

# Benenden Magazine

August 2020





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# Editorial



Few things announce the good health of a village with more certainty than a thriving pub at its heart. Sadly, there were times over the past few months when there seemed no certainty at all that ours would last out a crisis that seemed to have no recognisable end in sight.

Luckily we have at the helm of the Bull a couple whose commitment to the cause was merely strengthened by the hardships their business had to endure. Their promise was that four centuries of history wouldn't end on their watch, so they sat tight, rode out the storm and are now welcoming their customers back - relevant protocols fully observed, obviously - for good times that may not be quite as we remember them but are very welcome nonetheless.

The story of their survival - told on page 22 - is hopefully one that reflects a new era of assuredness and contentment in Benenden, following a brief spell of turmoil. No doubt there are too many people for whom the suffering and uncertainty have yet to end, and our hearts go out to them - along with our offers of assistance via the invaluable Benenden Action Team - but with luck we will all soon be enjoying a pint and a sense of close-knit community in the pub the virus couldn't shut.

Certainly the rumblings among the various clubs and institutions that communicate through these pages suggest that normality is on its way back. Let's be sure we all get out there and remind each other what we've been missing.

Peter Thomas, Co-Editor

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# Church Calendar

## St George's Church

Rector: Revd David Commander 240658 [revdavidcommander@gmail.com](mailto:revdavidcommander@gmail.com) (day off: Thursday)

Churchwarden: Tracy Claridge 240454 [maisonsicheluk@tlclaridge.co.uk](mailto:maisonsicheluk@tlclaridge.co.uk)

Churchwarden: David Collard 241944 [julia.collard@btinternet.com](mailto:julia.collard@btinternet.com)

[www.benendenchurch.org](http://www.benendenchurch.org) 850849 [benendenchurch@gmail.com](mailto:benendenchurch@gmail.com)

Please inform the Rector or Churchwardens if you, or anyone else, is ill.

Each 10am service will be recorded, and the video available later in the day on [www.benendenchurch.org](http://www.benendenchurch.org).

Sunday 2 August	8am Communion at St Nicholas, Sandhurst	10am Communion
Sunday 9 August	8am Communion	10am Communion at St Nicholas, Sandhurst
Sunday 16 August	8am Communion at St Nicholas, Sandhurst	10am Communion
Sunday 23 August	8am Communion	10am Communion at St Nicholas, Sandhurst
Sunday 30 August	8am Communion at St Nicholas, Sandhurst	10am Communion

## Mission Church, Sandhurst

Rector: Revd David Commander 240658 [revdavidcommander@gmail.com](mailto:revdavidcommander@gmail.com) (day off: Thursday)

Every Tuesday 10am Communion

## Iden Green Congregational Church

Elder: Tobin Bird 240027 [www.idengreen.org.uk](http://www.idengreen.org.uk)

Sunday Services 10am Morning Worship 5.30pm Evening Worship

## The Roman Catholic Chapel TN17 4EL

Fr Barry Grant 713364 [www.sttheodore-cranbrook.org](http://www.sttheodore-cranbrook.org)

Masses 9am Sundays 7.30pm Holy Days

## From the Parish Registers

Weddings 22 July Beverley Best and Stephen Robins  
25 July Rebecca (Rex) Ghatauray and Edward (Ed) Hancock

Funerals 1 July Keith Freeman Interment  
9 July David Presgrave Funeral Kent and Sussex Crematorium  
10 July Ruth Tolhurst Funeral Kent and Sussex Crematorium



# Rector's Letter



## Joyful July!

Sunday 5 July was a good day - a very good day - in St George's Church. We were finally allowed, by the Government and the Church of England, to consider opening for public worship once again. The churchwardens and I considered it; we did our risk assessments; and we held our first act of public worship for 16 weeks.

What a joyful service it was. There were restrictions (and there continue to be restrictions); things are not 'back to normal', but we were praising God and we were together. The pattern going forward through July and August is an 8am or 10am Communion service at St George's each Sunday (see opposite for details). We will review what happens in September later in the month.

The last main service to be held in St George's, prior to the lockdown starting, was on 15 March. We were fortunate to have our Bishop, The Rt Revd Rose Hudson-Wilkin, the Bishop of Dover, come to preach and preside at that service. Much to my surprise, the week after we came out of lockdown we had our Archbishop, the Most Revd Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, come to preach and preside at St Nicholas Sandhurst.

Both of these services - with our Bishop and with our Archbishop - were joyful events, although I'm afraid we were not able to advertise that the 'ABC' was coming: first because we had very little notice, and second because of the limitation of numbers that we can get into church under COVID-19 restrictions.

Other joyful events on the horizon are that we are able to conduct weddings once more in our churches, though with restrictions: a maximum of 30 people at present; social distancing; and no singing. The same restrictions apply to funeral services taking place in church, and also to private baptism services, but it is a joy to be able to do weddings again, to meet up with couples to prepare them for married life, and to plan their marriage ceremony with them.

Then on 30 August we will welcome our new curate, Ylva, to our two parishes, at the 8am service at St Nicholas and the 10am service at St George's. You can find out a bit about Ylva on page 25. She is now licensed as a lay-worker in our parishes, and we hope that her ordination will go ahead at the end of September. It will be a joy to welcome her properly to the benefice.

As we think about these joyful things, we also remember those who are struggling, or who are grieving, or who are facing prejudices on a daily basis; and that we have a God who loves each of us equally, and calls us to do the same. So be joyful, and considerate, and continue to care for your neighbour. God bless.

Revd David Commander, Rector

# Village Calendar

The Village Calendar may look a little light for the foreseeable future. Coronavirus and the Prime Minister's lockdown of the entire country have rather put a crimp in our social lives and dates have been cancelled left, right and centre. Even the civic amenity vehicle won't be around for a while.

These will be trying weeks for us all as we negotiate a new landscape of self-isolation and social distancing. To that end, David Commander has come up with a list of guiding principles to steer us all through the confusion. We hope they may be a help until normal service is resumed.

## Guiding principles

Our approach to making decisions about specific events, services or issues can be guided by these principles:

**Be calm and trust the advice given by relevant authorities.**

**Protect the vulnerable.** It's not just your health, but the health of others who may be more vulnerable.

**Continue to love our neighbour.** Respect their needs and concerns as much as your own - but safely. If you have a neighbour living alone and isolated they would appreciate a call.

**Be transparent and open with one another, sharing accurate and up to date information.**

**Be creative when making decisions** - "how can we do this differently in these circumstances".

# Parish Council



The parish council is a statutory consultee for planning applications received within the parish and can recommend support or refusal of an application to Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. This is important work because, of course, the parish councillors are local people representing local residents. We can also request that conditions are imposed on permitted applications to ensure, for example, that outdoor lighting is restricted in our dark skies parish. From minor extensions, to Tree Preservation Orders, to external materials, to barn conversions to, well, everything. We look at them all.

We carry out a review of each application and a decision is reached, based upon planning policy, as to how to proceed. Over the last year or so, we have reviewed 83 planning applications; of these 43 were recommended for approval, with 40 granted, leaving one refusal of consent and two applications withdrawn by the applicants; 20 applications were recommended for refusal, 11 of which were refused, eight were approved and one remains undetermined.

