

BERWICK SELMESTON ALCISTON

VILLAGE NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2024



VILLAGE NEWS

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

Distribution is coordinated by Jeremy and Valerie Shaw. Tel: 01323 811567.

The Production Team is Liz Golden and Martin Chilvers.

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:

Liz Golden, 2 Cornford Crescent, Berwick Tel: 01323 870163.

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

Donations

Financial donations to the Parish News are gratefully received.

Cheques payable to "Berwick, Selmeston and Alciston Village 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 Canon 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: revshirley@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 - Lynette Kemp Tel: 07864 637274 Email: berwickparishcouncil@aol.com

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

Village Hall / Field Hire

Berwick Village Hall - Carole Vine Tel: 07341 660046 Email: berwickhallhire@btinternet.com

Berwick Field - Carole Vine Tel: 07341 660 046 berwickfieldhire@btinternet.com

Alciston and Selmeston Village Hall Website: www.southdownsvillagehall.org

Thank You and Farewell to Jane Anderson

Jane has been on the Production Team of the Parish News and latterly, the Village News, since 1988 helping with its monthly preparation and making sure that it is delivered to every home in Alciston, Berwick and Selmeston for free.

Motivated by a desire to get to know people, to serve and sustain a sense of local community, many people over the years have received her welcome, kindness and support. She has always been mindful of others needs and responded, quietly but generously.

We wish her a safe move and happiness in her new home with great gratitude for all she has done in the local community, and particularly for this magazine.

Peter Blee

Thank You

Although this magazine is part-funded by its advertising, we still rely on donations from our readers to keep us viable.

This month we are very grateful to Alan and Elaine Judd for their kind gift. If you can make a contribution, please refer to the information opposite. Many thanks.

Art Exhibition

Julie Little will be having an exhibition of paintings in Wilmington Church from 11.00 am to 4.00 pm on Saturday 31st August, and 12.00 to 4.00 pm on Sunday 15th September.

25% of proceeds from sales will be donated to the church fabric fund for much-needed masonry repairs.

Jane Grutchfield

Arlington Ancestors Pop-Up Museum

On 1st September, the usual 9.30 am church service at Arlington will also be in memory of our ancestors. From 2.00 to 4.00 pm on the same day we will be remembering our ancestors with photos and information on graves throughout the churchyard. Shining a light on their history, lives and connections to the village and the church, with some of them previously unknown to us today.

All are welcome to attend, refreshments will be available in the church.

Christine Skinner

Arlington's Village Market and Coffee Morning + Pop-Up Museum

10.00 am - Noon, Tuesday 10th September at Arlington Village Hall

The museum will also be open in the evening from 6.00 to 7.00 pm.

Some of the regular stalls are Anne's traditional fresh bread with other naughty goodies and fresh eggs; Lynnes popular home-made cakes and savouries; Jean's 'all sorts of everything' in aid of the Parkinson's Society; a second-hand book stall with books about the local area, and other sundries, jewellery, cards, and more.

Arlington's Pop-Up Museum will also be taking place at the same time, the focus will be 'Celebrating St. Pancras Church' and it will also be open again in the evening.

Thank you to the many people, local and from further afield, who continue to support our community event. Please bring your friends and if you have not been before you will be very welcome. It is a very sociable morning. The August Market was extremely busy, and the hall was full of people chatting and visiting the stalls and the Pop-Up Museum.

For further market information please contact Anne Hope:

Tel. 01323 486219 / 07760 424169,

Email anntonyhope@gmail.com

For further museum information please contact Wendy Holmes:

Tel. 07889 689844,

Email talkingteapot@yahoo.co.uk

Pauline Jackson

Firle and Beddingham Women's Institute

7.30 pm Wednesday 1st September at Firle Village Hall

Our August meeting was a 'summer party' held on the patio of the village hall - everyone brought delicious food to share and it was good to spend time chatting and relaxing on a summer's evening. Next month we shall have a talk on the Chaplaincy at Lewes Prison.

Do join us, we will be very pleased to see you. Please give me a call if you would like further information.

