walk anywhere new, but was very happy to go on walks she knew well.

I also noticed she developed a strange habit, when we returned from a walk she would walk up to the door step, stretch out till her nose just touched the edge of the step then would happily jump up. She also developed some odd habits indoors, again using her nose to check whether a door was open or closed. I took her to the vet and was very surprised to discover she was completely blind. These examples show that it is very easy to think the dog is being disobedient, when in fact it has sight or hearing problems.

Ideally teach your dog to respond to both voice and hand signals. Your dog will quickly learn what the hand signals mean if they are immediately rewarded with praise and treats.

A very useful one is “stay” Do this rather like a policeman stopping the traffic. The dog should immediately stop and stand quite still until you give another hand signal that means it can move again. Make this an excited quick movement.

“Down” is quite easy, hold a tasty treat and gradually move your hand down to the floor. As soon as the dog is lying on the floor give it the treat.

A nice easy one is “fetch” Have a ball in your hand while the dog is watching you and throw the ball.

To start with make all your movements quite big, over time these movements can be smaller.

Dogs are so very adaptable and are very quick to learn, especially if it is to their advantage.

I hope you find these tips useful.

Hazel Carter 01825 839477