Those of you with sharp eyes will have noticed that the numbers don't add up to the total number of applications reviewed. This is because eight applications remain undetermined by TWBC, and 12 where the PC either stated that it had no comment to make, or stated that there was insufficient detail within the application to enable a considered comment.

Planning is not a numbers game, though, and whilst it is pleasing when TWBC agrees with our assessment, it is disappointing when it doesn't. Whether the PC has recommended approval or refusal it is always founded on planning policy, but sometimes it seems that policy is too open to interpretation.

On to other matters, and I've been asked to remind those of you with hedges bordering on pavements to please trim them back so that people can use the paths safely. Thank you. Oh, and please remember to turn off your outside lights at night to give the wildlife their natural environment.

Peta Grant, Parish Councillor

Caroline Levett, Benenden Parish Council Clerk  
01580 240371 [clerk@benendenparishcouncil.org](mailto:clerk@benendenparishcouncil.org)

For more information see our website [www.benendenparishcouncil.org](http://www.benendenparishcouncil.org) or find us on Facebook

Parish Council Meeting  
No meeting in August

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MP for Maidstone  
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# Just a Thought



## Problems on the line

There she lay after a busy but satisfactory day. The house was cleaned, the children fed, bathed and loved. The radio filtered, emails checked. History had been visited through a manor house of a different time. Neighbourly chat exchanged and future fixtures agreed. Tomorrow, will anything much have changed? She has plans.

What of others lying on their beds that night? The nurse at the end of a busy time with her geriatric charges; the factory worker having completed a long but valuable shift; the clubbing teenager now too full of alcohol and something else; the elderly volunteer having done a stint in the charity shop; the office worker after an exhausting commute; the refugee who has been given a bed, but not his own; and the politician who is still going over decisions made. How was their day? Tomorrow, will anything much have changed? They have plans.

“This is an important announcement. There has been a very serious problem on the line and the regular train of life has to terminate at this station. Please will all passengers disembark and wait for instructions to save lives.”

Yes! Things have changed, changed almost beyond imagination. Changed not only for the few, but for everyone. The passengers of the train find themselves confronted by a plethora of signals; some clear, some confusing, some indecipherable, leading to a cloud of emotions and concerns. There is shock, disbelief, fear, disappointments and, as time goes on, missed special occasions, rearrangements, worry over finances, concern over food, irritation, frustration, strained relationships and much more. However there emerge some very uplifting and positive experiences too: kindness, sharing, concern, a chance to discover and to help neighbours. There is the opportunity to give, to read, to explore, to engage in hobbies, to deepen relationships, to make a difference, to appreciate the work of others and to learn.

The nurse had never, ever been so tired in her life, nor so scared. The factory worker sorely missed friends, but found she was quite good at DIY, which was news to her husband. The teenager started stacking shelves in a supermarket and realised he had better work harder for his A-levels or he'd be doing that all his life. The elderly volunteer was put on a ventilator, leaving the family in anxious times. The office worker discovered the treats and trials of working from home. The refugee began helping at a food bank. The politician determined to follow the instruction on an old school report: “Could do better”. The young mother thrown into home schooling realised that she was learning, in one way or another, as much as her children. Plans were in limbo.

Now the train of life is slowly getting underway again - indeed some carriages have been rearranged and re-assembled already; but this train is being diverted on to a different line and will possibly head for a different destination. People will be able to make plans again, though the timetable will probably be about as reliable as the old one.

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## Benenden Village Trust News

Although the Trust's main resources, the play areas, Benenden village hall and St George's, were closed during lockdown, some things have been possible. Holly Clayson and Karen Saunders have been working on repairs and improvements at the village hall; some grounds maintenance has been done at Iden Green and more is planned; we have successfully fireproofed the cellar at St George's Hall and some tree pruning work has been carried out. The best good news in these times is that Jen Gurr, our invaluable hall cleaner, has given birth to a healthy daughter. We wish her whole family well.

We had a wide variety of comments and suggestions in response to the facilities questionnaire and we are grateful to all who took the time and trouble to respond. Thoughts on the village hall and Benenden recreation ground range from approval for maintaining things as they are (albeit with wishes to see the hall and car park smartened up), through to major proposals like all-weather sports surfaces and tennis courts.

Some ideas for new sports facilities lie outside the scope of the Trust - our responsibility is to maintain and provide places where recreational activities can take place. We cannot set up or run clubs: the Tennis Club, the Bowls Club, the St George's Club, the preschool and the Pavilion at Iden Green are all independent organisations who rent facilities from the BVT.

Many of the suggestions tie in with ideas that we have been developing, while others will be helpful in working out the best way ahead. The pandemic has, of course, slowed progress. It also meant that we could not hold our annual general meeting as planned, but the business of the AGM will be conducted through email and the website during August and September. It will include the election of trustees, and volunteers interested in serving in that capacity are urged to put their names forward.

Membership of the BVT is free and open to all in the parish. All details can be found on our website: [benendenvillagetrust.org](http://benendenvillagetrust.org).

David Harmsworth, Chair

## GIBBON & BUCKLAND CHARITY GRANTS FOR STUDENTS AND SCHOOL-LEAVERS

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**Latest date for applications 30 September.**

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## St George's

Thank you to all who have made donations to St George's Church over the past year. Your invaluable support ensures that our church and churchyard are properly maintained for the benefit of all who wish to worship in, or simply visit, the centre of our community.

I am obliged to remind those who have accompanied their donations with a Gift Aid declaration that you must have paid, or expect to pay, at least as much income/capital gains tax each year as can be reclaimed on all your donations to every charity that you have supported during that year.

If you are a higher tax rate donor, please be aware that you will have paid more tax on your donations than can be reclaimed by St George's under Gift Aid. If you record your Gift Aided donations on your annual HMRC tax return you will receive appropriate recompense via your next year's tax code.

If you would like a summary of all your donations made in the financial year 6 April 2019 - 5 April 2020 please let me know.

Please contact me if you have any queries regarding donations to St George's Church and please be assured that all information regarding donations is treated with the utmost confidentiality.

Clive Turner, Planned Giving  
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## Talking Shop

The great news for all our customers is that we have opened the café in Benenden's for takeaways. From 10am to 2pm, Monday to Saturday, you can once again enjoy the best coffee, teas and delicious hot snacks and cakes, in the knowledge that every safety measure has been taken to protect our customers and staff.

We ask that only one customer comes in through the café entrance at a time and preferably pays by card to reduce contact. A table is provided outside the door so that customers can add sugar or sweeteners. A short walk from the shop takes you to the green, where there are benches to sit on and relax, so what are you waiting for? Come and support us.

From all the grateful feedback we have received during the COVID-19 lockdown, it is clear that this wonderful little shop has served the community brilliantly and many selfless volunteers have stepped up to help deliver groceries to people. As restrictions have eased, there has been a reduction in what people are spending in Benenden's, and we ask that you keep buying here so it continues to flourish.

Without the café being fully functional, we are reliant on buoyant sales from the shop, which is now open from 8am to 4pm, Monday to Saturday, and 9am to 12noon on Sunday. Apart from our usual lines, we do have some wonderful locally sourced summer fruits available.

