

Cuckfield Life

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Local village talk,
by the village

Issue #28 : FebMar '15

Free



Make yourself a crème brûlée

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Archers still on target

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How well do you know Cuckfield?

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EDITORIAL

By David Tingley, Editor

Is it me, or are there just a few more promising signs of life now? Maybe it's just the endless holiday ads on TV but I've also noticed daffodils breaking through the hard ground in the last week or two!

In the village, too, this February magazine begins the build-up of new things going on and events ahead of us.

The popular **Coro Nuovo choir** will be performing a concert of traditional classical music on 8th March at Holy Trinity Church. For more details of this and some of the choir members, read **page 29**.

As promoted last month, Cuckfield Dramatic Society will be performing **February Frolics** at the end of February. Make sure you get your tickets soon from Mansell McTaggart as I hear they are going fast. Last year was sold out! For **full listings** of other local events in Queen's Hall and further afield see **page 30**.

Cuckfield Pantry and Tea Room has opened its doors to a relatively new concept in West Sussex – **The Death Café**. If you are intrigued read more on **page 13**.

Talking of doors, it's great to report that new charity **Building Heroes** has now welcomed in its first band of trainees through the doors of the former site of Court Meadow School. They got cracking straight away by helping to paint the vicarage as part of their Community Outreach programme. See **page 4**.

And on that subject: **former vicar Nick Wetherall** and his wife Ruth return to Cuckfield for a special **lunchtime concert** at the church next month. **Page 14** gives the details.

On **page 12** we are also very pleased to share some of what **1st Cuckfield Scouts** have been up to. Thank you to Mike Schlup for that update.

And finally, just for fun, we have – on **page 22** – a **photo quiz** for you to test your knowledge of Cuckfield against your friends and family. How many did you get right?

Issue #28 – Feb/Mar 2015 –

3,500 copies printed

Next magazine copydate:
28th February 2015

Next magazine published:
15th March 2015

Cuckfield Life

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We'd love to hear from groups, organisations and individuals about what's happening locally. Include a photo if you can. Email your stories to editor@cuckfieldlife.co.uk

Youth Club secure

By Nigel Page

Cuckfield Parish Council is pleased to announce that it has completed the purchase of the Youth Club building and freehold in London Lane.

We have met with the current users to ensure a smooth transition. The building will be managed 'as is' in the short term; in the long term we hope to raise funds and grants to rebuild it.

Importantly we will be making the building available 'For Hire' to other clubs and community projects who need access to a community hall and building. Availability and costs are available from the Parish Office on 01444 451610.

The building will be managed as part of the Communities Building Committee, where we will use our experience and knowledge of running the Queen's Hall building. We have also asked Jane Revell and Mary Crouch, who are familiar with the operation of the building, to join this committee.



New showroom open

The team at Cuckfield Bathrooms proudly opened the new shop at The Clockhouse in January after months of refurbishment at the property.



Building Heroes official opening

The first trainees arrived at Building Heroes last month – just in time for the official opening ceremony.

The training centre, at the former Court Meadow School site, was officially opened by Cllr Pete Bradbury, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Building Heroes Education Foundation.

Guests also included Trustees and Supporters, Haywards Heath Mayor Sandy Ellis and the first cohort of trainees who had completed the first week of their 8 week course.

The trainees have already made their mark on the village by helping to paint the Vicarage in Cuckfield as part of their Community Outreach programme.

Building Heroes would be pleased to hear from any voluntary organisations who feel they could benefit from the programme.

The event also attracted generous donations, including a £5,000 cheque presented by representatives from Mitcham Golf Club who raised the money at a Charity Golf Day last year.

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Could you become a Bright Runner in 2015?

Brighton and Hove already boasts the Brighton Marathon, the award winning Brighton Half Marathon, Brooks Brighton 10k and weekly Brighton and Hove Parkruns. This year the city will host a brand new running event – the Bright10.

The inaugural race will take place on Sunday 18th October, kick-starting the autumn 10 mile season. The event offers runners the chance to experience Brighton and Hove at its very best, with a route that showcases the sights and landmarks of the city.

The Bright10 is organised by Runbase Limited, owned and managed by the former events managers of the Brighton Half Marathon Paul Bond and Gavin Stephens.