Rosemary Norris

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Cuckmere Pilgrim Path Annual Guided Walk - With a Big Breakfast at Selmeston

*8.00 am Saturday 14th September
from Berwick Church*

All are welcome to join the annual guided walk along the Cuckmere Pilgrim Path. The timings are approximately as follows. You are welcome to join at any point or to just attend the Cream Tea.

8.00 am Set off from Berwick

9.30 am Big Breakfast at Selmeston

12 noon Coffee at Arlington

1.45 pm Lunch at Wilmington (Bring your own packed lunch)

3.15 pm Cream Tea at Berwick

Peter Blee

Artwave Festival 2024

During Artwave, over the weekends of 14th/15th and 21st/22nd September, I have my studio open between 11.00 am and 5.00 pm. On each day at noon and at 2.30 pm I'm giving half-hour demonstrations of how I make my current ceramic pieces.

You'll find me at 'Keepers' off Bo-Peep Lane, BN26 6UH, and anyone in our parishes is welcome to call in. I'm Venue 161 at www.artwavefestival.org.

For those of you who have not been in our villages long, may I explain that I've worked here over these last 50 years, firstly making pots, then sculptural birdbaths for gardens and now small sculptures whose starting point is our surrounding landscape.

Sarah Walton

Tel: 07776 238972

Wilmington Harvest Festival - You Are Invited!

*3.00 pm Sunday 15th September
at St Mary and St Peter's Church*

Join in our Harvest celebration service, hear a talk on this lovely church and see the village history through the registers.

Cards, postcards and gifts available.

Tea, coffee, cake and boerewors

(South African farmer's sausage) rolls will be served.

Contact Revd Shirley Pearce for enquiries -

Email: revshirley@gmail.com

or Tel: 07880 554750.

The 94th Laughton and District Agricultural Society Ploughing Match

*9.00 am to 4.00 pm on Wednesday 18th September
at Church Farm, Litlington, BN26 5RA*

This year's Ploughing Match will take place in Litlington and is open to the public. The entry fee is £5 per person. There will be vintage, classic and modern tractors and heavy horse ploughing competitions. Come and enjoy the tractor and trailer rides around this lovely site plus many trade stands and on-site catering.

For further information about the ploughing match please contact Shauna Fenner at laughtonploughingmatch@gmail.com.

The Family Section has classes for cookery, preserves, handicrafts, flowers, fruit, vegetables and eggs and seven classes for children aged 4 and under, 7 and under, and 11 and under. You do not need to live on a farm or be from a farming family to enter any of the Family Section classes. The children's classes are free to enter, and adult classes are 50p if you enter in advance, or £1 on the day. Entries to be staged by 10 o'clock on the day of the show. Please contact Sue Hemington - Tel: 07811 427741 Email: hemingtons@talktalk.net for a Family Section schedule, or for any further information on how to enter the classes. Do come and join us!

Victoria Burrough

Ride and Stride Big Breakfast

*9.00 - 11.00 am Sunday 22nd September
at Arlington Village Hall*

If you are unable to take part in the Benefice Ride and Stride guided walk of the Cuckmere Pilgrim Path on 14th September, the following Sunday, Friends of St Pancras, Arlington are holding a Big Breakfast event in Arlington Village Hall to raise funds and for the Sussex Historic Churches Trust.

Full breakfast for £15.00 with tea or coffee. There will be two static bikes in the hall if you want to test your endurance, or perhaps walk the Pilgrim Path, or just come for breakfast! Sponsor forms available. Please contact Irene - Email: ireneflynn@btinternet.com to reserve a place.

Christine Skinner

Selmeston and Alciston Village HUB

*11.00 am - 12.30 pm Monday 23rd September
at A&S Village Hall*

The Hub welcomes you all to enjoy refreshments and delicious tea and coffee, as well as homemade cake in a convivial, warm

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environment. Pop in anytime, it's open to everyone – bring your little ones for a run around and meet up with neighbours and friends of all ages.

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

Ethiopian Orthodox Ecumenical Service and Lunch

*11.00 am Sunday 6th October
at Berwick Church*

This special service is in Support of our charitable link with Desta Ethiopia. All are welcome to attend the service, but the lunch is limited to 55 due to space, so please book early.