We are also putting out a plea for more volunteers as the shop begins to return to normality. Some of our volunteers are self-isolating at the moment so we are finding that there are gaps in the rota which we need to fill. If you haven't volunteered before and have a spare couple of hours to offer, please do. You will be welcomed with open arms and given training by our friendly team. You'll be benefiting the village and it's a great way to meet lots of friendly, fun people.

Bev Beveridge



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For more information contact Alison Prall  
240417 alisonprall40@gmail.com

## Benenden Action Team news

Can you help? We are currently looking for a dry and secure space where we can store food bank items in Benenden or Iden Green and from where we can make food box deliveries to those in need. If anyone can suggest or offer a small building or storage unit for this, we would be incredibly grateful.

Don't forget, if your job and income has been directly affected by coronavirus and you are struggling financially as a result, then please contact us and we can provide a food box service to help alleviate the pressure.

For regular updates about facilities opening up, local information and links to useful sites that advise on safety, testing and grants etc, please visit the BAT website:

Guy Hagan, BAT co-ordinator

07515 275150 [guy@rawfellconstruction.co.uk](mailto:guy@rawfellconstruction.co.uk)

[www.benendenaction.co.uk](http://www.benendenaction.co.uk)





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## Benenden School news

On the final day of term, we held our traditional Speech Day ceremony in which we celebrate the year's achievements and bid farewell to our Year 13 girls. As with many aspects of Benenden life during the past few months, the event took on an air of unfamiliarity. Broadcasting the event live through Microsoft Teams from a tent in the Science Centre and frantically cutting between pre-recorded videos and members of the senior management team reading prize winners' names live was a unique experience to say the least!

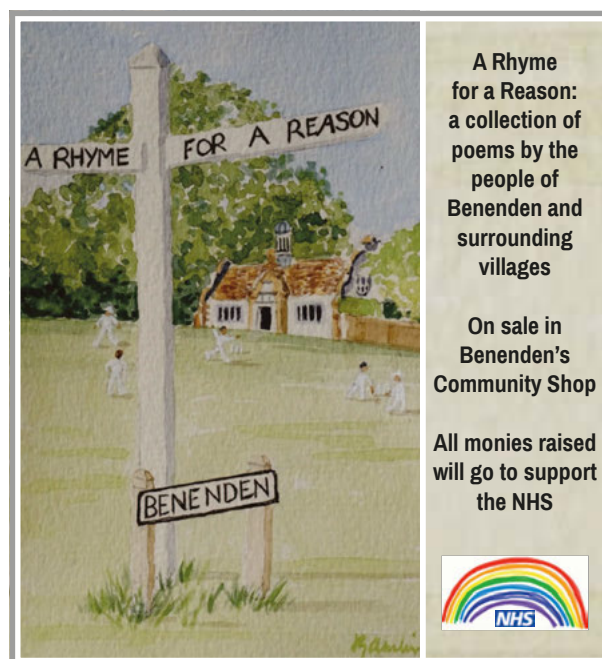
Of course, we have all become used to living our lives differently, and I have been extremely impressed with how well the girls and staff have adjusted to the transition to all lessons being delivered remotely since March. The girls' learning has continued at pace and the GCSE and A Level years have shrugged off the mixed emotions of their exams being cancelled to focus on some incredibly useful courses and new skills as part of the Leap Programme, which included optional enrichment courses such as sign language, archaeology, coding, Excel, first aid, cookery and nannying, to name but a few.

Although the pandemic continues to dominate our lives, it is important for us to remember that there have still been plenty of achievements - and much fun had - during this academic year. Standout highlights include the whole school production of *Sister Act*, the choir's first Christmas CD, the Physics trip to CERN, the 1st team finishing runners-up in the Lacrosse Nationals and seeing the new school hall and music school rising out of the ground.

It is also, I feel, important to recognise that the achievements have continued since the arrival of coronavirus; with girls' presentations, charity endeavours, fitness challenges and some wonderful examples of girls motivating one another with some incredible videos all serving as wonderful reminders of what a resilient and supportive pupil body we are lucky to have at Benenden.

I wish you all a happy and healthy summer as we continue to ease out of lockdown.

Samantha Price, Headmistress



## A Rhyme for a Reason

Over the last few months Shirley Gooseman, aka author Emma Berry, has been collecting poems written by people of all ages in Benenden and surrounding villages about life in lockdown. 'A Rhyme for a Reason' has just been published and is on sale in Benenden's Community Shop for a minimum donation of £5 per book. All monies raised will go to support the NHS.

## Beware vicar scam email

If you receive an email from Revd David Commander, or any member of the clergy, asking you to contact him urgently about something DO NOT reply by email. It seems that the Church of England database may have been hacked and false scam emails are being sent to congregation members. The message asks the recipient to contact the vicar urgently about a "delicate issue" or "urgent matter" but not to telephone. It seems that anyone who replies directly to the email will be asked to hand over cash or vouchers.

Revd David stresses that he would not send such an email and if there was an urgent issue he would telephone not email.



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## Benenden Hospital news

Benenden Hospital is gradually opening again in response to further easing of lockdown. In March, as part of a national agreement to increase clinical capacity, we began our support of the NHS as it dealt with the pandemic. The agreement between NHS England and the Independent Healthcare Providers Network - of which Benenden Hospital is a member - freed up clinical capacity UK-wide; now, as lockdown eases further it's an ideal opportunity for me to update everyone on what we are doing to keep patients, staff and visitors safe.

The hospital is in great shape to welcome everyone back, and while the pressure on the NHS has eased, we continue to give our support, while at the same time allowing self-pay patients and Benenden Health members to return for treatments.

We understand uncertainty remains and continue to follow official guidance, with the measures in place (over and above our already high standards) to protect patients and staff. This includes social distancing requirements being in place, along with anti-bacterial hand sanitising products at key points and, where appropriate, hospital staff wearing personal protective equipment. Patient, staff, and visitor safety is part of providing the time and space to care.

Jane Abbott, Hospital Director and Chief Nurse

## Iden Green and Benenden WI

Although many of our members are living in similar circumstances, lockdown has hit us in many different ways and now we must consider how to return and recover as a group of friends, under the constraints of government guidance.

We have all managed as well as could have been expected during the lockdown and would now like to think about our immediate future (pre-vaccination). We wondered about meeting in the open air, on the village green, or managing the social distancing, sanitising and extra cleaning needed in the Memorial Hall ourselves.

However, as an equal opportunities organisation, we would rather wait until all our members feel able to return in a safe environment. Therefore, we shall wait until restrictions have eased further before making plans for formal gatherings, although, we are all looking forward to our lunch at the Cherry Tree in Ticehurst and hope to use our credit note in March 2021.

Our national federation are acknowledging the disruption lockdown has created by adding a three-month extension to this year's subscription, but at the moment we are still treasuring the time we are allowed to spend with family and friends whilst looking forward to getting together safely as soon as we can.

Meanwhile, please support our efforts to help the country and the NHS by purchasing a copy of 'A Rhyme for a Reason' from Benenden's, our village shop. This is a community production kindly developed and arranged by Shirley Gooseman.