"We expect to see up to 10,000 runners take part in our first Bright10 event," said Paul. "The race is run over the classic 10 mile distance and will be a perfect and very achievable challenge for many new and would-be runners."

Registration for the Bright10 is now open. Visit www.bright10.co.uk to sign up today. Entry is just £27 for an affiliated place and £29 for an unaffiliated place.

For further information email bright10@runbase.co.uk and for all the latest news follow @TheBright10 on Twitter or like the Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/thebright10>.

New gardens required for NSPCC Open Gardens

Green fingered Cuckfield residents are being urged to come forward and open their gardens for charity this summer.

Members of the local NSPCC committee are busy planning the biannual Open Gardens event and are looking for new exhibitors.

"We only just managed to get enough gardens for the last event and this year we are already struggling," said committee member Mary Crouch. "We are keen to run the event this year but desperately need more gardens."

"We would welcome any enthusiastic gardeners from the village. You don't have to have a big garden. Small plots can be just as inspiring!"

"We hope to hold the event on a Sunday afternoon towards the end of June from 2pm to 4pm."

All the open gardens are included on a walking route around the village, which is sold to visitors to raise money for the NSPCC.

For more information, telephone Diane on 452395 or Mary on 459579.



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Haywards Heath history talk in Council Chamber

Local author and historian Colin Manton will be giving villagers an insight into Haywards Heath's history as he presents an illustrated talk in the Queen's Hall later this month.

The event, at 8pm on 25th February in the Council Chamber, has been organised by Cuckfield Museum.

Under the theme 'Haywards Heath - Then and Now' Colin will illustrate and discuss the evolution of the town from medieval manors and a rural Victorian railway halt into today's regionally important commuting, residential, commercial and administrative district.

Colin will explain how his recent book, Haywards Heath Through Time, was researched, planned, written and put together. The book is included in Amberley Publishing's No.1 best-selling colour local history series.

Entry is by ticket only and costs £5 (£3 for members and patrons). To reserve your place telephone Sandra Burns on: 01444 412082 or email: events@cuckfieldmuseum.org



Landmark houses display opens

Cuckfield Museum reopens on Saturday 28th February with a new main display commemorating 150 years since the building of one of the village's landmark houses.

Horsgate was built in 1865 for banker Richard Bevan, popularly known as 'the father of Cuckfield' for his involvement in local life and his generosity with financial support for very many good causes.

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Penland Farm houses get go ahead

By Claire Cooper

If passion, determination and sheer hard work could influence decisions on planning applications then Penland Farm would be preserved for evermore!

But after two years of campaigning, door knocking, delivering leaflets, writing reports, letters and raising funds, members of the Penland Farm Action Group and their supporters have had to face the decision they were dreading. The outline planning permission to build a housing estate on the much loved green space has been approved by a government planning inspector.

The news came as a devastating blow to the campaigners, particularly members of the steering group who have lived and breathed the campaign.

Action Group member Isobel Holloway looks back over the campaign, which has been a big part of her life since the news broke in 2012 that an outline planning application had been submitted to Mid Sussex District Council to develop land at Penland Farm.

"Anticipating local concerns about the proposals, Haywards Heath Town Council decided to hold its planning meeting at Warden Park School," Isobel recalled. "It was a wise decision; the hall was overflowing, people were even queuing out of the door."

Spurred on by the huge strength of feeling, the Penland Farm Action Group swung into action.

"We knew we had to have a co-ordinated effort, so we formed a steering group and allocated key roles."

Relying entirely on volunteers, the group set up a website and facebook page, and printed and delivered 4,000 leaflets in Cuckfield, Balcombe and Haywards Heath. "We spent hours pounding the streets," said Isobel. "Whole families, parents and children were out delivering leaflets. It was clear from the very beginning just how passionate people were about protecting our green space. One elderly gentleman handed me a cheque straight away."

Behind the scenes other steering group members were embarking on a huge research project. "Our research 'guru' John Clayton worked tirelessly, delving into complex planning policies and law; highly skilled and specialist areas," said Isobel.

"Mags Cracroft, our project manager, co-ordinated the campaign and ensured everyone was given a role to play.

