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February 2026



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PLUMPTON & EAST CHILTINGTON NEWS

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Happy Circle

Thursday 12 Feb 2026

Harp Concert

See Page 8 for more details

For more details contact:
Cherie 01273891592

Jumble Sale

Saturday 7th February 2026

Village Hall Jumble Sale

2pm.

COPY DEADLINES

13th February for March

14th March for April

Copy to 20 West Gate

or email: pecncopy@gmail.com or Telephone: 01273 891383





**Parish Council Report
February 2026**

Lewes Local Plan - Consultation

Plumpton Parish Council recently attended a meeting of the Lewes District Association of Local Councils, where Cllr Laurence O'Connor highlighted the importance of engaging with the current Regulation 18 consultation. This stage marks a key point in the process, as the council publishes its draft Local Plan for public comment before it is finalised. The Local Plan will shape planning decisions across the district up to 2042, influencing housing, employment, infrastructure, and environmental protection.

A major issue within the consultation is the clear mismatch between national housing requirements and what the district can realistically deliver. Lewes District Council is seeking to limit the number of new homes in recognition of local constraints. While the government's formula suggests a need for around 15,000 homes by 2042, the council's evidence shows capacity for only 8,570 net new homes.

This 43% reduction is grounded in significant limitations, including the boundaries of the South Downs National Park, the coastline, and other environmental factors.

A strong response from residents will help demonstrate to the Planning Inspector that the draft plan has been robustly tested and genuinely reflects local circumstances. This is especially important given the district council's view that the national housing target is unsuitable for an area as constrained as Lewes. The consultation is open until 28th February and can be accessed via the Lewes Council website here:- <https://www.lewes->

Racecourse: New CEO

Guy Chadwell officially began his role as the new CEO of Plumpton Racecourse on Monday 8th January, replacing Craig Staddon, who has taken up a new position at Cheltenham Racecourse. We would like to thank Guy for attending the Parish Council meeting on Tuesday 9th January to introduce himself. We look forward to continuing the close co-operation between the Parish Council and the Racecourse management that was established under Craig's leadership.

Tree Survey

The Parish Council is responsible for three areas of land within the parish, and to the best of our knowledge no formal risk assessment or tree survey has previously been undertaken. We therefore commissioned a comprehensive tree survey, carried out by Arboricultural Planning Consultant SJA, covering the Playing Field, Pocket Park and Village Green. The findings, while not unexpected, indicate that a significant number of trees require work, ranging from the removal of deadwood to full felling.

Please note the date of the next Parish Council meeting is Tuesday February 10th 19:45hrs in the Village Hall. Members of the public are welcome to attend.





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Litter Pick

We are having our annual parish litter pick on Sunday March 1st. Anyone interested in helping, please meet at the rotunda in Hollycroft at 10.00am. There is certainly plenty of litter to collect on our verges, so all help will be gratefully received. Cake and coffee will be available if further incentives are needed!

East Chiltington Church

Hopefully by the time this is published, remedial works on the church will have been completed and it will be open again. Discussions about its long-term use as a facility for the parish are ongoing and if you have any thoughts on this then please do get in touch.

The Parish Party

Looking ahead to this Summer, the date for the parish party is Saturday July 11th. Themes and ideas for the party will be discussed, but again if you have any ideas please do get in touch!

The Local Plan

The recent consultation for the latest update on the local plan has now been closed. We understand the team at Lewes District Council are on track to get the local plan finished by the end of this year which will highlight its recommendations for new housing in the district. We are assured that as far as any proposals for North Barnes Farm are concerned, nothing has changed - which is that the Council has determined the site is unsuitable for future development.

Rotunda and Playground

The parish council are getting some quotes for repair work on the rotunda in

Hollycroft. We are also planning a cleaning session for the playground which is likely to be a date in April.

A WhatsApp channel for people in East Sussex

The County Council have recently launched an official WhatsApp Channel for East Sussex County Council for local residents to use. It aims to be a good way to share messages with residents which they can trust.

You can find it by scanning QR code (see page 5) on whichever device you normally use WhatsApp.

WhatsApp Channel is completely private - followers' details are not visible to the Council or to other followers, and no personal information is shared. It's also a one-way system - followers cannot reply to Council posts (except with emojis) but they can share messages with other people.

Future Meetings of the Parish Council in 2026: THURSDAYS: 19th March, 28th May, 23rd July, 24th Sept. and 26th Nov. All at Beechwood Hall, Cooksbridge. 7.00pm




East Sussex County Council
WhatsApp channel



Scan this QR code using the camera to view or follow this channel.

TECT Update

A small flock of sheep are now grazing on the TECT field. A huge thank you to everyone for keeping their dogs under control and we continue to ask everyone to kindly keep dogs on a lead when walking through that half of the field.

Events

TECT Quiz night @7pm @ The Jolly Sportsman -
Tuesday 10
February 2026 -
please contact Caro Vickers for tickets





Daniel Stewart-Roberts, District Councillor

Alternate Weekly Collections for waste start from 9th February, which means that, from then on, your black bag waste will be collected once every two weeks, instead of weekly, with recycling being collected on the same day in the other week. Food waste will continue to be collected weekly. The changes bring Lewes District into line with the rest of East Sussex and much of the country (although some councils only collect black bag waste every three weeks). The Council has tried to learn from the wheelie bin roll out in early 2024. There is a lot of helpful information on the website (<https://www.lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk/AWC>), including how to exchange your 140l waste bin for a bigger (240l) one. There will also be extra Environment First waste team staff available on the helpline (01273 471600) to answer any questions.

One of the reasons for these changes is to encourage an increased take up of the food waste collection service. Having visited the Woodlands Composting Facility at Whitesmith and seen the fantastic compost it produces from the collected food waste for farmers and gardeners, I would really encourage you to sign up for the service if you haven't already.