Jackie Liffen 752232 WI@daisystar.co.uk





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Paul Leek



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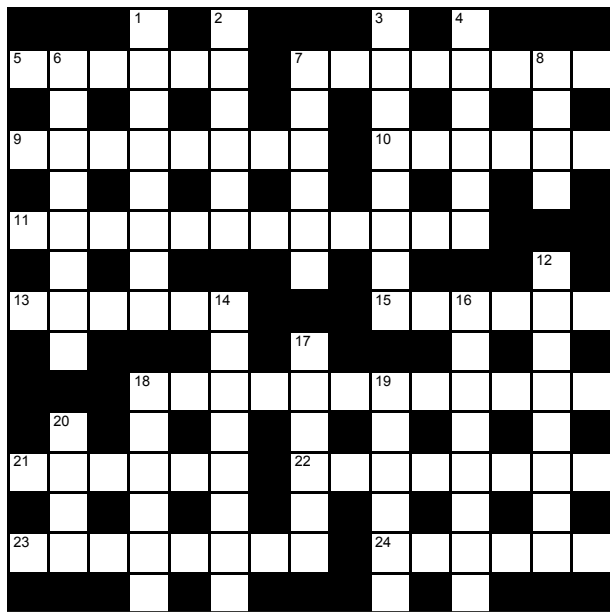
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# MINDBENENDERS By ASCII

## CROSSWORD No22 (Difficult)



### Across

- 5 An auld covered carriage (6)
- 7 Wrap up cannabis or convulvulus? (8)
- 9 Creates music together with a model (8)
- 10 Bankrupt died following awful urine (6)
- 11 Fond memory of being in crime scene (12)
- 13 Narrowly bring something fishy to Cambridgeshire cathedral city (6)
- 15 Cheering cavalryman? (6)
- 18 Inspiring craftman making stained glass? (7,5)
- 21 Sun God and small British bird confused in underground tunnels (6)
- 22 Grimly, I tug five along with me, as I flee (8)
- 23 Works hard to filter sediment (8)
- 24 Ruler goes after lithium with pleasure (6)

### Down

- 1 Residence chosen by unsatisfactory i-pad vote (8)
- 2 Micro-ravaged isle for a healthy breakfast (6)
- 3 People of France lose first of 20; aquire ear, nose and throat and dig in (8)
- 4 Injured whale I attend for a short time (6)
- 6 Unfortunately I axe corn from diet and fall ill (8)
- 7 However it's spelt, it's hard to beet (6)
- 8 Sheep reverses into water jug? (4)
- 12 Sounds like harbour for small nails to keep returns from HMRC (3,5)
- 14 Overwhelming desire to release inner gay (8)
- 16 Roughly, I take his Japanese mushrooms (8)
- 17 Steal from the pharmacy? (6)
- 18 Could be used to tie up horse badly at rail (6)
- 19 Performance with sore leg a little more amusing than it might be? (6)
- 20 Fourth intial scan? Absolutely true! (4)

## SUDOKU

	1				4		6	
3					9	7		
					8		7	1
8								4
	9				6	1		5
	7							6
					5		9	
		9					2	3
6		3	4					

Each column, row and block **must** contain numbers 1 to 9 in any order. Each number can be used only **once** in each column, row or block.

## CODEWORD No22 (Tricky)

15	23	6	7		7	12	26	4	4	20	2	24
7		24		20		26		25		25		20
12	20	26	17	10	23	19		26	5	22	7	2
26		5		2		16		1		16		15
3	26	14	4	20	25	13	16	1	1	17	7	
23				4		4		17		17		26
11	24	10	2	26	15		10	7	2	24	17	4
5		2		6		10		4				23
	2	16	17	7	4	23	22	8	11	16	12	10
7		4		5		5		26		5		20
13	26	21	16	7		12	16	9	18	26	7	2
26		16		4		23		18		22		26
9	2	7	23	4	23	8	7		4	24	5	9

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Z									B		M	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

Each number represents a letter. Break the code and complete the grid. Three letters have been given to help you. Heavy lines denote a new word.

## FOURWORD

1	2	3	4
2			
3			
4			

In the grid, place all of these letters to make the same four words across and down. Four clues are given to help you.

AEEMOOOPPRSSUU

- 1 Church altar in unholy peas
- 2 Tip: shortly, you are after post office
- 3 Add nothing to bout in Japan
- 4 Queen's map loved in Piccadilly Circus?



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## Village Hall news

Benenden Village Hall is now open for business again. It feels like forever since we all had to close our doors and shut ourselves away from each other and the rest of the world, but at last, we've been given the all-clear to start welcoming you all back again.

Unsurprisingly there have had to be a few changes made to the way we operate, in order to keep you all as safe as possible. We are limiting numbers of all bookings, and providing cleaning materials and hand sanitiser to everyone on arrival, as well as increasing our cleaning efforts and allowing 'cushions' of time between bookings to avoid clashes.

Happily, indoor sports have been allowed to return from the end of July, meaning that some of our yoga and dance classes can slowly return, and even some shielding measures have been relaxed, so perhaps a few of our more vulnerable patrons will have to opportunity to reconnect with friends and family.

The hall has had a little bit of a face-lift, with a fresh coat of paint in the main hall (requiring some pretty serious scaffolding), a thorough deep clean, and some new sign-boards. We are planning on continuing with the renovations over the coming months, to help the hall look a little less tired and inject the space with a fresh new energy. You might notice that the old climbing frame has gone from the back wall of the main hall, and although a few of you might feel a pang of sentimentality towards the old thing from primary school days, I expect that most will be glad to see the back of it.

As always, we welcome your feedback and are thrilled to have you back with us again. See you soon.

Holly Clayson 07419 989830  
enquiries@benendenvillagehall.org  
www.benendenvillagehall.org

## Panto 2021 turns into a revue

In the light of the ongoing pandemic, the Benenden Players have decided, sadly and very reluctantly, to cancel our panto that would have taken place in early 2021.

Each year the players and your friends and families put enormous work and effort into weekly rehearsals from September through to the end of January and move mountains to put on a production. However, unless we can sit 180 people a time at each of five shows we cannot afford to hire the hall for rehearsals, produce and hire costumes, and buy materials for props and sets, and we don't want to put the cast, crew and back-stage team (all volunteers) through the effort of auditions and rehearsals with no good prospect of putting on a show. As auditions would be the first weekend in September, we thought it better to replan now, rather than later.

We know it's enjoyed by many in the community (and further afield) so, instead, we hope to be able to stage a revue on the final weekend of January 2021, with as many of you as possible on stage and in the audience (depending on what is possible at the time). We will, of course, be back with the Benenden Panto in 2022, bigger and better, louder and funnier than ever. If you want to take part in the 2021 winter revue, please email me or message us via our Facebook page.

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nancy.tolhurst@btinternet.com

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## Planning Matters

For full details of the Parish Council's comment please see minutes of meetings.

