

A close-up photograph of a field of flowers. The foreground is filled with numerous purple, bell-shaped flowers with white speckles, hanging from green stems. Interspersed among them are several plain white bell-shaped flowers. The background is a soft-focus field of similar flowers, creating a sense of depth. The overall scene is vibrant and natural.

BERWICK SELMESTON ALCISTON

VILLAGE NEWS

APRIL 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 Jane Anderson 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:

Jane Anderson at Old Postman's Cottage, Alciston Tel: 01323 870075.

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

Laurie Tinsley, Wynsford, Berwick Tel: 01323 870895.

Donations

Financial donations to the Parish News are gratefully received.

Cheques payable to "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 Peter Blee Rector of Berwick and Vicar of Selmeston with Alciston

The Parsonage, Berwick, Polegate, BN26 6SR

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

Revd Shirley Pearce Assistant Priest

The Vicarage, Wilmington, Polegate, BN26 5SL

Tel: 01323 318231 Email: revshirleym@gmail.com

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

Churchwardens

Alciston - Michèle Boys Tel: 01323 870623

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

Selmeston - Jan Matthews Tel: 01323 811380

Benefice Administrator

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

◇ VILLAGE CONTACTS

Parish Council Clerks

Alciston - Sandy Thomas Email: alcistonparishmeeting@gmail.com

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

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

Village Hall / Field Hire

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

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

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

Thank You

Once again, at the start of a new financial year, the Village News team would like to say thank you to all who have contributed to the magazine over the last year.

So, whether that has been by way of news, articles, recipes and photos, etc, by helping with the magazine distribution or financial donations, all are very much appreciated. This, of course, includes those individuals and companies who pay to advertise - all of which allow us to continue to distribute the magazine free of charge to the villages' residents. (Details of current advertising costs are included at the end of the magazine.)

So, in an age where 'digital content' is so freely available, please continue to send in contributions so that those who prefer to read a hard copy document, or perhaps don't have access to a computer or internet, can still have a link to our village activities. Details of how to contribute to the magazine are given inside the front cover. Incidentally, an e-version of the magazine is also produced, so if you, or someone you know, would like to receive this, please get in touch.

The magazine can also be requested by post if you don't mind covering the cost of postage.

*Thanks again from the Village News Team
(Jane Anderson, Brian Calcott
and Martin Chilvers)*

Arlington's Village Market and Coffee Morning

*10.00 am - Noon, Tuesday 9th April at
Arlington Village Hall.*

All are very welcome; we will be pleased to see you. There will be fresh bread, cakes, quiches, local eggs and other regular stalls. Arlington's Pop-Up Museum will also be taking place at the same time.

Thank you to the many people, local and from further afield, who support this community event. We hope you will continue to do so. Please bring your friends, and if you have not been before you will be very welcome. The March Market was again very busy, and the hall was full of visitors.

For further market information please contact Anne Hope:

Tel. 01323 486219 / 07760 424169, Email anntonhyhope@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 Open Meeting

*7.30 pm Wednesday 10th April
at Firle Village Hall*

At our March meeting we had a talk on 'Taking good photos with your iPhone' from Mairi Thomas. She explained about using a 'grid' system so that the subject matter is correctly positioned. We also learnt what our phones can do including automatic focus, slow motion and time lapse, as well as using diagonal lines to enhance your photos. We saw a good many photographs that Mairi had taken, and she explained why they were pleasing to look at and how the subject should be positioned left of the picture. Our mobile phones can take incredible photos - it's just a question of learning all the different settings!

Next month we have a talk by Ian Everest on 'The Ouse Valley - Past Life and Times'. This will be an open meeting, so anyone is welcome to join us that evening. There will be a raffle and refreshments. Do come and join us if you would like to.

*Cover photo: Fritillaries -taken by Jane Corkran's daughter Claire
in Joanna Lumsden's garden (Elm House, Berwick Village)*

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Rosemary Norris
President Tel: 07784 707016

Fancy a Game of Bingo?

7.00pm Friday 12th April
at Firle Village Hall

Firle and Beddingham WI are hosting an evening of Bingo in Firle Village Hall and refreshments of tea/coffee/cake will be provided. Bingo cards will be for sale on the evening.