My efforts to get Highways to fix the deceptive flood depth indicator at the Novington Lane railway bridge seem to have got somewhere with the work now scheduled in the next few weeks. In the meantime, do please take care when it has been raining. There have been several recent incidents of cars being written off after driving into the water. Don't let it happen to you.

Email: daniel.stewart-roberts@lewes.gov.uk

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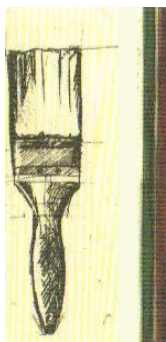
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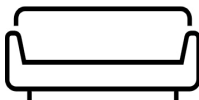
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CLIMBING THE WALLS

So, that's Christmas and the New Year out of the way, although the costs continue for many.

Rather than the usual 'give ups' (chocs, ciggies, cakes, etc...) I tend towards 'to do' aims. In recent years this has been to swim each week. Let's just say my trunks have not been submersed in chlorinated water, ever! I resolved that 2026 was going to be different, I'd even been to the Triangle leisure centre to check membership terms and what are the best times to go. Also, most importantly, was there somewhere to get a nice coffee afterwards.

Sadly, the trunks are still dry, but at least I can say hand on heart, this is not due to lack of resolve so much as the dreaded lurgy. I've been confined to barracks for almost a fortnight and I'm climbing the walls. Oh, I've loads of books I could read, not to mention the magazines I subscribe to. But they need a level of concentration that I'm not able to sustain. TV on the other hand is more, well, passive. Although this may be due to the sort of stuff I've been watching? Which may explain why I keep dropping off?

In between snoozes, coughing fits and sneezes, I've been subjecting myself to daytime TV. Not something I do when full of health and vigour. Vigour? that'll make my wife smile!

The ads are the worst. The numerous cheap cremation options. Basically, the cheaper the option, the more there is to spend on booze and a cruise for those left behind. My wife's been showing an interest in cruises recently, maybe I should be looking for trip wires on the stairs? Then there's the appeals. Clever marketing has the underlying message '

send us your money or the puppy dies!'

The worst ones, for me, are for online bingo sites. We are told (by an actor?) how much better life has become since they started playing bingo on such and such website. Not sure if it's the medication I'm on but they all look like they've been smoking too many Columbian woodbines, if you get my drift?

I've had enough of this, I do what I always do in times of crisis... I put the kettle on.

Supping my tea, I decide its best to go back to tried and tested shows of the past.

These have storylines where doctors do home visits and a vast amount of police resources are deployed on very minor crimes... Meanwhile, back in the real world, eh? To think we used to watch that rubbish years ago!

'The Big Match revisited' is always good to take a view of life in Britain in the 70's and 80's. The players all had names you could pronounce, the fans wore flares and the goalmouths had to be cleared of loo rolls every time a goal was scored. Arrgh, those were the days!

Tonight, will be different. Its Traitors night! When I first saw the trailers when the show started, I vowed 'that's definitely something I'm not going to watch!' How wrong I was, I'm as hooked as anyone. Now, in my daytime slumbers I think of new ways it could be adapted. A political version is my favourite. Just think, anytime we feel it's time for someone to go, we leave a sealed letter in their personal chamber telling them they have been murdered. I had thought of banishments at the round table, but that would have to be a hell of a size table!



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2026

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Events in 2026

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Centenary Exhibition

29 March

Centenary Race

9 May

Open Day & Spring Fair

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Maybe your enthusiasm for gardening waned a little through the Winter, but the snowdrops and daffodils are hopefully inspiring you to get out there? Michael has documented his garden wildlife observations and what he discovered amazed him. Come and learn about the wildlife of your garden and how you can make your garden wildlife friendly.

Michael has worked for a number of wildlife conservation organisations where he has helped thousands of people to explore, understand, appreciate and celebrate their amazing wildlife heritage.

And, yes, he's still very proud of winning the award for 'Lewes Personality of the Year 2012'.

Come and enjoy an evening of laughs – we are really fortunate to have Michael coming to Plumpton.
Tickets are free, donations on door welcome.



Plumpton & East Chilmington Wildlife Group

January 2026 Crossword: Answers:



Andy Starling

Plumpton Primary School

Plumpton Primary School have now got a **Second Hand Clothes Recycling Bin** situated by the school gate (next to the bike shed).

By donating your old items, you will be helping raise much needed funds for the school.

The more you give, the more funds the school receives!

Thank you for your support.



PLUMPTON BUSES – Compass Travel (compass-travel.co.uk)

Data from Compass website – January 2025

166 - LEWES to HAYWARDS HEATH	NOT SATURDAY		NOT SATURDAY		NOT SATURDAY	NOT SATURDAY
	Monday to Friday	Monday to Saturday	Monday to Saturday	Monday to Saturday	Schooldays Only	Monday to Friday (not schooldays)
Lewes, School Hill	07:31	09:30	12:17	14:27	17:05	17:05
Nevill Road, Nevill Crescent	07:36	09:36	12:23	14:33	17:11	17:11
Offham, Blacksmiths Arms	07:39	09:39	12:26	14:36	17:14	17:14
Plumpton College	07:46	X	X	X	X	17:22
Plumpton, Half Moon	07:48	09:46	12:33	14:43	17:21	17:25
Plumpton Station	07:53	09:50	12:37	14:47	17:25	17:29
Plumpton, The Plough	07:56	09:53	12:40	14:50	17:28	17:32
Wivelsfield Green, Coppards Close	07:58	09:56	12:43	14:53	17:31	17:35
Fox Hill, Fox & Hounds	08:03	10:02	12:49	14:59	17:37	17:41
Princess Royal Hospital	08:09	10:06	12:53	15:03	17:41	17:45
Haywards Heath, South Road	08:11	10:08	12:55	15:05	17:43	17:47
Haywards Heath, Perry Mount Rd	08:13	10:12	12:59	15:09	17:47	17:51
Haywards Heath, Sainsburys	x	10:14	13:01	15:11	17:49	x
Sat Only						