"We soon had more than 2,000 supporters from Haywards Heath, Cuckfield, Lindfield and Balcombe writing hundreds of letters."

Objections from Cuckfield, Lindfield and Balcombe Parish Councils and Haywards Heath Town Council gave the campaign a further boost.

"The parish and town councillors were brilliant – supporting us all the way and giving us their advice and assistance," said Isobel. "We also employed landscape and planning consultants and a traffic data specialist." She added that the whole campaign cost over £17,000, all donated by supporters.

The campaign gained further momentum when Mid Sussex District Councillors on the planning committee



went against the recommendation of planning officers and refused the application.

"Those councillors really put their necks out for us," said Isobel.

As expected, an appeal was lodged and the action group faced their biggest challenge - preparing for the appeal hearing.

"Each stage meant more reports had to be drawn up and letters written," said Isobel. "We were constantly working under time pressures and having to respond to amended plans. The development company was even submitting new information at the appeal hearing."

The inspector's final decision was met with disbelief: "We were totally devastated at the way the strength of opposition was brushed aside," said Isobel.

"Emotionally it's been really difficult but there have been humorous moments. At the Cuckfield Parish Council planning meeting someone asked how many more cars they envisaged the 210 house development would bring into Cuckfield via Hanlye Lane. After chatting amongst themselves they answered 35!" said Isobel. "The whole room burst out laughing.

"On the positive side we have shown that we can come together as a community for a cause people care about. We also got a large reduction in the number of houses proposed and the promise of more planting and landscaping schemes," she added.

"Our job hasn't ended. We will be scrutinising the detailed planning applications and ensuring that local people's voices are heard.

"We also now have the knowledge and expertise to share with other community groups fighting to save their own precious green space."



1st Cuckfield Scout Group

by Mike Schlup, Scout Leader

Scouting exists to actively engage and support young people in their personal development, empowering them to make a positive contribution to society. All scouts, young and old, are guided by strong values:

Integrity: We act with integrity; we are honest, trustworthy and loyal

Respect: We have self-respect and respect for others

Care: We support others and take care of the world in which we live

Belief: We explore our faiths, beliefs and attitudes

Cooperation: We make a positive difference; we cooperate with others and we make friends

2014 was a great year for the 1st Cuckfield Scout Group, incorporating Beavers (6-8 years), Cubs (8 to 10 years) and Scouts (10 to 14 years). The programme throughout the year for each section is designed to reinforce the values of Scouting but with the caveat that it must be fun! The beginning of the year is always a tricky time for all the sections as the bad weather makes it difficult to get outside to burn off all that youthful energy. So time is spent on other skills such as map reading, knots, pioneering (building structures with poles and rope) and indoor games.

As soon as the weather improves we try to get outside as much as possible. Hikes are a popular activity, as are wide games in the fields (water works permitting) and treasure hunts around the village.

For 2015 we are already looking forward to major events, such as the district swimming gala and the district cooking challenge (our scouts are defending champions). Another big event will be summer camp. Last summer we spent a fantastic four days and nights

at Stanford Camp in woodland near Pease Pottage. This was back to basics stuff, with all meals cooked over open fires and the scouts even spending a night in the shelters that they had built.

Can you help us? 1st Cuckfield Scout Group is always looking for new volunteers to help out in a variety of roles, in particular helping out with meetings. There is a long waiting list of children hoping to join the group but we need more leaders to help. A bonus of becoming an adult volunteer is that it gets your child to the top of the waiting list. If you want to find out more please email exec1stcuckfield@yahoo.co.uk



Death Café in Cuckfield

The Mid Sussex Branch of Death Café comes to Cuckfield next month.

The concept is simple. Since 2011 people all over the world, who are often strangers, have been meeting to eat cake, drink tea or coffee and discuss death. Why?

We often find it difficult to talk about death. But the fact that we all die is a challenge, a possible source of anxiety and has practical implications.

A Death Cafe is a discussion group, not a grief support or counselling session. It provides an opportunity to informally share ideas, experience and concerns. There is no agenda. The objective is 'to encourage dialogue with a view to helping us make the most of our lives'. Discussion emerges from the subjects on the minds of the participants.

