



ALCISTON BERWICK SELMESTON
VILLAGE NEWS
NOVEMBER 2023

◇ VILLAGE NEWS

Advertising is coordinated by Brian Calcott. Tel. 07999 788618.

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Contributions, Photos, etc (other than advertising requests) should be sent to Martin by the 12th of the month by email: empty.sea@outlook.com

They can also be passed to one of the coordinators:

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Valerie Shaw at Selmeston House, Selmeston Tel: 01323 811567.

Laurie Tinsley, Wynsford, Berwick Tel: 01323 870895.

Donations

Financial donations to the Parish News are gratefully received.

Cheques payable to "Parish News" can be passed to: The Treasurer, Brian Calcott at 2 Railway Cottages, Station Road, Berwick, Polegate, BN26 6TA.

Alternatively, electronic donations can be made to Barclays Bank - Account No. 70650625; Sort code 20-49-76.

◇ CHURCH CONTACTS

Benefice Priests

Revd Peter Blee Rector of Berwick and Vicar of Selmeston with Alciston

The Parsonage, Berwick, Polegate, BN26 6SR

Tel: 01323 870512 Email: peter.blee@berwickchurch.org.uk

Revd Shirley Pearce Assistant Priest

The Vicarage, Wilmington, Polegate, BN26 5SL

Tel: 01323 318231 Email: revshirleym@gmail.com

Shirley Pearce's 'on duty' days are Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday.

Churchwardens

Alciston - Michèle Boys Tel: 01323 870623

Berwick - Andy Williamson Tel: 01323 870163 / Paul Lewis Tel: 01323 870927

Selmeston - Jan Matthews Tel: 01323 811380

Benefice Administrator

Jane Grutchfield Email: benefice.administrator@berwickchurch.org.uk

◇ VILLAGE CONTACTS

Parish Council Clerks

Alciston - Sandy Thomas Email: alcistonparishmeeting@gmail.com

Berwick - Alison Stevens Tel: 01323 460007 Email: berwickparishcouncil@aol.com

Selmeston - Bryan Stevens Tel: 07799 862765 Email: selmestonparishmeeting@gmail.com

Village Hall / Field Hire

Berwick Village Hall - Thea Eastmead Tel: 01323 871218 Email: theaeastmead77@gmail.com

Berwick Field - Carole Vine Tel: 07341 660046 berwickfieldhire@btinternet.com

Thank You

We are very grateful to receive donations this month from Alan and Elaine Jupp and Hilary Pogge von Strandmann. If you are able to help to cover of the increased printing cost (up by 14% in October) any contribution would be most appreciated.

Berwick Produce Show AGM 2023

*Thursday 2nd November
at Berwick Village Hall*

Our AGM and cup presentation will be on Thursday 2nd November at the Village Hall; all are very welcome.

The date for the 2024 produce show will be Saturday 17th August 2024.

The produce show committee is considering running the bingo evenings over the winter to raise funds for the produce show and the village hall; if you are interested in this please let a committee member know so we can gauge interest or email sue.woodgate1@btinternet.com or via WhatsApp. Many thanks.

Sue Woodgate

The Ludlay String Quartet

*12.30 pm Sunday 5th November
in Berwick Church*



Beethoven String Quartet Op 18 No. 2 and
Borodin String Quartet No. 2

Maeve Jenkinson, violin 1
Kate Comberti, violin 2
Robert Duncan, viola
Sebastian Comberti, cello

Tickets cost £15 and are available online from Eventbrite.co.uk or Seaford Tourist Information Centre (Free entry for children).

Arlington Village Market and Coffee Morning

*10.00 am – Noon, Tuesday 14th November
at Arlington Village Hall.*

All are welcome and we will be pleased to see you. There will be fresh bread, cakes, quiches, local eggs and other regular stalls and refreshments. For further market information please contact Anne Hope: Tel. 01323 486219, Email anntonyhope@gmail.com.

Arlington's Pop-Up Museum will also be taking place at the same time. November's focus will be 'The Spitfire and WW2'. For further information please contact Wendy Holmes Tel: 07889 689844, Email: talkingteapot@yahoo.co.uk.