Following the launch event for Desta Ethiopia (Charity Number 1194896) in November 2022, Berwick Church is hosting an ecumenical service which will include chanting and prayers from the Ethiopian Orthodox tradition.



Father Abate will attend with participating priests and deacons of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. This will be followed at 12.15 pm by a buffet lunch in the church with an Ethiopian vegan menu.

After lunch at 1.30 pm there will be a short presentation regarding environmental protection around Ethiopia's Churches and Monasteries, stemming from their theology. Following this

there will be a presentation from Desta featuring their current work in the context of ongoing conflict, particularly in the north of the country. Their video presentation conveys something of the spirit of resilience and positivity of the people.

The event will close with prayers from Father Abate and Peter Blee.

Tickets £15 each are available from
www.eventbrite.com.

Peter Blee

“Fun, Fish & Finking”

*From 6.30 pm Saturday 12th October
at A&S Village Hall*

Expect the usual fabulous hosting team, delicious Village Chippy supper and a well-stocked bar at this very popular evening. Book early to avoid disappointment. Bring your own team of six or we can join you up with other friendly faces.

The cost is £15.00 per person, which includes the brain-stretching quiz and a fish/veggie and chip supper. Please contact Helen 07969732109, Mairi 07582 938185 or Phil 07538 187552 to book.

This is an A&S Village Hall Fundraising evening, so we politely ask that all drink is purchased at the event. Thank you.

Rachel Lewis

Brighton Welsh Male Voice Choir

*Save The Date: Saturday 9th November
at A&S Village Hall*

More details to follow.

Rachel Lewis

Remembrance Service Refreshments

Sunday 10th November at A&S Village Hall

Refreshments will be available following the Selveston 11 o'clock Memorial Service. All are welcome.

Rachel Lewis

The Snowsmith

*Save The Date: 3.00 pm on Saturday
16th November at A&S Village Hall*

Half a String Theatre returns to the A&S Village Hall with this wonderful puppet and theatre show to entertain all the family. What can unite the grumpy town of Thawmor this winter?

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Email: bookings@southdownsvillagehall.org
Text: Megan 07846 260350

Rachel Lewis

A Letter to the Benefice

The church in Wilmington was quiet as usual this morning; I hadn't put the lights on, and it was overcast, so the interior was dim. Early, so the many visitors walking up to the Long Man or hiking over the downs were not yet evident. The visitor's book stood open, showing that some stop long enough to write down their impressions, often about the church, many times about the yew tree. Both have been at the top end of the village for a long time.

As a parish church of the Church of England, those of us who worship God in it also have a duty to serve God and neighbour. The new commandment that Jesus gave to his followers was to love God with all our hearts, and to love our neighbour. Part of this is to care for the church and the churchyard, so that everyone can feel welcome and know that we are there for baptisms, weddings, funerals, Christmas and Easter, the rhythm of daily life, that endless

ticking of the metronome. Whatever has changed over hundreds of years, church and tree have been there.

The time has come when we need to look afresh at this responsibility we carry, and to confess to you all that the costs of maintaining church and churchyard has become too heavy for this small but dedicated congregation to manage alone. Not long ago, £12,000 was raised to replace some of the props for the tree. In the past two years £19,000 has been spent on treating dry rot, doing essential plasterwork, and painting. We need to raise a further £6,000 for essential stonework and have now turned to applying to grants to cover this. Sadly, nothing that needs doing in a Grade 1 listed building can be done cheaply.

Of course we will do everything we can, and this involves some new ventures. We know you care about all the churches in the benefice and hope that you will engage with us as we set a course to secure church, churchyard and tree for future generations. I welcome any ideas and comments and promise to keep you all informed of the progress we make. Do come up to the church, enjoy its stillness, gaze on the tree and rejoice in its sturdy presence: treasures to cherish.

Shirley Pearce

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In relation to this the Wilmington Parochial Church Council (PCC) writes:

It has recently become clear that Wilmington PCC is facing a major financial challenge and at present it is not able to meet its monthly costs. These consist principally of the following: the ministry costs to the Diocese of having a vicar, repair and maintenance of the church, insurance and running costs and care of the churchyard. If the current situation is not addressed, then the parish is likely to lose the ministry of the House for Duty position currently held by Revd Shirley Pearce.