This first Cuckfield meeting will be at 7.30pm on Wednesday 11th March at The Cuckfield Pantry and Tearoom. There is no cost for attendance. Coffee, tea and cake will be available to buy.

If you think that you would like to come along, please email either Joanna Warrington at joannawarrington@hotmail.com or Terry Bevan at t.bevan45@btinternet.com

For more background information you can visit the Death Café official website at www.deathcafe.com

Award for former Warden Park pupil

Former Warden Park pupil and local artist Paul Milton been awarded the title of BDA Ambassador for the Arts and Dyslexia.

Paul was given the honour after meeting members of the British Dyslexia Association (BDA) last year.

Delighted with the award, Paul said: "I didn't know I was nominated or even considered for the award, which was an honour and great surprise.

"The nicest part was when I heard they had chosen me because I care about the Arts and care about the people. They had a lot of people approach them but out of all of the people they chose me."

Paul received his award at a gala event in Mayfair, where he also showcased, and even sold, some of his artwork.

"Whilst at the event, the Chief Executive of an IT company that deals with technology aimed at people with dyslexia bought one of my latest drawings!" said Paul. "Wherever I exhibit or talk about my art, I also like to talk about my dyslexia and how the BDA gave me the confidence to achieve things I couldn't possibly imagine."

Paul is currently busy making plans for the Balcombe arts trail later this year.

Glimpses of spring

VILLAGE GREEN

By Margaret Tyzack More, Cuckfield Local

Traditional country wisdoms are being turned upside down these days as our weather becomes stranger and stranger. 'January brings the snow. Makes our feet and fingers glow.' So runs the first verse of an old nursery rhyme. It didn't this January in our area thank goodness. The joy of the first snowdrops already spearing their way through the grass before the turn of the year was matched a few days later by a few bright daffodils spotted in Cuckfield and Lindfield. Could the rose blooming with the wild primroses in my garden be a hint of changing climate? This is a new aspect of the weather for us Brits to discuss, which is not quite so safe as the short old greeting of 'morning'. Turned out nice again. Glimpses of Spring certainly cheer the spirit, adding to our health and well-being at a time of snuffles and sneezes and this winter's flu.

Now for a cautionary tale around health and well-being. For some time I have been feeling considerably below par. Several symptoms forced themselves upon my awareness. "Do we want know this?" I hear you say. Read on. Searching the web it seems that my problems could result from high levels of copper in my body causing adrenal stress. Where did this copper come from? Copper leaching from the soldered joints of my water pipes? Sure enough, the joints showed pale green telltale signs of copper leaching into the water to my kitchen taps. Plumber as soon as possible. Result! Whereas the water test strips had been reading point one, very close to the danger limit, the new joints showed copper content in the water of 0.2. Big difference to the water and to me. Worth having a look at the pipes to your kitchen taps to be on the safe side.

One of the problems experienced was disturbed sleep, which is why the BBC World Service was on at 4 o'clock in the morning the other night. My ears pricked up when I heard that the Mayor of New York is banning all expanded polystyrene containers used by the street food traders as from this summer. An alternative recyclable container is made from begass, by-product of the sugar cane industry. Something that Cuckfield Local looked at several years ago when we launched our Plastic Bag Free Cuckfield initiative with our cotton bags was the issue of plastic takeaway containers. Expanded polystyrene is neither recyclable nor degradable. It stays in landfill for ever or adds to the plastics in our oceans.

The next Cuckfield Local Food Market will be on Saturday 14th March at The Talbot 9:30 – 12:30. To contact Cuckfield Local email Sheila Harris sheila.harris@gmail.com or Margaret makaet@yaho.co.uk

'March brings breezes sharp and shrill. Shakes the dancing daffodils.' Keep warm.



Wetheralls return for concert

Almost a year after Nick and Ruth Wetherall moved to Cornwall they will be returning to Holy Trinity Church to take part in the lunchtime concert series on Friday 6th March.

Both extremely talented musicians, the programme will include music by Mozart, Bach and Marcello and performed on the piano, recorder and oboe. The highlight of this concert will undoubtedly be the performance of Mozart's Oboe Concerto in C. This work was presented to Nick as a parting gift last year, which

he promised to return to play. This is going to be a very special concert, so please do come and join us!