Thank you to all who regularly come to support this community event, please bring your friends, and if you have not visited before you will be very welcome. At the October market the village hall was buzzing once again with people chatting, visiting stalls, and browsing in the museum which featured Arlington & Upper Dicker Women's Institute. It was lovely to see so many faces from the village and also past residents of Arlington.

Pauline Jackson

Firle and Beddingham Women's Institute

*7.30 pm Wednesday 8th November
at Firle Village Hall*

Our meeting in October was our AGM and the committee and President were all voted to stand again for the coming year. We sang 'Jerusalem' which is the tradition at our AGM.

We followed the business meeting — hearing about a few hilarious memories from members concerning holidays gone

*Cover photo: Emma Cooper -Autumn Leaves
Taken adjacent to the lane on the way up to Ludlay near the village hall.*



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by that didn't all go according to plan! We will welcome Michaela Wynne-Davies at our November meeting who will advise us about colours that might suit us under the heading 'Colour me Gorgeous'.

Do join us – we are a friendly group and always looking for new members. Please contact me if you would like to come along as a guest. You will be most welcome.

Rosemary Norris
President Tel: 07784 707016

From the Resident Poet

7.00 pm on Wednesday 15th November in Berwick Church

I was flattered by the amount of people who kindly came along to the launch of my poetry residence in Berwick church on 13th September. There will be a follow-up evening on Wednesday 15th November in the church at which I can report on progress regarding various initiatives and read some more poems, in conjunction with other poets.

(To avoid any confusion, this is a separate event from the poetry group meeting on Monday 27th November, announced by Michèle Boys later in this magazine.)

The Start

You know the way. You know the roundabout beside Drusilla's Park, the outside lane that helps you overtake. You know the times when unseen blockages, or driving rain, slows traffic to a crawl. This is your life: a narrow road, a mobile prison and some electronic comfort. Take next left. Now you're alone. On either side the land extends its welcome. Turn the radio off. Listen to the insects' hum, a crow's harsh caw, the sparrows' chatter. Feel the past steal up around you and become a friend who takes you by the hand. Step out. Downland rears ahead. Behind, the Weald. Trees stretch their shadows over you like cloaks. A door is opening. Go in. Be healed.

Antony Mair

Meanwhile, as part of my brief, I have been writing some pieces relating to the Pilgrim Path, and thought it good to share one with you through this magazine, which I read in September (see below). Any feedback is welcome – my email address is antony@tackleway.com.

Antony Mair

Village HUB

*10.30 am – 12.30 pm Monday
20th November at A&S Village Hall*

We will be serving refreshments, delicious tea and coffee as well as homemade cake. So why not join us, pop in anytime during the morning. It is open to everyone - bring your little ones for a run around and meet up with neighbours and friends of all ages.

This month the church will be selling delicious cakes, quiches, and lots more to take home and enjoy - including a selection of meal deals.

Next Hub date: 18th December – There will be a Christmas Food Bank Collection and any donations would gratefully received. Please contact any of the committee below if you have any questions or need help with transport to and from the hall. Contact:

Thea 07772 155772, Helen
07969 732109,
Mairi 07582 938185
or Janie 07785 940915.

Rachel Lewis

Tipple Talk

*7.00 pm Saturday 25th November
at A & S Village Hall*

Back by popular demand, we journey through Bella Italia and its vineyards sampling four regional wines with accompanying nibbles. Our host, Katrina, is an award-winning professional with over 10 years' experience in the wine industry. Her knowledge of wines is awe-inspiring and with her gift for communication and storytelling, it promises to be a fun and informative evening.

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An event not to be missed, limited tickets so book early to avoid disappointment. Tickets cost £22. Enjoy Prosecco and olives which will be available to buy from the bar from 7.00 pm, and your wine tasting starts at 7.30 pm. Last day for tickets is Monday 20th November – please contact Thea 07772 155772, Helen 07969 732109, Mairi 07582 938185 or Janie 07785 940915.

Rachel Lewis

Pilgrim Poetry Group

*2.30 pm Monday 27th November
in Berwick Church*

At the suggestion of Antony Mair, poet in residence for the Cuckmere Pilgrim Path, there will be the opportunity for a reading group to meet, read and discuss a selection of poems on broadly spiritual themes by a variety of poets past and present.