The PCC is drawing up plans to respond to the situation and will be letting people know in the next couple of months how they can help. The Diocese is allowing the parish to pause its monthly payments until the end of October to give it space to undertake this task.

Berwick in Bloom

The railway station garden project has been going from strength to strength, mainly due to the hard work of a few volunteers - you know who you are!



The bees and butterflies have been busy enjoying the flowers as they come into bloom. A Comma butterfly even landed on our new hand-painted sign the day after it went up, to our amusement and delight.

The Berwick Inn has added to the colour with its fantastic hanging baskets, and the lovely garden behind the pub.

We would love to welcome any new volunteers on board to join the team. It's fun and rewarding, and we are a friendly group, with a little summer garden party most years. We would also like to hear from anyone who would like to make a small contribution to our funds, to keep up the yearly planting on the platforms - bulbs for the spring, and something bright and eye-catching for the summer and autumn. You can contact us through

the Village News production team, and we will put you in touch with the Secretary/Treasurer for the Station Garden Project.



Next month's issue will feature an article by Sue Woodgate, with a full report on the Berwick Flower and Produce Show, one of our key village events every August.

A Huge Thank You!

'Making a Difference Locally' (MADL) is the registered charity for Nisa stores enabling independent retailers to donate money to their local communities. Each shop raises money via their in-store collecting tins and then nominates a local charity to be the beneficiary.

Alciston & Selmeston Village Hall was very fortunate and grateful to have been the nominated charity to receive the donation from Selmeston Service Station Village Shop.

The committee would like to sincerely thank the management of the 'garage' for choosing us and to MADL for approving our nomination.

Thea Buckthorp and Mairi Thomas

Cuckmere Pilgrim Path - New Poet In Residence

The new poet in residence for the Cuckmere Pilgrim Path will be Oenone Thomas. She takes up the position in September and more information will follow.

Antony Mair's collection of poetry over the past year, 'Behind the Seen' is now available in Berwick church - £5.

Peter Blee

September Gardener's Diary

There is lots to do in the garden this month, with the main thing being to keep certain plants well-watered in the hot and dry weather. (If we get any!)

Water sweetcorn plants regularly with tomato food to get the best cobs. Continue to feed tomato



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plants and remove leaves lower down on the plant to help with circulation and prevent disease. Pick out the tops to leave 5 or 6 trusses per plant. Pinch out the tops of runner beans once they have reached the top of their supports. Lift onions, shallots and garlic once the foliage has flopped over and yellowed. Keep harvesting French and runner beans little and often to prevent them going to seed. Keep an eye out for potato and tomato blight and remove and destroy any affected plants.

Lisa Collington

Recipe of the Month: Blackberry Syllabub

(Serves 6)

Ingredients

900 g blackberries

125 - 175 g caster sugar (or more according to taste)

425 ml double cream

1 small wine-glass dry white wine

Method

Put the blackberries in a saucepan, with a tight-fitting lid (reserving six for decoration) and cook, covered, over a gentle heat until their juices run. When they have cooled, puree the blackberries in a blender and sieve to remove the pips.

Whip the double cream and white wine together. When the puree is quite cold, fold it into the wine-flavoured cream, taste for sweetness and add more sugar if you think it needs it.

Divide the creamy mixture evenly between six glasses, put one of the reserved blackberries on each glass and serve with shortbread.

Valerie Shaw

Family Support Work (FSW)

With the summer coming to an end, it has been another few weeks full of activity here. Our annual Warnham Park visit, as well as another trip to Arundel Castle Cricket Foundation, took place in glorious sunshine, and the many trips to beaches, parks and nature reserves have kept all our families occupied. Behind the scenes, we have been using this slightly quieter time of year to welcome our new Trustees and Chair and start to make important plans for next year.

We know that activity will really ramp up in September when children return to school, and we expect to be adding even more families to our existing waiting lists. It is a sad reflection of the times that so many families are finding that we are their only source of potential support, and are desperate for us to work with them.