166 - HAYWARDS HEATH to LEWES	NOT SATURDAY		NOT SATURDAY		NOT SATURDAY	NOT SATURDAY
	Monday to Friday	Monday to Saturday	Monday to Saturday	Schooldays Only	Monday to Friday	Monday to Saturday
Haywards Heath, Sainsburys	x	10:16	13:03	15:15	15:38	17:53
Haywards Heath, Perry Mount Rd	08:45	10:18	13:05	15:17	15:40	17:55
Haywards Heath, South Road	08:49	10:22	13:09	15:21	15:44	17:59
Princess Royal Hospital	08:51	10:24	13:11	15:23	15:46	18:01
Fox Hill, Fox & Hounds	08:55	10:28	13:15	15:27	15:50	18:05
Wivelsfield Green, Coppards Close	09:01	10:34	13:21	15:33	15:56	18:11
Plumpton, The Plough	09:04	10:37	13:24	15:36	15:59	18:14
Plumpton Station	09:07	10:40	13:27	15:39	16:02	18:17
Plumpton, Half Moon	09:11	10:44	13:31	15:43	16:06	18:21
Plumpton College	09:14	x	x	x	16:09	x
Offham, Blacksmiths Arms	09:20	10:50	13:37	15:49	16:15	18:27
Nevill Road, Nevill Crescent	09:22	10:52	13:39	15:51	16:17	18:29
Lewes, School Hill	09:27	10:57	13:44	15:56	16:22	18:34

167 - LEWES to BURGESS HILL	NOT SATURDAY		NOT SATURDAY
	Monday to Friday	Schooldays Only	Monday to Friday (not schooldays)
Lewes, School Hill	07:20	14:55	14:55
Nevill Road, Nevill Crescent	07:25	15:00	15:00
Offham, Blacksmiths Arms	07:27	15:02	15:02
Plumpton, Half Moon	07:34	15:09	15:09
Plumpton Station	07:40	15:13	15:13
Plumpton, The Plough	07:42	15:15	15:15
Wivelsfield Green, Coppards Cl	07:45	15:17	15:17
Wivelsfield, Ote Hall Chapel	07:49	x	15:19
Burgess Hill, St George's	07:50	x	15:20
Burgess Hill, Church Road	08:00	x	15:27

167 - BURGESS HILL to LEWES	NOT SATURDAY		NOT SATURDAY
	Schooldays Only	Monday to Friday (not schooldays)	Monday to Friday
Burgess Hill, Church Road	08:15	08:29	17:10
Burgess Hill, St George's	08:32	08:38	17:19
Wivelsfield, Ote Hall Chapel	08:33	08:39	17:20
Wivelsfield Green, Coppards Cl	08:40	x	x
Plumpton, The Plough	08:46	08:46	17:25
Plumpton Station	08:49	08:49	17:28
Plumpton, Half Moon	08:53	08:53	17:32
Offham, Blacksmiths Arms	08:59	08:59	17:38
Nevill Road, Nevill Crescent	x	x	17:40
Lewes, School Hill	09:06	09:06	17:45

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Rev. Anne Dunlop

*It's just a day like any other, the day I
decide,*

*I will quit smoking, start the diet, live
better...*

*The day I decide to leave. The day I decide
to stay.*

A day like any other.

*I give it meaning, as if it is pregnant with
power,*

and energy that will impel.

*Just a day like any other. Yet are all days the
same?*

Is it a day like any other ...but not.

It is a new day unique perhaps a hope day.

*It can be if I choose which makes it a day
like any other.'*

Well, how are you getting on the with New Year resolutions? Well done if you are still on track. I refuse to make any as I know from years of experience that this whole concept does not work for me. I just end up feeling bad that I have not kept it going for even a month. The hour of fast walking, the avoidance of anything unnecessary and yummy, the two books I will read every week etc.

It's interesting that all of the above are designed to improve things that I lack – a fitness regime, a healthy choice, an improvement in knowledge or keeping up the current trends. There is nothing there about me as a person, me in relationships with others. It is a self-referential improvement programme I have designed for me, to be initiated by me, maintained by me. No surprise then that it peters out after a few weeks, if that. Is that because I simply lack the inner resource and willpower to maintain it? I think not, rather it is because 'life' just gets in the way – it's just how it is. I have read that statistically only around 10 percent of us keep up a New Year's resolution – so I comfort myself with that, which reinforces my dismissal

of the whole idea – or is that a cop out of are we being hard on ourselves because we are simply – human.

Self-improvement is not a new idea; we are not the first to become so fixated on it. I read that Benjamin Franklin decided he lacked certain virtues and listed them and decided to give two weeks to each so that he may acquire them. I understand all went well until it came to 'chastity'.

A better approach is that of Aristotle (yes it goes that far back 342 BC). He proposed the acquisition of virtues, and these do not drop from the sky they have to be practiced and habitualised until they become our character. Courage, generosity, kindness, friendship, honesty, truthfulness etc. Where we lack these we 'put it on', we do it deliberately whether we feel inclined or not. Eventually it becomes second nature. I often liken this to a 'uniform' worn for a job. It can feel like 'just dressing up' when you first put it on but gradually you move into the role it represents. Lots of flaws in that example, but we can get the picture.