These will be held in Berwick Church, the first will take place on and in subsequent months with dates to be decided.

Everyone is welcome to attend and take part. If you are interested and would like to receive in advance copies of the poems for discussion, or for enquiries, please contact Michèle Boys michele.boys@live.com or call 01323 870623. Thank you.

Michèle Boys

Christmas Party

*Saturday 9th December
at A & S Village Hall*

Christmas partying in December is always a must for the Alciston and Selmeston Village Hall. Not one to be missed! Further information to follow.

Rachel Lewis

Firle Community Lunch Club

There is a delicious two course lunch available in Firle Village Hall once a month, usually on the second Tuesday of the month, from 12.30-2.00 pm. If anyone would be interested in coming along,

please get in touch with Penny Woolgar on 01273 858133.

Enjoy a homemade lunch with tea/coffee for £5 plus good company in lovely surroundings. The next one will be in December; date to be confirmed.

Penny Woolgar

A Diary Date for 2024 : A Piece of Work – A Theatre Show with James Rowland

*7.00 pm, Sunday 4th February
at A&S Village Hall*

Tickets £12. Suitable for ages 15+.
Show is 70 minutes no interval.

*'A riveting, remarkable hour of theatre'
**** The Guardian*

After a small hiatus, theatre is returning to the village with this award-winning show. Through his trademark mix of music, song, story, James will paint a picture of our country in all of its beauty, grime, pain and kindness, over one heart rending and hilarious evening. Book your tickets now.

Online: www.applause.org.uk/whats-on/
Email: bookings@southdownsvillagehall.org
Text: Megan on 07846 260350.

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Stewart Fuller, Director

The Berwick Plesiosaurus

The recent article by Jean Bradford in the September issue of Village News, on the

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Village Artisans Christmas Craft Fair



10.00 am to 3.00 pm on Saturday 2nd December
Berwick Village Hall, Berwick, BN26 6TD

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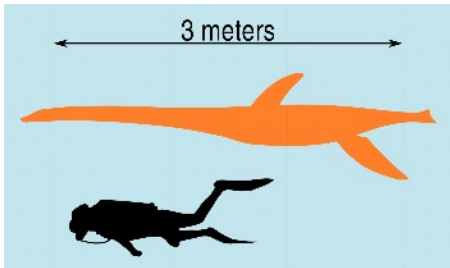
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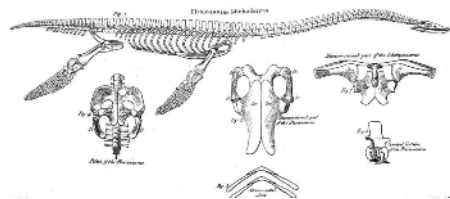
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Cuckmere Brick Company revealed another part of our local history, as the remains are still visible on walks in Berwick, and you often see examples of the rich red bricks used in the construction of various buildings in this area. What intrigued me even more was the last sentence, describing the finding of the bones of a *Plesiosaurus dolichodeirus* (Greek - near to a lizard) during excavations of the clay in 1921. I wanted to find out what this reptile may have looked like, so made a quick scan of the Internet.



This revealed that the reptile lived between 228 and 61 million years ago, during the early Jurassic period, making it probably the oldest resident of Berwick! It was about three metres long, with a small head, and a long slender neck, having a broad turtle-like body, and a short tail and two pairs of long elongated paddles. It was a carnivore and lived in a marine environment, giving birth to live young.



The first complete skeleton was discovered in 1823 and up to the present day, palaeontologists have found 938 specimens.

Simon Muggleton
(Pictures are Public Domain)

Neighbourhood and Local Plans

I recently spoke at the Planning Inquiry in Ringmer against the proposed Thakeham development and explained to the planning

inspector that the people of Ringmer are not against housing and in fact have taken over nine hundred new homes when all applications are totalled together but the infrastructure is creaking from sewage to GP services. Thakeham is yet another development with a starting price of £680K that will not help house local people and is in direct contrast to the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan.

Neighbourhood Plans are voted on by local people through a referendum and say where housing can and can't go in an area. Ringmer was one of the first to get its plan done, but since the Lewes Local Plan, which is the overarching planning document for the district, went out of date, it puts the Ringmer plan out of date too.