We know that many of you will be in the middle of planning Harvest activities. Please do let us know if you are organising any events which we can help you to promote, and if you are collecting Harvest donations from us it would be very helpful to know in advance so that we can plan our van schedule. We still have very low stock of some of our foodbank staples, but we hope that this will improve over the coming weeks, and we will be able to resume our full foodbank delivery schedule - recently we have had to cut some of our deliveries due to not having enough food.

With many thanks for your continued support and prayers.

July's work in numbers

- ◆ 234 individual visits and 1119 calls with families supporting 252 adults and 252 children
- ◆ 07 supported meetings with other agencies
- ◆ 68 group sessions held supporting 726 parents and 452 children
- ◆ 91 food deliveries made

Prayer points

- ◆ Pray for all the children starting a new school in September
- ◆ Pray that all staff return to work rested after some time off during the summer holidays
- ◆ Give thanks for our new Trustees and pray that they will quickly settle into their important roles with us

Nikki Kerr, FSW Director of Fundraising and Marketing

A Very Sporty Village

A regular sight in Selmeston these days is the appearance of some of our lither residents running along The Street and surrounding fields, in training for a faraway marathon somewhere. Other residents may be seen loading their cars up with children and assorted items of sports equipment. We even have our own physiotherapist just in case a muscle or two are strained with all this action!

This led me to thinking just how long sport in some form or other, has taken place in Selmeston? The Mesolithic period extended between 9600-4000 BC, and evidence has been found in the sandpits by the church in Selmeston that there was a thriving community living here. These hunter/gatherers would have had little time for any kind of sport, save that of running and throwing spears, at deer, wild pigs and oxen, in order just to live. No doubt some wrestling would

Chloe Burrell

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also have taken place, with arguments over 'the kill'.

It would take the Romans landing here in 45 AD to apply discipline to aspects of their sport, mainly used in training for combat. The Romans made their training weapons heavier than the actual ones used in combat, so they would feel lighter and more agile in use, building up their muscle power.

The Romans particularly liked ball games, such as harpastum, wrestling, running and various types of combat sport. Equestrian sport was popular, mainly involving chariot racing. It has been suggested that the Roman Troy Game was played in this area of Sussex, where young men on horseback would have to weave in and out of a maze, mimicking the attack on the city of Troy.



The Anglo Saxons too enjoyed races on horseback as well as wrestling, lifting heavy weights (rocks) and swimming.

It goes without saying that the Normans too enjoyed various sports, especially archery (to the detriment of King Harold) along with horse racing, playing bowls, and various forms of just kicking balls around.



Only 50 years after the Black Death hit this country, it is recorded that in 1403 and 1404

games of 'foteball' were played in both Selmeiston and Chidham (near Chichester), as part of baptisms, and on both occasions, one of the players suffered a broken leg. A very different game today - or maybe not, depending on the team you support?

King Henry IV issued a proclamation in 1410 forbidding the levying of money for 'foteball' and imposing fines of 20 shillings (£1) on Mayors and Bailiffs in towns where misdemeanours such as 'foteball' occurred. It is not known if these fines were imposed on Selmeiston. It is even recorded that Oliver Cromwell played both football and cricket in London in 1617, with more rigorous 'sports' taking place between the Cavaliers and Roundheads!

Another early game played in Selmeiston (along with other East Sussex villages) was stool ball ('cricket in the air'). This game was first recorded as being played in 1450 and gets a mention in 'The Two Noble Kinsmen', a play attributed to John Fletcher and William Shakespeare.

This game was probably at its height in Sussex from 1866 to 1887 when the Selmeiston Harvest Bugs were often matched against other local teams such as the Firle Blues, the Glynde Butterflies, Waldron Bees, and the Chailey Grasshoppers. It was revived during the First World War at the Royal Pavilion Military Hospital for the injured troops, as it was not so strenuous as the proper game of cricket and is still being played somewhere in Sussex today.

Talking about cricket, this has been officially taking place in Selmeiston since 1807 when Lord Gage of Firle generously gifted some land at the southern end of the village for a pitch to be available for the two parishes of Alciston and Selmeiston. This gift may have been influenced by Viscount Gage's forefather, Sir William Gage, who in 1725, challenged Charles Lennox the 2nd Duke of Richmond to captain a game of cricket, one of the first recorded matches.