Rosemary Norris

The Baroque Collective Singers: A Spring Garland

3.00 pm Sunday 21st April
at Berwick Church:

A delightful selection of Spring and nature-themed music spanning five hundred years. To include Janequin, English madrigals, Handel, Britten and Finzi. The Baroque Collective Singers with Nicholas Houghton, organ; Andrew Robinson, baritone and John Hancorn, conductor.

Tickets cost £15 (under 16s free) at www.thebaroquecollective.org.uk, or on the door.

Jane Grutchfield
Benefice Administrator

Selmeston and Alciston Village HUB

11.00-12.30 Monday 22nd April
at A&S Village Hall

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

Church Mission Society: Presence in the Sanctuary

10.00 am-4.00 pm Saturday 27th April
in Berwick Church

With Jesus - With each other - To the edges. A day of prayer, reflection on the gospels and engagement with the arts in beautiful rural Sussex.

To book your place visit:

www.presenceinthesanctuary.eventbrite.co.uk.

Tickets cost £10.

Catherine Marsh-Lewis
Berwick Church Outreach Officer
outreach@berwickchurch.org.uk

May Activities at S&A Village Hall

On Thursday 2nd May, the hall opens its doors for local government elections.

May also sees the return of the Cricket Season with home games on Saturdays the 11th and 25th. The Selmeston and Alciston village notice boards have details of more 2024 dates.

Rachel Lewis

A Date For Your Diary

The Alciston and Selmeston Summer Event is due to take place on Sunday 9th June. More information to follow shortly.

Rachel Lewis

Happy Spring from Your Fabulous Flower Show Committee

Sunday 18th August at A&S Village Hall

As the days get longer and warmer, we turn our attention to our gardens. What

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better time to think about your entries into this year's Alciston and Selmeaton flower show on Sunday 18th August?

Planting new flowers and vegetables is very exciting, and we will be giving you some tips on what to do in the garden as the year progresses to make sure you have some excellent entries for this year's show. More on that in a minute.

Firstly, we want to make sure that those of you not so keen on gardening also mark the day in your diary. Even if you are not green-fingered, there are plenty of classes that you can enter.

From cake baking to photography, from homemade pickles to handicrafts, there is a class for all. And not forgetting the youngest members of our community: we have fun competitions for all ages from under 3s to 9-12s.

We are particularly excited about two new classes this year. There is a freestyle 'have a go' flower arrangement category for those of you who love flowers but don't feel you're an expert arranger; you never know, you might be a natural!



Pictures from last year's show.

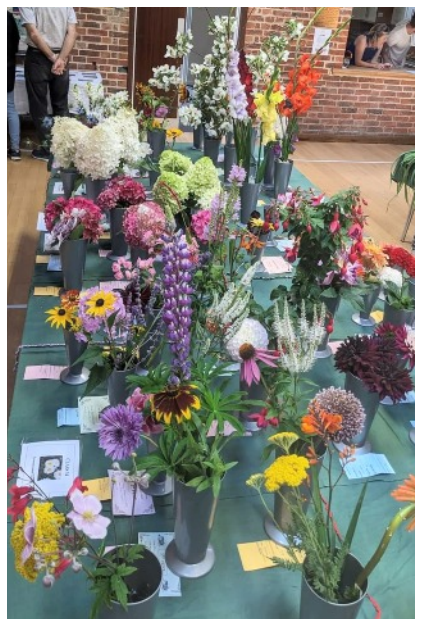
Secondly there is the 'My favourite local hero' writing class to enter for both adults and children - put your thinking caps on...

Also this year, there is a new cup donated by our flower arrangement judge Pat Hayes. It is for the most interesting flower arrangement overall - thanks Pat!

So back to you keen gardeners - here are some things you can be thinking about in April:

1. It's time to sow indoor pots of veg such as beans, marrows and courgettes. Hopefully, you picked up some interesting seeds at our seed swap in March!
All you need is a sunny window ledge, and you'll have some great veg for the summer.
2. Sow outdoor veg such as beetroot and carrots.
3. Plant Sweet Peas and Sunflowers.