Paul, the writer of so many letters to early followers of Jesus, had a lot to say about this process. Just as with the conscious decision we make about which clothes to 'put on' when we get up in the morning or when we go out in the evening - casual or smart - so we have to make a deliberate choices to put on certain character traits and put off others. Putting off bad habits and putting on new ones both require the discipline of consciously deciding again and again to do certain things in certain ways in order to embed desired patterns of behaviour deep within us. Deep within the actual physical structure of our brains just as we learn from contemporary neuroscience.

We often use the phrase 'putting it on' about someone who we think is pretending to be something they are not. It carries the accusation of hypocrisy. The point is, however, that we all have to go through the phase when, if we're going to get anywhere at anything, adopting that action or attitude feels artificial unnatural and fake. But gradually bit by bit the deliberate putting on of these qualities will in fact transform our character at its deepest level until they become second nature.

Such decisions and actions do not have to wait for a New Year.

Church Services for February 2026

Sunday 1st February

All Saints

Epiphany 4

11.00 am

Septuagesima

Family Communion

Sunday 8th February

All Saints

2 Before Lent

11.00am

Sexagesima

Family Communion

Sunday 15th February

All Saints

Next Before Lent

11.00am

Quinquagesima

Family Communion

Wednesday 17th February

All Saints

Ash Wednesday

11.00am

Ash Wednesday Service

Sunday 22nd February

All Saints

Lent 1

11.00am

Family Communion

Sunday 1st March

All Saints

Lent 2

11.00am

St David's Day

Family Communion

A said service of Holy Communion is held in All Saints Church, Plumpton Green each Tuesday at 11.30am (November to March held in the Rectory)

A substantial Lunch is provided in the church annex each Tuesday, meeting at 12.30pm. All are welcome. Suggested donation £5.00

For general church matters please contact Rev Anne Dunlop 01273 890006
revannedunlop@gmail.com in the first instance or one of the Churchwardens.

East Chiltonton - Janice Doran 07484 348341 jncdoran@gmail.com

Plumpton Howard Wood 07794484373 hawood167@hotmail.com

Mike Middleton 07977 942167 mike@middleton.eclipse.co.uk

Want to hire the Church Annex?

Please speak to Bob Doran on 07484138203

Help Needed

Would you like to volunteer? We are looking for additional helpers :

- To transport members of our congregation to church services
- To become part of a team which cleans the church or annex
- To help with hospitality providing teas and coffee after church services
- To provide a dish for our Tuesday lunches in the church annex approximately once every five weeks
- To provide certain handy person duties such as mowing in the church grounds.

VILLAGE EVENTS CALENDAR

VH = Village Hall

StM = St Michael's

ECC = East Chiltonington Church

HQ = Scout HQ

ANX = Church Annex

Sch = Plumpton School

TC = Tennis Club

PAV = Pavilion

ALC = All Saints Church

BOOKINGS

Village Hall & Pavilion:

Jane Donovan 07747 050903 or 01273 891036

7th Feb - Village Hall Jumble Sale	VH
19th Feb - ReNature Plumpton: "A year in my Garden" Michael Blencowe	VH
28th Feb - Horticultural Society Jumble Sale	VH
14th Mar - Junior Football Jumble Sale	VH
21st Mar - St Peter & St James Quiz Night	
23rd Mar - ReNature Plumpton: A talk by Hurst Hedgehog Haven	VH
11th Apr - ReNature Plumpton: "All About Trees" Jacqui Hutson	
25th Apr - Honeybees Jumble Sale	VH
25th Apr - ReNature Plumpton: "Wildflowers in my Garden" Kate Gold	
30th May - St Peter & St James Fabric Sale	
6th Jun - ReNature Plumpton: "Bees in your Garden" James Power	
13th Jun - Strawberry Fair	
20th Jun - Churches Jumble Sale	VH
28th Jun - Village Open Gardens (in aid of St Peter & St James)	
18th July - Hospice Jumble Sale	VH
5th Sept - Pav Jumble Sale	VH
26th Sept - Apple Pressing Day	
3rd Oct - PPTFA Jumble Sale	VH
17th Oct - Village Hall Jumble Sale	VH
14th Nov - Flower Club Jumble Sale	VH
21st Nov - Festive Fair	VH
5th Dec - Cricket Club Jumble Sale	VH

Plumpton & District
Footpath Society

PROGRAMME FOR FEBRUARY 2026



Wednesday 4th February: Meet, for a 10.30 start, outside Asda at the Brighton Marina. (Parking in the multi-storey car park at the marina - 4 hrs free parking) Map Ref. BN2 5UT. The 6m walk takes us along the promenade from Brighton Marina to Hove Lagoon with the option of walking inland on return.
Walk Leader: Gill Hall 07484216120

Sunday 8th February: Meet 10.30 at Sullington Heights—South Downs Way, Post Code RH20 4AX. This 5.5m walk will take us to Sullington/ Ancient Church./ Tithe Barn/ Museum. There will be a coffee stop with cake!
Walk Leaders: Sue and Robin Akers 01273 891701 or 0777542361

Saturday 21st February: Meet 2.00pm at Ditchling Common car park - Map Ref. 338 181 - for a 4m circular walk taking in Hope Farm, Ote Hall, Great Ote Hall Wood, Lockwood, St George's.
Walk Leader: Diane Ellis 01825 723716 or 07895720839

Wednesday 25th February: A TALK at Plumpton Village Hall byt Chris Horlock. 'Sussex Scrapbook 2' - 1.45 for a 2pm start. Non-members admission fee £2, to include a cup of tea and piece of cake.

PLUMPTON VILLAGE SOCIETY'S NEW YEAR'S DAY WALK

After the aborted walk last year due to rain and 50mph winds, the weather was kind to us and thankfully it was a dry and calm day on the first day of 2026. Over 50 walkers (and lots of dogs) enjoyed a 2.2 mile along tracks and roads, with no fields or stiles this year.