20 July 2020

- 20 01516 FULL Wickets, The Green  
Erection of single storey rear extension.
- 20 00866 FULL 5 Cherryfields Removal of flat roof dormer including walls and cheeks; rebuild to include pitched roof with gable end and the addition of one velux window.
- 20 01407 LBC The Old Barn, Nineveh Lane  
Installation of wood burning stove and flue into the living room, flue to go out through roof.
- 20 01360 TPO Goddards Green Barn, Goddards Green Road Trees: OAK (T1) - Crown raise to a height of 5.5 metres and remove dead wood.
- 20 01466 FULL Moorlands, Woodcock Lane  
Erection of a single garage / storage area.
- 20 01500 LBC Pympe Manor, Pympe Road Listed Building Consent - Change to external materials used for the new addition; Replacement of C20th front door GDI with new oak door to detail; reuse of C20th salvaged door leaf at internal door opposite; Replacement of north door GD2 with new part-glazed door in painted hardwood to detail; reuse of salvaged door leaf within uncovered historic internal door opening; Exposure of medieval west wall of house; Removal of C20th fireplace surround in ground floor G3; Proposed plaster finish

to C20th fireplace in study G13; Levelling of first floor bathroom floor; Additional section of weatherboard over-cladding for the northwest return of C18th range; Additional removable handrail to staircase matching existing details; Change from single to double dormer window at first floor master bathroom F11 (south elevation); Infill section to eastern bay of sliding doors (south elevation new range) to allow doors to open as a pair; Proposed fireplace & chimney at new range omitted.

- 20 01685 FULL Brewers Shaw, New Pond Road Creation of a hard surfaced court for private use, with surrounding fence and associated landscaping.

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FOURWORD  
I APSE, 2 POUR, 3 SUMO, 4 EROS

6	8	3	4	2	9	5	1	7
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3	6	5	1	9	7	8	4	2
7	1	8	2	5	4	3	6	9

SUDUKO

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Z	R	J	S	N	V	E	T	C	B	H	M	P

CROSSWORD No22

Down: 1 Adoptive, 2 Muesli, 3 Entrench, 4 Awhile, 6 Anorexic, 7 Borsch, 8 Ewer, 12 Tax haven, 14 Yearning, 16 Shitake, 17 Piffer, 18 Lariat, 19 Giggle, 20 Fact

Across: 5 Landau, 7 Bindweed, 9 Composer, 10 Ruined, 11 Reminiscence, 13 Finely, 15 Hussar, 18 Leading light, 21 Warren, 22 Fugitive, 23 Strainer, 24 Liking

CROSSWORD No22

MINDBENDERS Answers



# Lockdown Easing



## Breathing new life back into the Bull

How Mark and Lucy have helped our 'local' evolve out of catastrophe

In the middle of all the chaos and confusion this year, there has been little room for certainty. For Mark and Lucy Barron-Reid, as for the rest of us, there have been concerns for family, friends, life and livelihood as the virus has shaken our convictions, but underpinning it all has been one non-negotiable promise. "This pub has been trading since 1608," says Lucy, "and it's not going out on our watch."

It's a statement of intent that is music to the ears of those who love to drink and socialise in Benenden, and for those who simply love Benenden. The Bull sits at the centre of the life

and charm of our village, and there can be few who haven't spared a thought for its guv'nors throughout the COVID-19 crisis.

Shut down by the Government on March 20, with no hint as to when it might re-open, the pub sat unused for some 15 weeks while we feared the worst and Mark and Lucy went through the mincer. The easing of lockdown has meant a tentative return to business, and for those of us sitting in the sunshine enjoying a pint of Harvey's, it may seem as though the good times are back, but the pandemic has left its scars.

"A week before we closed, on the regular five o'clock update, Boris advised everybody to stay away from pubs," recalls Lucy. "The feeling was horrendous. Then on Friday 20 March he said: 'You have to close at midnight tonight but we suggest you close now.'"

"We've both been in this business for a long time and all of a sudden, everything we'd ever done and everything we knew was stopped, and that was that. We knew it had been stopped for a good reason, to stop people losing their lives, but the impact and shock was terrible."

What started as a vague suspicion that cancellations were gathering pace for unprecedented reasons, quickly turned into a full-scale disaster. Beer and food delivered on Friday morning had to be given away on Friday evening; staff were paid for their holidays for the rest of the year and then furloughed; customers walked out of the door not knowing when, or if, they'd be able to return.

"We were in here playing Always Look on the Bright Side of Life and everyone was having one last pint," says Lucy, recalling that night of gallows humour, "but it was devastating. Personally, it took me about seven weeks to recover from it, the fear of





the unknown and the thought that we might have to shut down and never open again.

“The anxiety at four in the morning was horrible, and the worry wasn’t just for us and our family, it was for the whole team and the community that relies on us and the poor souls suffering from this hidden virus.”

The community

might have known it would take more than a global pandemic to knock Mark and Lucy out of their stride for too long. Everything at the Bull was done by the book and there were 15 long weeks with no form of income - they even rejected the idea of selling food and drink from the premises because they didn’t want to compete with the village shop - but eventually the padlocks came off and locals trickled back in to discover a pub that had evolved to suit a changed landscape.

The car park had become an evening suntrap, the underused ‘Green Room’ a cosy lounge. Lucy had spent lockdown honing her instincts for style and design; Mark had been up a ladder, tiling roofs and fixing windows. Secondary glazing was redeployed as health and safety screens; hand sanitiser and signage popped up everywhere; new-fangled ‘QR code’ menus were introduced for customers wary of laminated, wipe-clean cardboard; the green leather armchair in the bar became the best seat in the house; and slowly, we all took the first small steps towards the new normal.

“Everything was last-minute because we didn’t know until a week beforehand when we were going to open or how it was going to work,” explains Lucy, “but we worked very hard, our customers have been very patient and I think what we’ve ended up with is a pub that has a real gentleness to it now.”

“On Sundays we were doing 140 lunches and it got a bit much,” reflects Mark. “Obviously a gentler pub comes at the cost of a third of our turnover and a few staff that we haven’t been able to take back on yet, but we’re doing everything we can to help make sure British pubs as we know them don’t become just a piece of history.

“Unless there’s some kind of real solution to the virus, you’re never going to have people sitting at the bar of their local ever again, but you have to do things by the book and hope Boris is right when he says things will be back to normal by Christmas.”

With second spikes and local lockdowns still a part of the daily vocabulary, there’s no place for complacency, but the signs are good that the Bull is emerging from a potentially catastrophic chapter in its four centuries of history and carving a new future for itself. Lucy has even reached the point where she can identify positives from the past four months.

“Loads of positives,” she insists. “We’ve had a fantastic time with the children, they have been remarkable, we are so proud of them. We’ve had a bit more time to think about what matters and what doesn’t matter, and I hope everybody remembers that. We’ve had time to do a lot of walking, thinking and gardening and to realise all over again that we live in the most beautiful area.

“Most of all, though, we’ve realised we still love the trade and we’re going to keep doing everything we possibly can to make this pub work for Benenden and for all our patrons who rely on the community and company it brings.”