Despite pleading with Lewes District Council to get their Local Plan back in date, they have said it will be at least 2025 until they will be able to do so and at the planning inquiry the lack of a Local Plan was the key argument the developers used for allowing their speculative application.

Wealden District is in exactly the same position having never had a Local Plan and so the villages and town within the district are at the mercy of developers as we have seen at Mornings Mill and Hindsland near Polegate.

Updating or getting a Local Plan in place is not difficult - especially now the Government is scrapping housing targets and moving to a 'Brownfield first' strategy. The South Downs National Park Authority are updating theirs right now so it doesn't go out of date in two years' time and so will continue to protect the green spaces inside the park. If they can do it so can Wealden and Lewes district councils. Indeed, other neighbouring Planning Authorities have recently successfully had their Local Plans approved with much lower housing numbers than their housing allocation with Worthing and Adur being two local examples. Adur got theirs through with just 57% of their standard method allocation by providing supportive evidence and Worthing with a 74% shortfall.

As the local MP my frustration is that we have gotten the Government to remove

housing targets and made it easier to update Local Plans, but if our local councils don't develop the local plans to say where housing can or can't go, we will not be able to halt the concreting of our green spaces.

Maria Caulfield MP

November's Gardener's Diary

What we can do this month in the vegetable garden, is clearing any rubbish off the soil to prepare for manure or compost. The best way is to cover the ground with compost and leaves, leaving it until next year to dig in, allowing the worms to work it into the soil.

Don't forget you can plant Garlic and Broad Beans this month, so they will have a great start in the spring.

Rake up all the leaves you can for the compost heap, if you have a rotary mower try running over them to break them up and you will find they will compost down quicker.

Check the onions to see if any are rotten. If they are, throw them away, the same with potatoes.

Don't forget to raise your mower up for the last cut of the year!

Lisa Collington

Recipe of the Month: Pumpkin Soup

Ingredients

2 tbsp olive oil
2 finely chopped onions
1 kg pumpkin or squash, peeled, de-seeded and chopped into chunks.
700 ml vegetable or chicken stock
150 ml double cream.

Method

Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan and gently cook the onions until soft but not coloured. Add the pumpkin or squash to the pan and continue cooking for 8 to 10 minutes, stirring occasionally until it starts to soften and turn golden.

Pour the stock into the pan and season with salt and pepper. Bring to the boil and

then simmer until the squash is very soft. Pour in the double cream, bring back to the boil and then puree with a blender.

If desired, serve with croutons and toasted pumpkin seeds. When cold, the soup can be frozen for up to 2 months.

Valerie Shaw

Family Support Work (FSW)

I am writing this as the Harvest donations arrive thick and fast following Harvest Festival services at the start of October. The foodbank is starting to fill up nicely after a period of being rather low on stock, and we are extremely grateful to all the churches and their congregations who have been so generous during the last few weeks. More and more of our families are asking for food support now so it is wonderful to be able to provide them with help in this way.

Since September there has been a continued stream of new referrals, as the new school year brings issues to the surface that may have been hidden over the summer. We are spending a lot of time in meetings with schools, supporting parents in achieving the most appropriate help for their children so that they can thrive. One parent wrote to their practitioner earlier today after such a meeting, saying: *"Thank you so much for meeting me this morning. It was so lovely to finally feel there is light at the end of the tunnel."* We were able to take twelve families to Dalesdown for a weekend residential in early September, which proved to be a wonderful time with unseasonably nice weather. Activities included cake decorating, stick man craft, football tournaments and the ever-popular prize bingo!

Our charity shop in Eastbourne was closed for two days at the start of October whilst staff and volunteers carried out a refurbishment. It is now fully open for business again, but we are in urgent need of donations, particularly ladies' and men's autumn/winter clothing and children's toys and games. If you have any good-quality items you would be willing to donate to the shop, we would be very grateful – these

Chloe Burrell

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Our Christmas plans are well under way, with parties being planned by nearly all our practitioners, as well as arrangements for Christmas toy and food collections. If you would like a member of staff to come and speak at any point during Advent we would be delighted to do so, but do contact us soon as diaries are already filling up! Please contact Spencer on 01273 832963 or spencer@familysupportwork.org.uk if you would like to discuss.