Soup will be served from 12.30 and the concert will start at 1pm.

If you would like to volunteer and get involved in this exciting concert series, please contact hannah.carter@me.com. Help is urgently required from putting up posters to making soup!

 **Haywards Heath Music Society**
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21st Feb 2015: Janet Canetty-Clarke
Northern Lights: Greig and Sibelius

Well-known local conductor, pianist and lecturer Janet Canetty-Clarke will present another of her popular illustrated talks in Haywards Heath Methodist Church at 7.45 pm. She will discuss how the Scandinavian environment influenced the lives and music of these two composers.



Tickets £12, conc'ns £11, member's discount £3
Family rate: 2 adults half price with under-18 (£3)

14th Mar 2015: Young Musicians' Showcase



Come and hear some of the best young musical talent in the district, starting at 2.30 pm in St Wilfrid's Church.

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A best seller set in the Seychelles

A Cuckfield author who had her debut novel published last year has just had more excitement when the title made the book retailers 'Amazon Best Sellers' list last month!

Echoes from the Oasis by A. R. Tirant is the story of a strong female character, Anna Savy, on the island of Mahe at the turn of the 20th Century in the Seychelles.

"I was delighted when I saw my book in the top three," Rosie commented. The novel was published in paperback in May 2014, followed shortly by a Kindle version in June.

Rosie's 'day job' is in the village but her passion in her spare time is writing. She is now working on the second title in what she hopes will be a series, telling the story of Seychelles history amongst a fictional set of characters.

The book is also available at Haywards Heath, Hassocks and Burgess Hill libraries.



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Hitting the target!

CUCKFIELD ARCHERS

By Claire Cooper

It's just two years since archery returned to Cuckfield but already young archers are on target to become some of the best in the county!

Members of the junior girls' team took part in their first two competitions last year and not only won the team prize but also an individual trophy.

"We were stunned," said club secretary Bridget Dolan. "The girls were competing against juniors from all over Sussex. They worked well as a team; their scores were consistently good and that made all the difference!"

The girls, Aoife Rice, Imogen Ferguson and Holly Hatch, were delighted to bring back the first team trophy for the Cuckfield Archers. And there was more good news when Holly went on to take the Recurve Trophy at the Eastbourne Junior Tournament.

"I didn't have any expectations and I think that helped a lot," said Holly. "I wasn't nervous and just enjoyed it."

The girls' success is a fitting tribute to the small and dedicated committee which has not only brought archery back to the village but introduced a new generation of villagers to the increasingly popular sport.

Bridget explained how she came to join the Cuckfield Archers and take up the sport which has now become a big part of her life.

"My daughter tried archery while on an activity holiday and just loved it," said Bridget. "Shortly afterwards I read a story in a local newspaper about plans to resurrect the former Cuckfield Bowmen, I had no intention of joining; I just took her along to a meeting to find out more."

Before she knew it she was club chairperson!

The initial meetings were set up by former Cuckfield Bowmen Roy Viccari and John Stevens. "The original Cuckfield Bowmen were set up in 1973 but moved

to Ditchling after health and safety concerns meant they could no longer train on Whiteman's Green," said Bridget. "Ditchling Archers are still going strong."

Spurred on by the success of British archers in the Paralympic Games, the first meetings attracted several villagers interested in taking up the sport, as well as experienced archers.

"We were lucky enough to attract a very experienced archer, Steve Pullen, who turned up bringing along his entire family!" said Bridget. "Steve's input has been invaluable, along with Paul Taylor who coached the local scouts and helped us to borrow the equipment we needed to get going. They have taught us such a lot."

Steve's graphic designer son John also designed the club's distinctive logo, featuring a cuckoo and archers' arrows.

During the first year the club was lucky enough to secure funding with grants from the Rotary Club, Haywards Heath Town Council, the Independent State of Cuckfield (through the Mayor's election fund) and Cuckfield Youth Club. "We also did marshalling and litter picking for the Cuckfield Bonfire in return for a donation," said Bridget.

By the end of the first year the club had attracted more than 20 members. That number has risen to over 35 and increases following every beginners' course.