Peter Thomas





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## A first greeting from Benenden's new curate, Ylva Blid-Mackenzie

My dear new parishioners

In these very strange times, I shall have to greet you remotely before we get to see each other IRL (In Real Life), as my youngsters would say. I am coming to you to start my three years of curacy. Officially it will all begin at the start of September, but Rev David and I have already started to meet up to get to know each other, and so it seems a good idea to tell you a little about myself.

What you first need to know, is that I am Swedish, born and brought up in the countryside south of Stockholm, spending a lot of time on my grandparents' farm. I have lived in this country for nearly 25 years and I am married to Liam, who is from Romney Marsh. We have three sons, now strapping young men: Jacob, Edward and Alfred.

I am a landscape architect and this is how I came to meet Liam, who owns Madrona Nursery in Bethersden. I wanted to improve my plant knowledge with a summer internship at the nursery and the rest is history, as they say. I now help to

run the nursery and I design gardens for private clients.

My call to ordination took a long time to come to fruition, but in 2017 I was given the all clear to go for training, which I undertook at St Augustine's College in West Malling, where I have just finished three years of part-time training. It has been a transformative time and I have made many dear friends.

One thing that has not been possible, so far, is of course our ordinations. In any other year I would have been ordained on 27 June in Canterbury Cathedral, and some of you may even have come to witness it, but this has now been postponed until 27 September. Because of this, I come to you as a licensed lay worker to start with, but after my ordination I will be your deacon for a year, then I will be 'priested' and serve you as a priest for two more years.

But what I will really be, is Rev David's apprentice, or his sidekick. To start with I shall just be his

shadow, going wherever he goes. As you and I get to know each other, I will get involved in some of the activities that the church runs, whatever that will look like as we ease out of lockdown.

I shall be with you every Sunday, as well as Tuesdays and Wednesdays and I really look forward to

getting to know you all and finding my place in your communities, worshipping and serving God together.

With every blessing,

Ylva





## Charity that begins at home

How the Gibbon & Buckland Trust is still helping young people in the village

For 410 years this building at the foot of the Green was used as a school room. As it says on the plaque, it was given in 1609 by Edmund Gibbon, together with farm land, to house a schoolmaster and a school room for a handful of boys. There were further gifts from a later Edmund Gibbon and from Thomas Buckland (to provide for a beadle).

The children moved out last year, so the link has been largely broken. However, the Gibbon building is still a parish asset, managed by the trustees of the Gibbon & Buckland Charity. The charity was created in 1878 by the newly formed Charity Commission, which sold off the land and invested the money to enable the board of trustees to run the school.

When the state took on the responsibility for children's education in 1924, a lease was arranged for the schoolmaster to continue to live there and the school room to be used. The charter drawn up with the Charity Commission specifically excluded trustees from using funds on anything that the state was expected to provide; but they could use them to enhance the primary school buildings and some other specific educational purposes.

Since 1973, when a new charter was drawn up, the income has been used in three ways. The tradition has been maintained of presenting each leaver with a Bible; the primary

school has been given periodic grants, most notably £30,000 for the major classroom extension in the 1990s and £40,000 last year to help equip the new school.

However, the most significant regular benefit the charity offers each year is in the form of grants to individual young people in the parish to support education and training after leaving school. In the last 45 years, hundreds of grants have been given and applications have risen from single figures in the 1970s to more than 30 a year now. The Charity's charter allows grants "for any young person under the age of 25 who is resident in, and has been resident in, the Parish of Benenden for not less than three years, either in further education or in other ways getting prepared for working life". Trustees will also give consideration to applications for grants for gap year projects of educational worth.

The interests and talents of Benenden's children are fascinatingly widespread - from acting to veterinary science, beauty therapy to theology, law to footwear design, medicine to game design - and the places and ways in which they pursue their courses range from BTECs to doctorates, throughout the UK and overseas. Trustees have the great privilege of drawing on the gifts of philanthropists long ago to continue to support the development of the young people of the village.

David Harmsworth, Clerk  
Gibbon & Buckland Charity



## GRANTED

Receiving a grant from the trust has enabled me to buy textbooks as well as funding field trips for my politics and criminology degree. The grant also went a long way to supporting my expenses allowing me to attend an extended work placement with an Oxford charity, SAFE, who support children affected by crime. I am happy to say having graduated I am now going to study law in Leeds.

Hannah Ellis



## GRANTED

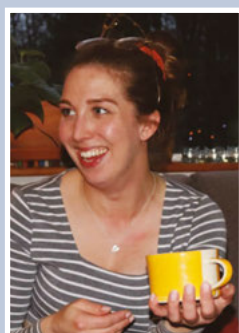
I received a grant each year while I was at university and it made a big difference to me, helping fund my living expenses in Oxford, which I soon found was really expensive compared to Benenden. It allowed me to support myself and use my time to work and focus on my degree. After university I applied and received the grant to help fund my volunteering project in Kenya for the Vanessa Grant Trust, offering educational opportunities to children and young adults. The grant money, along with some extra fundraising, allowed me to make a considerable difference to the children's lives in the three months I spent there. Thank you so much for making it all possible, I am extremely grateful.

Aisling Clube

## GRANTED

The trust money was always just the right amount of support when I needed it. It went towards my rent and bills when I was studying politics at Exeter University. Having that little bit of extra help as a student makes such a difference.

Kate Clark



## LIST OF COURSES IN PAST SEVEN YEARS

Acting Foundation Diploma	Internship in Merchandising
A Levels - volcanoes	IT/Finance
ALS, English, Sociology, Media	Japanese & driving lessons
Architecture	Law
Auto Engineering	Level 2 Cycle Maintenance
Automotive Engineering (PhD)	Level 2 IT
BA Business	Level 2 Motorsport
BA Business & Management	Level 2 Vehicle Fitting
Beauty Therapy NVQ2	Level 3 Vehicle Technology
BSc Agriculture with animal science	M Phil (Philosophy of Religion)
BSc Biomedical Sciences	M Architecture
BSc Psychology	Marine & Natural History
BSc Sports Coaching	Photography
BSc Sports Therapy	Masters of Research in Health
Business Economics	Mechanical Engineering
Business Management	Media & Communications
Ceramics BA	Medicine
Childcare Level 2	Mental Health Nursing
Childcare Level 3	MSc Sport Management
Cinema & Photography	MSt History of Art
Criminology Masters	MSt in Interdisciplinary Women's Studies
Design and Technology Management	Music (Composition) MA
Dip Light Vehicle Maintenance	Nutrition & Dietetics
Discrete Maths	PGCE Teacher Training
Economics	Philosophy
Economics, Politics & International Relations	Physics (MSc)
Environmental Conservation	Physics & Philosophy
Environmental Science	Politics & International Relations
Fashion Buying with Design	Politics & Criminology
Film & Interior Design	Print Journalism
Film Studies with Creative Writing	Property Agency & Marketing
FND Engineering Software	Psychoanalytic Studies BA
Footwear Design BA	Psychology
Freelance musician	Secretarial GAP
Game Cultures	Skills package
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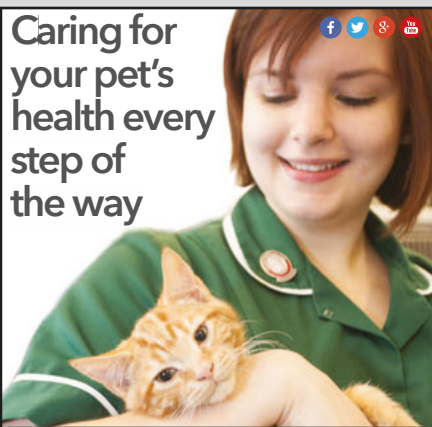


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# Spotlight

## Fern Hockney: Benenden girl on the beat

Fern Hockney is a familiar face around the village. If you visited the Bull (before lockdown) you would have seen her and her welcoming smile behind the bar, or you may have seen her walking her enthusiastic dog Stanley, or taking part in several Benenden Players' pantomimes. But a new chapter is now starting for Fern as she heads for London and a career in the police force.