September's work in numbers

- ◆ 234 individual visits and 1169 calls with families supporting 279 adults and 185 children
- ◆ 53 supported meetings with other agencies
- ◆ 50 group sessions held supporting 369 parents and 190 children
- ◆ 152 food deliveries made

Prayer points

- ◆ Pray for all the new parents we are supporting, who are finding parenthood very challenging and isolating
- ◆ Give thanks for the generosity of churches all across Sussex for Harvest food donations
- ◆ Remember with thanks a number of our long-term supporters who have gone to glory in recent weeks

Nikki Kerr, FSW Director of Fundraising and Marketing

FSW at Christmas

There will be a collection in all our five Churches in late November of Christmas presents and Christmas goodies for families supported by Family Support Work in this Diocese.

Tim Berrett, Jane Anderson

Slugs

I've had a strange fascination with slugs since I was a little boy. Back then I

believed that they were homeless snails that had lost their shells. It turns out I was right. Sort of. The whole eviction process had started as far back as the murky Mesozoic when some land snails cast off the shackles of a shell and evolved into slugs for some truly independent living. Sure, shells are great for protection and will help you to avoid drying out but they're clunky and require calcium to construct. Without them you can roam anywhere and (to namecheck another mollusc) the



The slug's shell has never been completely lost — a fragment remains hidden under their skin, a tiny, shrunken souvenir of their snail ancestry. Another link to their slimy dynasty is that all slugs, like all snails, are both male and female. As hermaphrodites, they possess both sets of sexual organs and this means that, if the situation dictates, they can go it alone and simply self-fertilise to produce their offspring. A true state of independence. Self-fertilisation creates a clone - or in a slug's case hundreds of clones – but the problem with inbreeding is a lack of genetic variability. Clones all possess the same weaknesses. An entire slug population can be wiped out by the same parasites and pathogens. To produce varied and resilient offspring, most slugs go in for the more old-fashioned approach of finding a partner for a quick rustle in the undergrowth.

But one garden slug species has turned this chore into art - a flamboyant celebration of a lack of independence. The spotted and striped Leopard Slugs start their performance by chasing each other around a tree, giving each other sonic, sensuous strokes and cheeky nibbles. Then they climb, shimmy along a branch, and descend on a rope made of their own

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mucous. Here, hanging in mid-air, the slugs evert their sexual organs, entwining them to create a moonlit globe. This graceful, balletic trapeze performance must be one of the most mesmerising sights on our planet. If you search hard enough, you can find beauty in the strangest places. Still, if I were strolling through the woods at night, I'd hate to walk into it face-first.

*Michael Blencowe (Picture © Nick Upton)
Sussex Wildlife Trust*

From the Vicarage: 'Every Little Helps'

Yes, you've heard it many times: 'Every little helps!' Thanks to advertising by a certain supermarket chain, we hear it quite often. It is a phrase that is 'out there' and pops into our conversations easily.

At the Arlington Pop-up Museum recently the subject was the Women's Institute, but the articles that caught my eye were about wartime appeals. In particular, the story of the Spitfire Fund:

"When my mummy has taken me out and I have wanted to use a public convenience


she has had to pay a penny. So I thought if we did the same at home it would help your fund." So wrote eight-year-old Patricia Boncey to Lord Beaverbrook, Minister of Aircraft Production, to accompany her postal order for 15 shillings.

In early 1940 Lord Beaverbrook came into government to speed up aircraft production. He pushed the idea of public appeals, for example to source raw materials and to encourage thrifty shopping, in a bid to help with the war effort. Press coverage of the Spitfire brought enquiries about helping get more planes in the air, and in May 1940, Spitfire funds was established. Within weeks funds were set up by councils, businesses, voluntary organisations, and individuals. Many were co-ordinated by local newspapers, which carried lists of individual donations: "From all at No.15 Station Lane", "My week's pocket money - Fred Smith aged 7", "My first week's old age pension - 10 shillings towards our Spitfire". [BBC online] Ranging from pocket money pennies to large contributions, the donations eventually raised about £13m (£650m today's value).