The outcome is not known, but by 1758 Firle had its own cricket team, (one of the oldest), challenging the other nearby parishes to the Gentleman's Game. Cricket soon attracted large crowds, making it a social occasion where food and drink were served, along with the odd wager on the outcome of a match.

Cricket evolved mainly in the South-East, usually Kent or Sussex, and was played on land where sheep and rabbits had grazed, making a carpet of level green grass. This was ideal, as the ball was at first, 'bowled' along the ground, towards a

'batsman' holding a bat that was curved like a hockey stick, standing in front of two stumps with a crosspiece (there is a reference to a three-legged church stool also being used) having legs called 'stumps'. It was only in 1760 that the pitched delivery was introduced along with the now familiar straight bat. By 1834 Selmeaton had a well-established team, regularly taking part in the West Firle Poor Law Union. (a group of parishes with a workhouse in the area).



In 1905 a rather special match took place on the Selmeaton pitch between 'The Ladies and Gentlemen of East Sussex', immortalised forever in a ballad of the same name, written by Hedley A Bryden. The 240-line poem was a reflection of country life in East Sussex, just nine years before the slaughter and chaos of the First World War.

This particular game was played on St Swithin's Day (15th July 1905), with the ladies playing the game conventionally, whilst the men were only allowed to bowl and catch with their left hand and using a broomstick for a bat. The ladies scored

fifty-six runs, with the men beating them by only four runs!

You can still hear the crack of a leather ball hitting Willow today, with the cry of 'Howzat', resounding on the Selmeaton pitch, with The Selmeaton and Alciston Cricket Team taking on fellow teams in their league.



No doubt when the regular fair took place in the fields behind Fairfield House, many other minor village 'sports' such as tug of war, skittles, egg and spoon races, Aunt Sally, Coconut Shy, wheelbarrow racing, Wellie Wanging, and not forgetting Ferret Legging of course, a great sport (for on-lookers).

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Cycling has always been popular in this area, brought to the fore even more now, as we have the new cycle paths along the A27, which can also be used for race walking or just rambling.



The latest sport to hit Selmeston is Pickleball, introduced to the village by Mike and Margaret Weller, having seen it played whilst on a holiday in Canada, although it was first played on Bainbridge Island, Washington USA, in 1965. Selmeston was one of the first Pickleball clubs in the UK, having both an indoor and outdoor court. Two or four players using a paddle have to hit a hollow plastic 'wiffle' ball over a 34-inch-high net until one side is unable to return the ball or breaks one of the rules.

Our village hall also has the facilities for playing table tennis, and taking part in Pilates, along with Yoga, which can also be experienced at Jijie's Rest with Alpacas looking on quizzically, thanks to James and Carly.

For those of us not wishing to don the Lycra, 'armchair sport' can always be experienced, especially this year, what with the Olympics having taken place in Paris, not forgetting, of course, your daily 10,000 steps, which can still be made up walking to the fridge and back for that celebratory beer!

Simon Muggleton

Bad Internet Behaviours and How To Fix Them - Visiting HTTP sites and checking your bank account on public Wi-Fi.

The "HTTP" prefix you see on the website address usually indicates that your connection is not secure. This means that snoopers could see the data you share with that website.

HTTP websites are therefore very dangerous for online payments and cases when you need to provide personal information. That's why most browsers warn you when you visit such websites.

To stay on the safe side, only browse sites that use an SSL - that's an encrypted connection, indicated by HTTPS before the address.

Like HTTP sites, public wireless networks usually lack proper protection. They leave you open to man-in-the-middle attacks and other nefarious ways for hackers and snoopers to get your information. Anyone could intercept your banking credentials or other sensitive data if you visit insecure sites on such a network.

If you use 'public Wi-Fi' when you are out and about, don't check sensitive information, especially if it's work or money related. Or better still - get a virtual private network (VPN) and keep your communications safe even on public Wi-Fi.

Another bad habit to break next month.