This Community Walk started at the station, out along the Racecourse, and East Chilington Church, with a refreshment stop half way at the Hollycroft rotunda. Everyone welcomed mulled wine (inc non-alcoholic version), or blackcurrant and mince pies. It took 1 ½ hours, taking in some fantastic views, returning to Plumpton via North Barnes Lane. It finished at the site of the old Sun Hotel. If you haven't read about the history of the Sun Hotel, please read the article in last month's News magazine.



The Walk was led by Rod Owens, supported by Lee Stevens and Frances Jeffery. Refreshments were kindly served by Beverley Gilbert, Sue Prosser-Brown and Aly Owens. All Committee members.

The Festive Walk next year will be heading to the North of the village!

Wishing the whole community a healthy and enjoyable 2026



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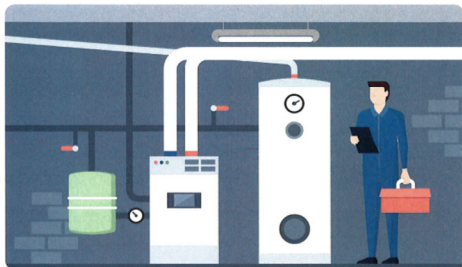
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CHAILEY REPAIR CAFÉ - WE ARE ON THE MOVE!

Happy New Year everybody! We start 2026 with some important news....

St Peter's Church is closing due to urgent repairs to the floor being refurbished from January onwards. Chailey Repair Café is moving back to Chailey Village Hall, (next to the Five Bells just 500 yards down the road from the Church) from 10th January until the work in the church is completed, when we will look forward to returning to the Church.

2025 was an outstanding year for the Repair Café – we tackled 736 of your repairs, 77% successfully, many of those on the day. Although we will always do our best to fix your item while you wait (we don't offer a drop off service) sometimes the repair is just too complicated. When that happens, it is possible that the volunteer will offer to take your item home to complete as a private arrangement outside the Repair Café – but please note that is not always possible..

Our most popular service was sharpening, followed by repairs to lamps, clocks, zips and radios.

And the strangest things we tackled? A hoverboard, a trimphone and a tiara! Oh and numerous stuffed animals including a dog, moth, pig, reindeer, squirrel, unicorn, furry, cuckoo, owl and monkey – we see all sorts at the Repair Café!!

Our 2026 dates are easy to remember – we are normally open every 2nd Saturday of each month between 10am – 1pm. Our new 2026 posters and flyers with all this year's dates are now available at the Café, so you won't forget!

Chailey Repair Café is part of a world-wide movement where volunteer experts repair things free of charge – although a donation

towards running costs is invited. Anyone can bring along broken items or clothing needing repair from home, and have a cuppa and a cake while they wait!

You'll find us at Chailey Village Hall on the A275 next to the Five Bells pub normally on the second Saturday of each month (10th Jan, 14th Feb, 14th March and so on....) between 1000hrs and 1300hrs where we have a full Café service including our legendary cakes!

Contact us at chaileyrc@gmail.com and we'll see what we can do to help.

See you very soon and a very Happy New Year from all of us here at Chailey Repair Café!!

Bryan McAlley and the Chailey Repair Café team

Chailey Repair Café



almost

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13 Dec 2025, 10 Jan, 14 Feb, 14 Mar, 11 April, 9 May, 13 June, 11 July, 8 Aug, 12 Sept, 10 Oct, 14 Nov, 12 Dec 2026

10am–1pm St Peter's Church, Chailey Green, BN8 4DA
Enjoy a cuppa and some cake!!!

chaileyrc@gmail.com





Jumble Sale

Raising Funds for the Village Hall

Saturday

7 February

2.00 pm – 4.00 pm

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Uckfield, Lewes & Newick Arts Society

11th February 2026
Uckfield Civic Centre 2.30

Natalia Murraroy: The Courtauld Collection of Impressionist Painting.

February should bring us some daffodils and snowdrops to give us hope that Spring is on its way. This delightful lecture will surely do the same. Natalia was born in St Peterburg gaining a BA and MA in Art History at the Academy of fine Arts and a PhD at the Hermitage Museum. Natalia now works at the Courtauld Institute of Art and has written several books, featured in films on the Hermitage and the Russian Revolution, and in programmes for BBC Radio 4.

The Courtauld Institute of Art was founded by Samuel Courtauld in 1930. He was Chairman of Courtauld's the family textile business and, unusual for those days, he promoted education, sick leave and pensions for his employees. He developed a great interest in Art especially the French Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings and, with his immense wealth, was able to assemble a fabulous collection, including Van Gogh's 'Self portrait with a bandaged ear' and Manet's 'Folies-bergère.'

Guests are always welcome and do not need to be invited by a member. Just £8 on the door.