Fern is a Benenden girl through and through. She went to the primary school and later Cranbrook School, before completing a degree in history and philosophy, followed by a masters in criminology, at Cardiff University. "My advice to anyone choosing

a degree is to pick a subject that inspires you and to get involved with clubs and sports outside the lecture hall," she says. "Don't think about future career paths until you near the end as you will change so much over the time you are there."

After university, Fern returned to the village to live at home and work at the Bull while she planned her next step. "I've long

wanted to join the police force and be involved specifically in community-based initiatives, but I really didn't expect it would take me three years to be accepted onto the Police Now National Graduate Leadership Programme! The programme is aimed at graduates and extremely

competitive. You can only apply once a year and 60% of applicants are turned down but I was very determined and on my fourth attempt was finally successful. It was so demoralising, but I picked myself up each time and applied again. My advice to others in the same situation is: if you want it badly enough, keep on trying."

Fern admits that she will find it hard to leave the village that she loves so much. "My childhood here was great, making camps and playing in the woods, and today I love the fact that I can walk through the village and know so many people of all ages. During lockdown I've recognised more than ever how lucky I am to live here, and I will really miss it, but I plan to be back at weekends. In retrospect, I'm glad that I had a breather here to review all my options after university. I've loved working with Mark and Lucy at the Bull for the last three years and having a laugh with the regulars (you know who you are)."

Fern started her intensive training with the Metropolitan Police in mid-July and is now based in Brixton. Her new housemates comprise a lawyer, banker, musician, record producer, charity worker and a burlesque dancer and, of course, Stanley. "It will be a big contrast - but I'm ready for it now."

If you are in London in September, then keep an eye out for Fern who will be on the beat by then (in uniform but without Stanley!)

Ruth Clark







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## Buying wisely at Benenden's

Tracy Claridge on the maths of bringing good wine to your local shop

Here are the figures a British wine drinker should be looking at before buying a bottle. UK duty rates: £2.23 per 75cl ex vat; £2.68 per 75cl inc vat. When you buy a bottle of wine at £4, you are in effect paying for 65p of actual wine, once you've factored in the transport cost and the profit margins of the distributor and the retailer. Only above £6.70 will you be paying less on tax than on all the other elements involved in bringing that wine into your home.

Theoretically the more you pay, the better the wine should be, but we all have our own taste profile. What we try and do in the shop is provide the best wines at the best price possible, very rarely dipping below £6 and rarely going above £20. We do not stock Champagne, preferring to support the English sparkling wine industry.

Shop space permits a selection of about 85 wines and there is good value to be had all across the entire range. COVID-19 has temporarily shut down many on-trade wine importers and there are deals to be struck, as many of these importers are cutting their margins to turn stock into hard cash. From South Africa, Bellingham Estate 2017 Sauvignon Blanc at £6 is a real bargain, as is the Domaine de Cassagnau 2017 red blend of Merlot/ Syrah/ Grenache from Limoux at £6.75. These wines will not always be available, so apologies if you find your favourite is no longer on the shelves.

Domaine de Pellehaut Cotes de Gascogne red, white and rose make a great trio at £7.95, with the last-named being by far our most popular rose: an off-dry fruit bomb of strawberries and cream. The Pellehaut white, which has just moved to the 2019 vintage,



is a blend of six grape varieties: crisp, fresh, aromatic with a hint of residual sugar. *Delicieux!*

For non-Sauvignon drinkers, try the aromatic Versant Viognier 2018 from Foncalieu at £8.65 or/and the Italian Fiano 2017 Carlomagno at £10.75. At the top end, back to Sancerre (Sauvignon Blanc) 2018 from Dezat at £19.95, which is perfect with blue and goat's cheese and seafood salads.

For top quality Argentinian wines, try the offerings of our dear friend Patricio Gouguenheim, star of a couple of the regular tasting evenings in the village (watch this space for an announcement about the next one). Prices range from £11.20 for the fruity Torrontes to £16.25 for the complex Blue Melosa Malbec. The Long Country 2019 Merlot and Sauvignon Blanc from Chile are easy drinkers at £6.75.

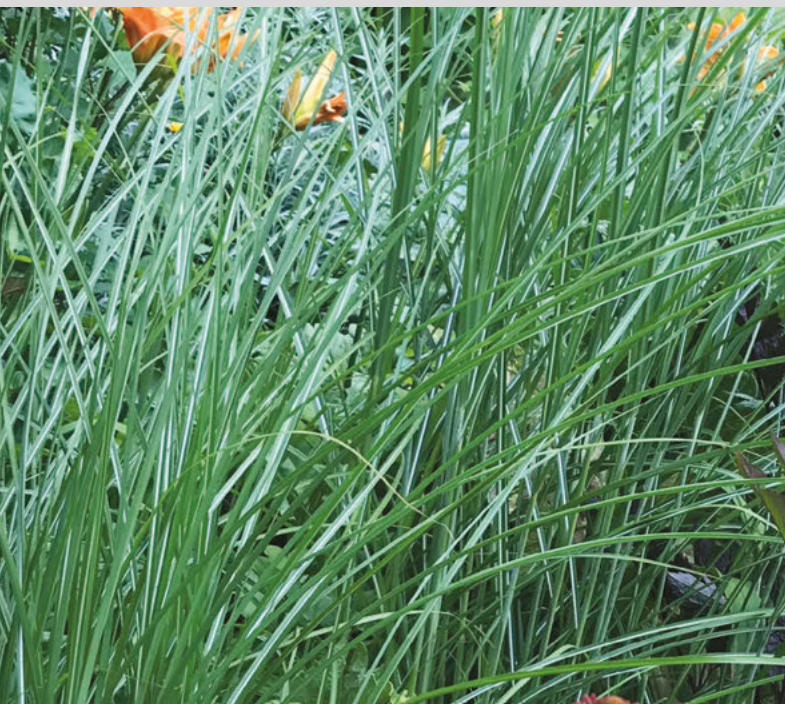
There is a great choice in Benenden's, so thank you for supporting the shop in these difficult/strange times. Please shop local, use it or lose it, it is as simple as that.

In September, every Saturday between 10am and 2pm, there will be a promotion of Bordeaux wines, as well as other wines to taste, hosted by myself and Peter Thomas. *Sante.*

Tracy Claridge



# In Your Garden



## Ornamental grasses and their restful graces

It is at around this time of year that any ornamental grasses in our mixed borders really start to deliver. They are masters at form and structure and partner brilliantly with mid to late summer flowering perennials and even look good just in a large swathe of their own. I have even made a hedge out of them (more on that later).