Cuckfield Archers runs its popular six week beginners courses twice a year. The course includes two hours coaching every week, with all equipment provided. "We never seem to have trouble filling it and almost everyone goes on to join the club," said Bridget. She added that the next course will be in the spring.

New archers signing up after the last course included



husband and wife team Paul and Lorraine Wheaton. "I saw the club advertised on a notice board in Sainsbury's and we decided to go along together," said Lorraine.

"I've always been interested in archery but didn't know that there were any local clubs, so finding one in Cuckfield was perfect."

"What I like about archery is that anyone can do it – it doesn't matter what age, shape, size you are or whether you have a disability. It's very inclusive."

"Joining a group can be intimidating but everyone here has been so welcoming and friendly. They are a lovely group of people to spend time with on a Sunday afternoon!"

Husband Paul added: "I like the fact that you go at your own pace and make improvements every week. It doesn't matter what everyone else is doing."

"I've got my first badge already, which has given me extra incentive to keep trying and improve. I like the challenge of getting better every week."

After completing the course and joining the club, the couple treated themselves to new bows at Christmas!

The group meets weekly at Warden Park Academy on Sunday afternoons. Sessions are currently held in the school gym but in spring and summer the archers venture out on to the rugby field.

The team of coaches includes Bridget, who completed her Level 1 training last year.

The Club has a strong focus on inclusion and welcomes members with physical and learning disabilities, to train alongside able bodied members. "Archery is a very inclusive sport and we have several members with disabilities, including one of our archers who is profoundly deaf, blind in one eye and walks with a frame," said Bridget, "as well as members with Downs Syndrome and learning difficulties."

There's been a massive expansion of archery in Britain since the Olympics. Bridget added: "When a British archer won the first gold medal of the paralympics it seemed the whole country was watching."

Blockbuster adventure films such as the Lord of the Rings and the Hunger Games have given the sport a further boost, attracting many younger members to the sport. "Bows are in the public consciousness in a way they weren't five years ago (even Nerf make a crossbow now) and as a result most archery clubs are now oversubscribed," said Bridget. "Some have an 18 month waiting list."

Successful junior member Imogen was inspired to take up archery after reading the Ranger's Apprentice books. "I liked the look of archery – I thought it looked fun," she said.

Like most sports, archery equipment can vary in price. "You can pay as much or as little as you like, £60 for a starter bow, but the average cost of getting kitted out with good intermediate equipment is around £300," said Bridget, who also has also picked up bargains on ebay.

New member Alice Reilly, from Cuckfield, has recently upgraded her bow and is looking forward to trying it out on outdoor targets in the spring.

"I can't wait to get outside," said Alice, who joined the club after completing the autumn beginners' course. "After finishing the beginner course there was absolutely no doubt that I would carry on," she said. "I look forward so much to Sundays – even count down the days!"

"I didn't think archery would be as enjoyable as it is but it's just brilliant. It's such a challenge trying to improve but everyone is so friendly and helpful."

Away from the weekly practices, members can be found at various events around the village raising much needed funds for the club.

This includes running stalls at the Cuckoo Fair and have-a-go sessions at the Village show. "Fundraising is very important as we try to keep costs down", said Bridget. "Members pay just £50 a year – it works out at just £1 a week. There aren't many sports that offer such good value."

For more information about Cuckfield Archers visit: www.cuckfieldarchers.org.uk

A home office

DESIGN AT HOME

By Fiona Evans, Limited Editions

Working from home has never been more popular or practical. Thanks to this busy technological world we live in communications have never been easier. So if you don't have a home office but your work ethic allows, how about creating a snug place in your home to work from without hogging the dining table?

There are many options available on the market offering fabulous fitted out spaces for unused rooms, eaves space and empty alcoves; wonderful purpose built offices in summer house style or pod form destined for the end of your garden. If your budget or taste doesn't run to these options, then here are some suggestions for creating the homeworking space you desire.

There are certain things to consider when creating a home office or studio.

How much space do you need? How much available space do you have? How to utilise it?

Of course you will need a suitable working area such as a desk or table. Appropriate lighting is a must and you'll need sufficient storage for all your stuff. Objects to encourage inspiration and avoid distraction are helpful such as pinning ideas, lists etc to a board, while suitable décor in tranquil colours help lull you into the right frame of mind. The office space should be at a comfortable temperature and choosing a decent chair helps (but not so comfy that you fall asleep).