Annette Shelford
annette@shelford.net

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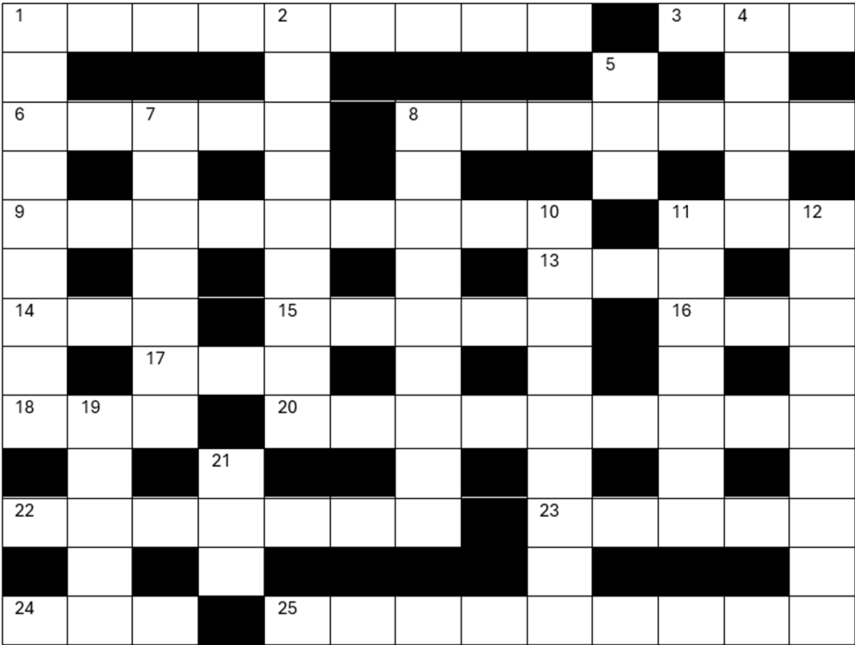
Do you need help or someone to talk to? We are a group of local volunteers who offer a befriending service and help with everyday things such as shopping and simple household jobs, to anyone needing support. We can help on a regular or one off basis and, there are no charges associated with our help, with the exception of travel costs if we transport you somewhere such as to the doctors or another similar appointment. All our volunteers are DBS checked.

It doesn't matter what age group you are in or whether your family is local. If you feel you would like our help or, to talk about how we may help you, please phone Gina or Alison on the above number or, you can email us at: pecgoodneighbours@gmail.com

New volunteers are always needed and very welcome. If you are interested in joining our team please get in touch on the contact details above.



February Crossword 2026



Clues Across:

- 1 and 3.** 2nd Feb, in the USA (9,3)
- 6.** Live, under adverse conditions (5)
- 8.** Wise king of Israel (7)
- 9.** Where Peter Pan lives (9)
- 11.** A circuit in a race (3)
- 13.** Cast-iron cooker (3)
- 14.** It consists mainly of nitrogen and oxygen (3)
- 15.** Alloy of iron and carbon (5)
- 16.** Rock formation, e.g. in Dartmoor (3)
- 17.** Garden bird, great or blue for example (3)
- 18.** Mr O'Connor, late singer and comedian (3)
- 20.** Coiling (9)
- 22.** Weather condition we mostly see in January or February (7)
- 23.** Queen Boudica's tribe (5)
- 24.** Protagonist in Great Expectations (3)
- 25.** Saint celebration on 14th February (9)

Clues Down:

- 1.** Danish territory, capital Nuuk (9)
- 2.** People who like to go naked (9)
- 4.** Scent (5)
- 5.** Slang for an old English Shilling (3)
- 7.** Turns upside down (7)
- 8.** Drooling (9)
- 10.** Black and white dog, originally from Croatia (9)
- 11.** Open framework, or grid (7)
- 12.** Bird-eating raptor (9)
- 19.** Listlessness (5)
- 21.** US Airline from 1930s - 2001 (1,1,1)

Andy Starling,

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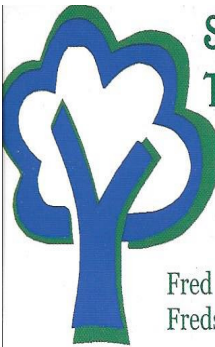
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Plumpton and East Chilmington Wildlife Group

New Year Plant Hunt

In 2012, a group of botanists set themselves a challenge to head out on New Year's Day and see what they could find in flower. Coordinated by the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland, the New Year Plant Hunt (NYPH) has now grown to become a popular Citizen Science activity, in which thousands of people take part. The rules are simple – to spend up to 3 hours recording the wild and naturalised (not deliberately planted) plants that you find in flower in a chosen location. The flowers need to actually be open, not just in bud.

My first NYPH was in 2016 and I've taken part every year since, following roughly the same route around Plumpton, Streat and East Chilmington. Over the 10 years I've found a total of 75 different species in flower, the most being 40 in 2021. The only 3 species that I've found every single year are Daisy, Dandelion and Winter Heliotrope. Notable for its vanilla-like scent, Winter Heliotrope was introduced to gardens in 1806, first recorded in the wild in 1835, and has since spread widely. Locally, I first recall seeing it by the lynch gate at East Chilmington churchyard; I now see it along Station Road, on the ridge between the racecourse and Streat, and on the verges of St Helena Lane.

So, to this year's hunt. Cast your minds back to January 2nd, a crisp, cold day, perfect weather for plant hunting. I started in Riddens Wood (aka the Chinese Wood) where I knew I would find Butcher's Broom and Periwinkle in flower. Surprisingly, a lot of the Holly bushes in the wood were also beginning to flower. I then headed across the fields to Streat Lane and picked up Hogweed and White Dead-nettle along the verges. Then to Streat churchyard, where I found Daisy, Sweet Violet, Smooth Sowthistle, Red

Dead-nettle, Annual Meadow Grass and Primrose. Walking along the ridge towards the racecourse I spotted flowers and fruits of Wild Strawberry and the first glorious yellow Lesser Celandine of the year. Then to Ashurst Organics, where Pete and Collette kindly allowed me to look over their vegetable fields. As an organic farm, no herbicides are used. As a result, arable plant species that are in decline elsewhere are thriving. Among other species, I saw Treacle Mustard and Corn Spurrey, both on the Sussex Rare Plants Register.

I continued along the ridge towards East Chilmington churchyard. Our local churchyards represent some of the very few remaining examples of agriculturally unimproved meadows in the parishes and are managed sensitively for wildlife and visitors. I found Smooth Hawksbeard, Red Campion, Petty Spurge and Winter Heliotrope. On across the TECT field, where I found the first Dandelions of the day, and back across the fields to Plumpton Green. The final stop of the day was Plumpton Station. I found Hedge Bedstraw still in flower in the wildflower verge beside Platform 1, and a Forget-me-not, a Bittercress and Annual Mercury in flower at the edge of the car park. The 3-hour time limit was up and I'd found a total of 37 species, one fewer than last year.