What struck me to write about them this month, as one could write about grasses from anytime now until midwinter, was that a client of mine bought some very striking tall daisies from the excellent plant nursery at Great Dixter (*Heliopsis helianthoides* var. *scabra* 'Summer Nights' to be precise) and we plonked them in a few weeks ago in the middle of a border we have been fine tuning since the summer of 2018.

The border is a work in progress and this week it was all looking a complete picture, with the *heliopsis* taking centre stage. It would need another year or two to bulk up but I was beginning to think the client had trumped me and I would shortly be out of a job (lesson learned: do not impart all your planting knowledge!) but as I studied the photograph I had taken I realised that in fact what really made it was the large *miscanthus* right beside

the *heliopsis*. Without this tall, swaying grass, looking very green and graceful, the border would have been a jumble of flowers and heights - put in a tall grass and it all knits together. Thank goodness, thought I, my job was safe after all.

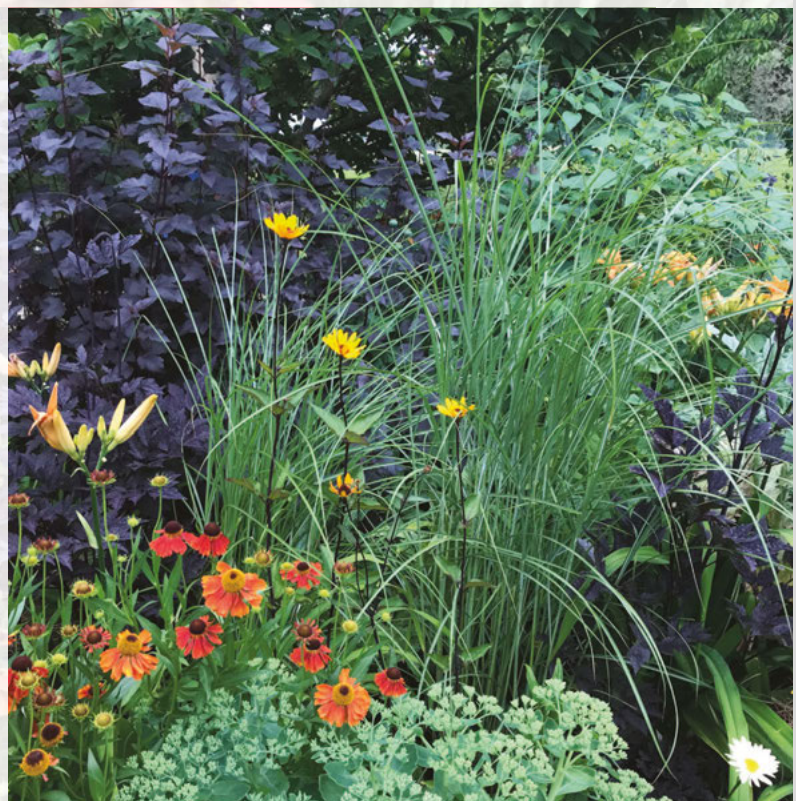
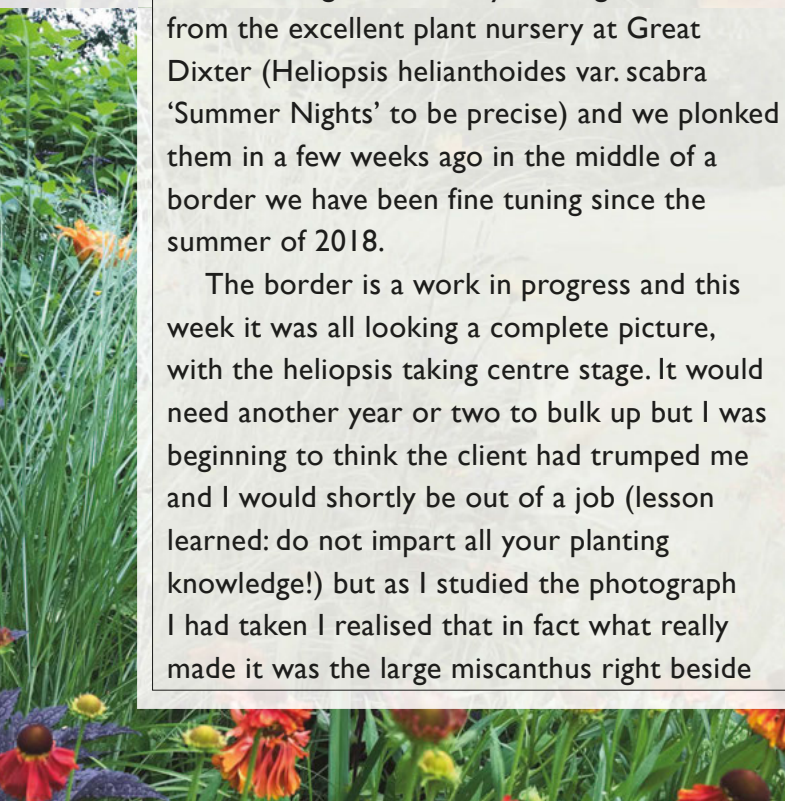
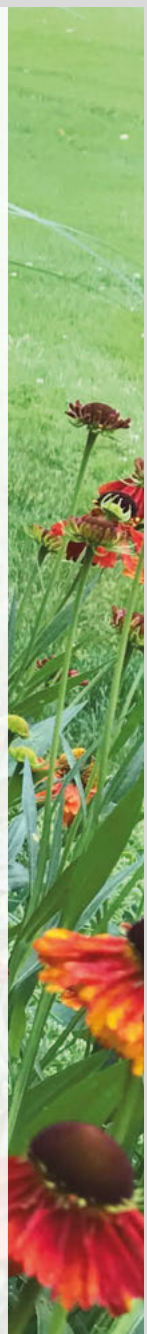
This particular *miscanthus* is a variety called 'Kleine Fontane'. It grows to six feet plus each season, with the flowers adding another foot or so, and it's quite statuesque without being a giant. It also makes a great hedge - in the same garden we planted a long row all the way along a rather scruffy fence which was marking out the boundary beside the swimming pool. It works a treat and I thoroughly recommend using grasses in this way, particularly when you cannot plant a proper hedge.

Of course, grasses come in all shapes and sizes. Some of the loveliest are also the smallest, such as *Hakonechloa macra*, *Sesleria autumnalis*, *Carex testacea*, but a tall grass, like the *miscanthus* genus, the *panicums* or the *molinias* are a wonderful sight for almost every month apart from February (when they are cut to the ground) and March (when they have yet to put on any growth). Definitely one for the notebook.

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Above: Adjusting to the present and staying hopeful for the future: church bells can ring; the café can serve; nails can be painted; Year 6 say farewell to the Primary School; the Archbishop of Canterbury visits St Nicholas, Sandhurst; the natural world continues to cheer us on

Front cover: Damselflies maintaining social distance. Photograph: Amelia Thomas