Even if you don't enter any classes, it's a fun packed afternoon socialising with



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your wonderful neighbours from Alciston and Selmeston.

Please put the A&S Flower Show on 18th August in your diary and start thinking about your entries!

Neil Creaton

April's Gardener's Diary

Now the clocks have changed and hopefully the weather's getting warmer, we can start sowing some seeds. Carrots, Beetroot, Peas, Turnips, Radish and Leeks can go in, but only if the soil is workable.

First early potatoes should be planted by now and second earlies 'chitting', ready for the middle of the month. Main crop can be planted at the end of the month.

Get your Onion sets in, when the soil is dry and if not already in, plant your shallots.

If you have Broad Beans in pots, plant them out when they start to flower, pinching out the tops to help stop blackfly.

If you have an area which is too wet to work with, cover it with black sheets and it will keep the weeds from growing, until it dries out.

A little tip for lawns with lots of moss is to get some sulphate of iron and spread over the lawn. This will kill the moss and strengthen the grasses.

Lisa Collington

Audio-Visual System Project

The A&S Village Hall Committee is continuing to work on a project to raise funds to install a complete audio-visual system at the hall, with HD projector, screen, sound system and outside PA.

This will mean we can provide facilities for film evenings and exciting presentation opportunities alongside offering a more up to date event space for the wide range of groups who use the hall.

We are very grateful for your ongoing support in joining us at our Village Hall events and, as a portion of profits we make will go towards our new AV fund, we especially welcome you to keep coming! You can watch the progress with our fabulous fund-raising barometer next time you visit.



We'd love to know your thoughts about the Village Hall and the events that we run. If you have a spare couple of minutes, please complete this brief survey:

bit.ly/ASHallSurvey or scan this QR code: (Hard copies of the survey are also available at the hall, or from the members of the committee.)

A&S Village Hall Committee

Baby Loss Certificate

Losing a baby at any time is tragic. But for parents who lose a baby before 24 weeks gestation, up until now, it has been impossible to formally recognise their baby. In my role as Minister for Women's Health I recently announced the government scheme to allow parents to record and receive a certificate to provide recognition of the loss of their baby before 24 weeks gestation.

This is part of the wider work we are doing around baby loss by firstly reducing the number of still births and neo-natal deaths but also ensuring bereaved parents feel supported through their grief and recognise their loss, acknowledging their pain and ensuring they feel heard.? The new baby loss certificates will not be compulsory - it remains the choice of all parents to manage the difficult time of a loss, however they see fit.

The new baby loss certificate is available for either or both parents to register the

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name and date of their baby's death and after registering this on the Government website a certificate will be sent to parents in roughly 14 days' time. It is just available in England and to start with will go back to 2018 with the intention of opening this up to all parents shortly.

Other measures as part of the baby loss review include, ending the three miscarriage rule where women had to have three miscarriages before they were entitled to medical help and now they will be assessed after a first miscarriage, ensuring that every maternity unit has a bereavement suite and access to a bereavement midwife and rolling out Early Pregnancy Units in trusts so that women having problems with a pregnancy can attend these rather than A&Es.

While nothing can take away the pain of losing a baby, the way we support parents can make a difference to how they cope. Anyone who wants to register for a baby loss certificate please follow the link below.

More information can be found at www.gov.uk/request-baby-loss-certificate

Maria Caulfield MP

Family Support Work (FSW)

Time is really flying by this year, and we remain at full capacity as more and more families are referred to us weekly. It is concerning just how many are coming to us already at a total crisis, having been let down by other services, so there is a real pressure on our practitioners to provide as much support as possible.

Despite the challenges we are seeing some real progress with our families, as they begin to improve their housing, financial and confidence issues. Sadly, it is still extremely hard to get appropriate support for the many families whose children have additional educational needs, but we are not giving up and

continue to press other agencies for the right help. One parent recently wrote to her practitioner to say:

"Without your commitment, understanding and sometimes firm words when needed, we honestly do not know where we would be. All three of the children have got their autism diagnoses and even though this is a little depressing for us, it was answers and being believed – something that was never in doubt."