Nationally, more than 3600 people took part over the period of 1st – 4th January. 663 different species were recorded in flower, with the highest number, 110, being recorded in Swanage. This is a coastal, relatively mild, location where you would expect to find more species. In contrast, people searching in frosty Scottish glens recorded only Gorse. Urban areas tended to have more non-native species in flower than in rural locations. Towns and cities have more sheltered and disturbed locations, creating warm microclimates where alien plants can establish and naturalise.

The range of species recorded were very similar to previous years. The most frequently spotted species were Daisy, Dandelion and Groundsel. Herb-robert and Winter Heliotrope entered the Top Twenty list of most-frequently recorded plants, displacing Lesser Celandine and Common Ragwort.

Kate Gold

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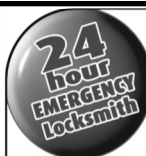
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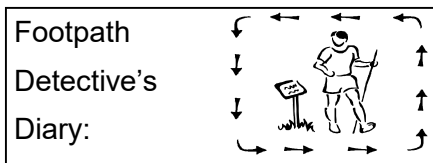
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A Footpath Detective's Diary February 2026 A stroll around Ditchling

I took over the responsibility for writing the Footpath Detective's Diary in 2006 and after nearly 20 years I'm finding it hard to come up with new routes that might be sufficiently interesting on a monthly basis. I have to supplement a few foreign adventures and routes outside of Sussex, and I'm never quite sure what the good people of Plumpton and East Chiltington want. If there is anyone out there who thinks they have a route they would like to write about to supplement my offerings then do get in touch with our editor.

This little route of 4.3 miles is a loop that starts and finishes by the village hall in Ditchling. When it has been wet there will be a few muddy bits on this route. I did this wander in early November with a good friend who always enjoys a walk and extols the beauty of the countryside with real enthusiasm and so is a joy to walk with.

We began by heading west over the cross roads and past the church that is dedicated to St Margaret of Antioch. The present building dates from the late 12th century, sited on a sandy knoll overlooking the village. It is built on top of an earlier Saxon church referred to in the Domesday Book. Remains of the Saxon church are to be found in the lower walls of the nave. It is well worth a visit. We turned right to walk past the museum and the village pond, which at the time looked very low in water or perhaps high in silt. There appeared to be little in the way of bird life which was sad, hopefully it was just a quiet day on the pond.

Our route continued up Lodge Lane, a narrow tarmac road for a while until passing the last of the dwellings. Then it becomes a track between bushes and at this point can

get a little muddy for a short way. This bit of the route is on a ridge with views to our left across Keymer and Hassocks. At the end of the path we came to Oldlands Mill, a post mill on a single-storey octagonal roundhouse with four spring sweeps. It is owned, maintained and operated by Oldland Mill Trust. It is likely that a windmill has been here or near this spot since about 1700 and there are records that show that this mill has been on the site at least since 1828 and was working until 1912. It fell into disrepair but has been lovingly and carefully restored to full working order and mills flour for local sale.

At the mill we turned right to head north on Oldlands Lane for a short way, then we turned right again onto a footpath that followed the edge of two fields to sweep around east and then SE to bring us to Orchard Lane and from there onto North End (B2112). We turned right towards Ditchling village and then left onto Dumbrells Court Road. We continued to head east along the track towards Mac's Farm and then took a path on our left to head north. The path we were on is between hedges and then on meeting and crossing a wider track we took a path signed on our right that went east. After a couple of field boundaries the signs turned us south on a field edge but we found no exit at the south end of this field and walked the edge of the field around three sides. The signs ran out and in the NE corner of this field we were by the farm buildings of a farm I knew was accessed from Spatham Lane so we followed its track to the lane. I'll have another go at finding where the actual footpath goes another time but as the light was fading we went south down the lane and at the end turned west back into Ditchling using the paths at the edge of the Lewes Road (B2116). It was time for some refreshments and there are a few good places to enjoy refreshments in the village.

EJH



Bird Watch

Just before the turn of the year, we ventured into West Sussex to try to find wild

geese that come here for the winter. As it was before the cold weather, we were unfortunate that few had yet arrived.

These geese are grazers, usually feeding in water meadows or coastal plains. A few days later, the cold weather to the north, with snow covering their food source, pushed several flocks of over a hundred White-Fronted Geese and a few Tundra Bean geese to this county. We found only the usual feral geese, Canada Geese, Grey Lag Geese and Egyptian Geese, all descended from escaped populations from collections over the past centuries. Having no natural predators, apart from perhaps foxes taking eggs or goslings, they thrived and numbers increased.

The Egyptian Geese are now widespread and breed very early in the year. They often have young by February. They are peculiar-looking birds which have been described as being constructed by a committee that assembled the parts before the members consulted! It appears that they are the favourite prey of the White-tailed Eagles that have been re-introduced and breed in the county. Perhaps, if the introduction had been earlier, there would be fewer Egyptian Geese about.

We did also see two of the three Egret species, but not the most common Little Egret. We found Cattle Egret, with yellow thicker bill and hunched up appearance and the elegant Great White Egret, about the size of a Heron. From there we went see the harriers coming in to roost at the Wildfowl Trust at Arundel. Several Marsh Harriers drifted down the Arun Valley as the light began to fail. When I was young, Marsh Harriers were one of the rarest raptors and in the little Observers Book of Birds, it was stated that only about half a dozen pairs occurred in Britain. Now, with

habitat improvement and protection, that number can be seen in a day and there are several communal roosts of them here in Sussex.