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Another 'every little helps' article covered the 'Warship Week' campaigns. In 1941 and 1942 communities across the country came together to raise money for the war effort. These fund-raising ventures allowed a community to sponsor a naval vessel through individual investments in Government Bonds and National Savings Certificates, and through the Post Office Savings Bank, so that investments were recovered with 2 ½ to 3 % interest. There were 1,178 'Warship Weeks' organised during the campaign, involving a total of 1,273 districts. [History Today website] The final total raised was £9,556,115,89, the equivalent of £43.1 billion today.

I am reminded of the miracle of the five loaves and two fish, when a boy offered to share his 'packed lunch'. 'As evening

approached, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food." Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away.

You give them something to eat." "We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish," they answered. "Bring them here to me," he said. And he directed the people to sit down on the grass.

Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.

The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.'

Matthew 14:15-21.

On a comparatively minuscule scale, we need the same willingness to assist us in the churchyard at St Mary and St Peter's, Wilmington, on Saturday 4th November, to clear behind the church where it has become very overgrown.

This appeal will be the third this season, and we are always grateful to those who respond. Even if it is for just 30 minutes of your time, or a financial contribution if you are unable to do the physical stuff. All our churches benefit hugely from the work of volunteers, those who serve in the church and those who help to maintain the churchyards. We are enormously grateful; God bless each one of you.

Every little, does indeed help.

Rev Shirley

Refuge

Peter Blee writes that recently "*For National Poetry Day the theme was Refuge. A poem by Margaret Wilmot from Selmeaton was one of four winners at a local event in Eastbourne run by the Poetry Cafe*".

Alciston (for Michèle)

Winter-spare the day we come upon the tithe barn,
huge – it must have shaped the elbow in the lane.
Its great oak doors are locked, no hint of the life
the abbey in its day would have sustained,
no animals about, a crumbling dovecote,
paddock bare – but Rob points, See the hollows?
He thinks the land rolls down like fish-ponds maybe.
A path leads toward the small church on its knoll.

Open – and as we enter voices sound
as if remnants of old rituals still endure.
Ye that stand in the house of the Lord... Almost
ghostly from the chancel, the monks' same words.

The tones change. A woman comes to greet us –
coffee? tea? and lo there is a table spread
with eggs for sale laid by 'my girls.' The warmth
is magical – and cake even (our daily bread).

Truly, it's difficult to leave a place
of angels – one even bending from a sill.
Lord, who shall dwell in thy tabernacle
or who shall rest upon thy holy hill?

On a back wall we find the dials once scratched
for services. No twig-gnomon now, no time –
no end to this view in all its fulness,
a whole world. We gaze out, perched on its safe rim.



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◇ CHURCH SERVICES AND MORNING PRAYER

Please visit the benefice websites to check on services and times:

www.sussexdownlandchurches.org.uk or
www.berwickchurch.org.uk

Sunday 5th November

09:30 Arlington Holy Communion
09:30 Selmeiston Holy Communion
11:00 Berwick Holy Communion
11:00 Wilmington Holy Communion

Sunday 12th November

Remembrance Sunday

08.00 Alciston Holy Communion (BCP)
10:00 Selmeiston Holy Communion
10:45 Wilmington Remembrance service
(Joint service with Arlington)
10.50 Remembrance services at Berwick and Selmeiston War Memorials
11:00 Berwick Holy Communion

Sunday 19th November

09:30 Arlington Holy Communion
09:30 Selmeiston Holy Communion
11:00 Berwick Holy Communion
11:00 Wilmington Holy Communion

Sunday 26th November

09:30 Alciston Holy Communion (BCP)
09:30 Arlington Holy Communion
11:00 Berwick Holy Communion
11:00 Wilmington Holy Communion

Prayer

9.30 am each Wednesday at Berwick church, except on the first Wednesday of the month when there is an Holy Communion (BCP) service.

5.00 pm each Thursday at Wilmington church.

To receive a weekly notification about services (the Sunday Link) please email the Benefice Administrator at

benefice.administrator@berwickchurch.org.uk

Pastoral Prayer or Talk

Peter Blee and Shirley Pearce are available to speak to people on the phone and are also able to pray with people on request in church at Morning Prayer and to offer help in any way possible.

Telephone: 01323 870512, 01323 318231 or
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