Our family activity events are now in full swing – the Easter holidays included our first trip of the year to Arundel Castle cricket foundation and a farm trip in Midhurst where children could bottle feed lambs and take ponies for walks. Our first Dalesdown residential weekend of the year will take place in the middle of April, which we know will be another fantastic opportunity for some of our families.

I'm delighted to let you know about our new fundraising event for this year – the Cuckmere Pilgrim Path sponsored walk. Replacing our longstanding Easter Monday walk, this event will take place in the May half term holidays and allows participants to take in the seven historic churches in the Cuckmere valley as well as the fantastic scenery. We hope to see lots of you there.

February's work in numbers

- ◆ 245 individual visits and 1105 calls with families supporting 257 adults and 209 children
- ◆ 34 supported meetings with other agencies
- ◆ 50 group sessions held supporting 1010 parents and 436 children
- ◆ 123 food deliveries made

Prayer points

- ◆ Pray that our practitioners will not be overwhelmed by the scale of the problems facing their families.

Chloe Burrell

BSc (Hons), MCSP,
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- ◆ Give thanks for the new intake of volunteer student counsellors who provide such a valuable service to our families.
- ◆ Pray for a safe landing for all participants in the FSW Skydive.

Nikki Kerr, FSW Director of Fundraising and Marketing

Recipe of the Month: Rhubarb Fool

(Serves 3)

Ingredients

700 g rhubarb
75 g caster sugar
One heaped teaspoon of grated fresh ginger (if desired)
200 ml Greek yoghurt

Method

Cut the rhubarb into chunks and place in a shallow baking dish with the caster sugar and ginger (if used) In a preheated

oven - gas mark 4, 350°F, 180°C, 160° C fan - for 30 to 40 minutes.

Allow to cool and then puree in a food processor together with the yoghurt. Place in a dish or individual dishes.

We would welcome your favourite recipes for future issues.

Valerie Shaw

Just What Happens to your General Waste, Recycling and Garden Waste?

Rosemary Norris recently attended talk in Lewes and heard details about what happens to our rubbish. The main speaker was Neil Peters who is the Lewes District Council Manager for Waste and Recycling. She writes...

Neil Peters explained that each waste vehicle visits around 1400 properties a day. All black bag rubbish is taken to the Energy Recovery Facility (ERF)



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incinerator at Newhaven where it is burnt to produce steam to drive turbines to produce electricity that is then sold to the National Grid.

The recycling which is collected fortnightly is taken to a 'transfer station' which is at Lights Yard near Lewes, where it scanned and, if there is too much contamination, it is rejected and sent to the ERF. Lewes has a low contamination rate, so a large amount of the bottles/cans/cardboard does go on for recycling at Crayford in East London (just north-west of Dartford). There they have a pre-sort chamber which separates the various metals, glass, cardboard, etc - I was surprised to learn that much is done by hand with operators standing either side of a conveyor belt and picking out what is not suitable.

All recycling should be clean (wash out jars of pickle etc/ketchup bottles) as it

cannot go onto the next section if it is contaminated. Once the plastic bottles/cans/aluminium cans/cardboard, etc, have been sorted, then they are compressed into a large 'bale' and sold on the open market for processing.

Neil said that we must never put batteries in the rubbish as they cause fires - anything like an electric toothbrush/ razor/kitchen gadget that has a battery inside. These **MUST** be taken to a household waste site. Alternatively, most larger retailers voluntarily offer a take-back service, and stores also have a bin where you can recycle batteries.

Batteries contain Lithium and other metals which can be reclaimed as there is only a finite amount of some of these metals in the world.

(Another article next month about garden waste/food waste.)

Rosemary Norris

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The South Downs

I love heading out at the weekends for a hike over the Downs - but 90 million years ago, this part of the planet wouldn't have been a safe place to be. I'd have been busy avoiding the teeth of hungry aquatic predators like the 10-metre-long Mosasaurs as I cruised through a shallow sea.