An adult male Hen Harrier had been reported using the same reed bed in which to spend the night. These are magnificent birds, with silver-white bodies and black wing tips, that they attain only as full adults of four years or more. Unfortunately it slunk low and though the younger spotters saw it well, I got only a fleeting glimpse.

As the hours of daylight increase, we have the opportunity to recognise and learn the different bird songs. Song is the way male birds claim a territory and attract a mate and will do so in the same places, regularly. Early in the year, just a few do so, so it gives the opportunity to get to know these before later arrivals cause confusion. Song Thrush with its repetitive notes, are the first. Robins will sing from exposed places. Great Tits with their bicycle pump-like song and the beautiful flute-like notes of the Blackbird will also be early. I hope that any who are compiling a year list of birds in their garden are well under way, particularly as the cold snap may have brought something unusual closer to home.

Another interesting observation, is the number of Chiffchaffs wintering in Britain. These dull-coloured little warblers breed in much of Europe and Scandinavia. Those that breed in this country migrate to the Mediterranean region and West Africa, not crossing the Sahrah. At this time of year, those here will most likely be from more northern populations and are usually found where insects are plentiful, such as water treatment works or sewage farms but may well find their way into our gardens. Over two dozen are reported from one such site in West Sussex. As a number of them have been ringed, the chance of discovering their origin is possible.

R.J.L.



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www.chaileycommons.org.uk

After a cold, snowy and frosty start to the year, and the passing through of Storm Goretti with heavy rains, we are all looking forward to the advent of spring and we can already see the days beginning to lengthen.

A good start to the year was a talk from one of the commons neighbours, the artist Sacha Turnbull. Living locally and crossing the commons regularly, she has long been interested in the artistic aspect of the local landscape which she has illustrated in a wide selection of artist impressions. Her enthusiasm and quest for detail showed us a wonderful range of beautiful paintings which she has from both outdoor sittings and in her local studio. It was lovely to see the heathland shown in this way as well as other scenes and still life too.

You may have noticed the effects of ongoing conservation management on the commons clearing swathes of bracken and scrub to restore the open habitats of the heathland. The heaps of flailed bracken may provide habitats for reptiles.

The five Exmoor ponies have been back on Red House Common since mid-December. Careful observations by the pony checkers show that they are foraging on a mixed diet of gorse, bramble, and grasses as well as some acorns which are hopefully less damaging now. During the cold snap in early January, they were given some top up hay. Their owner the Moorland Mouse Trust are confident that they will find adequate forage on the common and that the hay can be phased out. Please do not feed the ponies which can also endanger their health.

We are looking for two more pony

checkers to join the team of volunteers. If you are able to commit to two checks per month on a rota and are interested in supporting the conservation grazing of the commons, please contact the Society on mail@chaileycommons.org.uk.

Forthcoming Events in 2026

Thursday February 12th Talk by
Stewart Angell – A History of
Mapping for Archaeology.
Chailey Village Hall 7.30.p.m.
Parking and refreshments;
visitors welcome.

Thursday March 12th Annual General
Meeting followed by a talk by
Simm Elliott – Lichens of the
Heathland – Chailey Village Hall
7.30.p.m. Parking and
refreshments; visitors welcome.

For further information, visit our website
– www.chaileycommons.org.uk or our
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William Coleman

01444 831098





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March 29th, Sunday, 10-3

April 18, Saturday, 10-3

May 10, Sunday, 10-3

June 14, Sunday, 10-3

July 19, Sunday, 10-3

August tbc - summer event

Sept 20, Sunday, 10-3

October 24, Saturday, 10-3

November 7th, Saturday, 10-3, Winter Fest

December 12th, Saturday, 10-3, Yule Fest

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Societies
Clubs
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*For changes or new
entries:
phone:*

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*Email:
pecncopy@gmail.com*

Baby & Toddler Group	Charlotte	01273 891086
Beekeeping Group	Jim Thompson	07597 067535
British Legion	Reg Lanaway	890070
Brownies	girlguiding.org.uk	
Chailey Commons Society	William Coleman	01444 831923
Cricket Club	Kelvin Speirs	890785
Flower Club	Sue Akers	891701
Football Club	Paul Manville	07813 114470
Footpath Society	Judy Lawrenson	01273 472277
Guides	girlguiding.org.uk	
Happy Circle	Cherie Winchester	891592
Honeybees Preschool		07786 615686
Horticultural Society	Lin Pilfold	01273 475594
Hospice Support Group	Sue Akers	891701
Junior Football	Darryl Bailey	07792 686673
Oil Buying Group	Diane Marks	07929 336065
Pantomime Society	Penny Acton	01273 891427
Plumpton Activity Scheme	Becca Baker	
	plumptonactivityscheme@gmail.com	
Plumpton Bowmen	Mark Piercy	07799 467997
Plumpton Camera Club	Tim Honess	01273 890582
Plumpton & East Chiltington		07478 524152
Good Neighbours	Gina Hawthorne	
Plumpton Rude Mechanical	Lee Stevens	07887 562721
Theatre Co. Friends		
Plumpton Short Mat Bowls	Malcolm Beard	890826
Plumpton Tennis Club	Lesley Satchell	07590 354420
Plumpton Village Society	Lee Stevens	07887 562721
PPTFA	Marie Leviston	891497
Plumpton Vol Driving	Gill Medhurst	01273 890055
	Bookings - Jackie	07855213947
Rainbows	girlguiding.org.uk	
Rugby Club	Mike Allen	890076
Scouts	Rodney Hills	890410
Southdown East Pony Club	Mike Nichols	01444 452295
Stoolball Club	Jo Taylor	890450
Turning Pointe Dance Classes	office.turningpointe@gmail.com	
Wildlife Group	Jean Stewart	

Plumpton & East Chiltington News

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