Wasp Spider

I never thought I'd say this, but I've fallen in love with a spider. And coming from a lifelong arachnophobe that's quite a claim. Whereas every other spider species sends me screaming in utter terror, the Wasp Spider has melted my heart. They are gorgeous. I met one on the South Downs last weekend and, hypnotised by her beauty, I spent hours with her; lying in the grass, staring lovingly into her eight eyes.



Wasp Spiders' rotund abdomens are delicately patterned with exotic black, yellow and white stripes. Every Wasp Spider looks subtly different - as if each has been individually hand-painted. Their eight legs wear stripy black and white stockings - the sort favoured by the Wicked Witch of the East.

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This stripy, waspish appearance has given the spider its name and is used as a defence mechanism to ward off predators who equate this colouration with being stung. They're a relatively new resident in England.

The first British Wasp Spider was found near Rye in 1922. Since then, they have slowly spread across Sussex, and you can find them in any areas of grassland. Here inside their long grass lair, they weave their silky circular webs which - like all spider webs - are a masterpiece of arachnoid architecture.

As if proud of her accomplishment the Wasp Spider autographs her web with a unique silken squiggle. The actual purpose of this thick zigzag flourish (the 'stabilimentum') is a mystery; although some believe it reflects UV light, luring in pollinating insects who mistake the web for a flower.

Male Wasp Spiders don't have it easy. Physically they lack any snazzy patterning and, at 5mm, are a third of the size of their hulking female counterparts. And when it comes to spider sex, she dominates the male too. During mating she turns her lover into lunch. So, as the female lies enticingly in her web, the male approaches her with understandable trepidation. It's all about timing. After she slips out of her old exoskeleton and into something more comfortable, her fresh body is temporarily soft - and so are her jaws.

This is her Achilles heel, an opportunity for the male to jump in, do his business and get out before being eaten. This sort of pressure would affect any fellas' performance, but the male Wasp Spider has a trick up his eight sleeves: he can detach his sexual organs, leave them inside the female and scarper.

I always assumed that jettisoning his genitalia allowed the spider to survive, but almost every mating session ends in death for the male. Scientists have found that after this self-imposed castration, the spider's sexual organs keep on fertilising the female and block other males' attempts at mating. The spider sacrifices his own life to save his member and ensure he becomes a father. Wow, what a way to go.

Michael Blencowe

Photo: © Victoria Hume Sussex Wildlife Trust

From the Vicarage

What a nice change it has been to see such happy faces on TV, day after day. I am, of course referring to the Olympic games, not the news reports. Of course there were tears, frustration, falls and disappointments, but, oh, the joy on the faces of those that won. Furthermore, you get a

sense that these competitors know each other well and share each other's highs and lows.

"Oh, I cannot describe the scene in mere words. You really should experience first-hand the incredible pleasure of standing in that cheering crowd, admiring the athletes' courage... their amazing physical conditioning, their unbeatable determination, and their unstoppable passion for victory."

So wrote the poet Lucian of the Ancient Olympics that had begun in 776 BC, words that echo our own reactions when watching any seriously exciting game, whatever the sport.

Emperor Theodosius I banned the games in 393 AD in order to promote Christianity, deeming the games to be pagan. Perhaps that was where Christians were first considered to be 'killjoys'. What a pity: competition, daring and drama are themes that define the human condition, and St Paul uses his observation of sport in his letter to the early church in Corinth, encouraging perseverance and discipline in running toward the goal of a full life in Christ.

God would have us live life to the full, but this joie de vivre seems in short supply nowadays. We need to be honest with ourselves and seek that which makes beneficial use of our time, our talents and our treasures and gives us happiness. God bless you.

Shirley Pearce





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- 09:30 Arlington Songs of Praise
"Remembering Arlington
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- 09:30 Selmeston Holy Communion
- 11:00 Berwick Holy Communion
- 11:00 Wilmington Holy Communion

Sunday 8th September

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

Sunday 15th September

- 09:30 Arlington Harvest Festival
- 09:30 Selmeston Harvest Festival
- 11:00 Berwick Harvest Festival
- 15:00 Wilmington Harvest Festival

Sunday 22nd September

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

Sunday 29th September

- 10:00 Berwick United Benefice Service

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- 5.00 pm each Thursday
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