But it would be much smaller, less fearsome prehistoric organisms that would shape Sussex. The calcium shells from microscopic marine algae slumped to the sea floor and millions of years of pressure and erosion moulded them into the curvaceous chalk hills that form the familiar foundations of the South Downs. It only feels like yesterday (well, about 6,500 years ago) that we humans showed up and got to work. The wild Sussex woods were chopped down and eventually sheep grazing became the dominant activity on the cleared hills for many centuries. The sheep-nibbled short downland turf is an internationally rare habitat, rich in flowers and the creatures that depend on them.



And, as chalk downland is such a rare habitat, the species that live here are also uncommon. Our butterflies are a prime example. Species like the Grayling, Silver-spotted Skipper, Small Blue,

Adonis Blue (above) and Chalk Hill Blue are restricted to this special habitat.

But it's not just wildlife that benefits. Those porous chalk hills filter, store, and provide us with most of our water. They also offer loads of other free services from flood prevention to pollination and food production.

The open countryside around Sussex also offers us immeasurable physical, mental and spiritual benefits. The South Downs were designated a National Park in 2011.

While writing this article, I discovered a letter penned in 1915 by the Lewes naturalist, W. E. Nicholson, expressing concern for the future of the South Downs around Lewes, and especially the rare Adonis Blue butterfly and scarce Forester Moth that live there. I'd like to think that Mr Nicholson would be reassured to know that, more than a century later, his beloved Lewes Downs, butterflies and moths are still just where he left them and all flourishing under the care of Sussex Wildlife Trust on their reserves at Malling Down and Southerham.

Michael Blencowe

*Adonis Blue photo ©Paul Marten
Sussex Wildlife Trust*

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From the Parsonage



Behind Selmeston church is a lane that turns into a footpath running to the back of Posturite at Berwick Station. It follows a ridge of Greensand that was formed around 115 million years ago. At Selmeston when sand was being excavated in the 1930's, possibly for local brickworks, Mesolithic items from 10,000 to 4,000 B.C. were found.

There are areas beside the lane, now largely overgrown, where the sand is loose and very fine. Children from the village used to play in these natural sandpits. Now some of this sand has been collected, washed, and placed in a bowl at the back of Selmeston church. It is there for those visiting the church to make patterns in it using the mini-tools provided. A simple contemplative and creative activity, a little like a miniature Zen Garden. The patterns, like handwriting, will be uniquely theirs.

As the sand is all one colour, the images or patterns created are only made visible by light casting shadows across its

surface. Because of this the bowl can be rotated to see how the image changes as the light falls from different directions on it.

The sand images created are like miniature landscapes whose features are seen differently according to the angle of light and time of year. Similarly, the curves, sunken paths and ancient mounds on the Downs are seen most clearly with the low slanting sun from Autumn to Spring. Light is everything when it comes to perception, and the same can be said of the spiritual dimension of life.

The bowl of sand offers a small act of creativity and the chance to reflect. Its fluidity is an expression of the flux of life. It is a symbol that the world, however permanent some things may seem, is always changing. Also, that each life flows only briefly through this world. (A sand hourglass was a popular symbol of mortality on gravestones in the 18th century.)

As images are created and then wiped clean in this bowl, so life comes and goes, but we're able to think of, and therefore place ourselves in relation to, what is unchanging and eternal, and contemplate the Eternal Home of which the church is an earthly model.

This is how people first began to think of God and their desire to share in the eternal. Christ came to fulfil that yearning and allow humanity to enter into the presence of the eternal God.

Selmeston church, like all churches, are places dedicated to this faith, where people reach out to what is true and lasting in a fragile world of flux and uncertainty and confusion. Here they have their sense of the dignity renewed and learn what is the right thing to do; how they will make their own personal mark on the world.

Peter Blee



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Sunday 7th April

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

Sunday 14th April

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

Sunday 21st April

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

Sunday 28th April

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

Prayer

9.30 am each Wednesday at Berwick church.
(On the first Wednesday of the month there is Holy Communion (BCP) instead.)
5.00 pm each Thursday at Wilmington church.

To receive a weekly notification about services (the Sunday Link) please email the Benefice Administrator at benefice.administrator@berwickchurch.org.uk

Pastoral Prayer or Talk

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

Telephone: 01323 870512, 01323 318231 or Email peter.blee@berwickchurch.org.uk, or revshirley@gmail.com

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