Whether you are considering converting the cupboard under the stairs, transforming a corner in the hall or landing, or are able to refurbish an entire room, lighting is of major importance. Natural light is the best, not only to see by but you will feel all the better for natural white light as it lifts your mood and encourages positive thoughts and ideas. Blinds can be used to block out bright sunshine without losing all daylight, so placing the desk under or near a window gives optimum effect. Task lighting from a desk lamp or similar focused on to your work is another must have.

Study spaces can be created within the smallest of areas, such as a deep cupboard fitted with shelves down to eye level and a drop-down hinged desk top which can be pulled up when you open the cupboard door/s. Additional storage compartments or memo boards can be hung from the inside of the doors. An empty corner of a room could also benefit from a fitted drop-down desk, with consideration given to storage shelves or compartments fitting behind the desk when it is dropped, if there is space and shelving or cupboards above.

If a free-standing desk is the answer, positioned by the window in your living area, choosing one that matches or complements your décor is a good way to go. Selecting storage items to help hide your work clutter will lessen the focus.

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Can you take a good photo?

At Cuckfield Life we are always after new stock for our growing collection of photos from in and around the village. Could you add to it?

All you need to do is email in your image, in the highest resolution it was shot in, to photos@cuckfieldlife.co.uk - at any time. We are always looking for new and creative images of Cuckfield.

There are a few helpful guides for cover photos. We like covers to be recognisable as Cuckfield (so just a close up of a flower on its own might not be obviously taken here). It's also usually better for these photos to be shot in portrait orientation - otherwise we have to crop a lot of the image off. It is also very helpful for us to know when the photo was taken. So just let us know a month when you email it in.

If your photo is selected to be used in print on the cover, we send you a £20 gift voucher for a local shop of your choosing. So, don't delay, get snapping today!

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Dinner party dessert

ON YOUR TABLE

Crème brûlée

Serves 6 people

Ingredients

- 500ml/18fl oz double cream
- 1 vanilla pod
- 100g/4oz caster sugar (plus extra for the topping)
- 6 free-range egg yolks

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By Simon Dennis, head chef at The Rose & Crown

This is a favourite with me and many other people and is the perfect way to end a dinner party. It is indulgent but not too filling! I hope you all enjoy making this recipe from the Rose and Crown Team!



Method

1. Preheat the oven to 150C/300F/Gas 2.
2. Pour the cream into a saucepan. Split the vanilla pod lengthways and scrape the seeds into the cream.
3. Chop the empty pod into small pieces and add them to the cream.
4. Bring the cream to boiling point, then reduce the heat and simmer gently for five minutes.
5. Meanwhile, in a separate bowl, beat the sugar and egg yolks together in a large heatproof bowl until pale and fluffy.
6. Bring the cream back to boiling point. Pour it over the egg mixture, whisking continuously until thickened - this indicates that the eggs have begun to cook slightly.
7. Strain the mixture through a fine sieve into a large jug and then use this to fill six ramekins to about two-thirds full.
8. Place the ramekins into a large roasting tray and pour in enough hot water to come halfway up their outsides. (This is called a bain-marie.)
9. Place the bain-marie on to the centre shelf of the oven and bake for 40-45 minutes or until the custards are just set but still a bit wobbly in the middle.
10. Remove the ramekins from the water and set aside to cool to room temperature. Chill until needed.
11. When ready to serve, sprinkle one level teaspoon of caster sugar evenly over the surface of each crème brûlée, then caramelize with a chef's blowtorch.
12. Set aside to cool for a couple of minutes, then serve.

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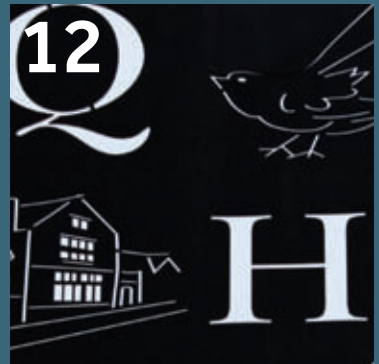
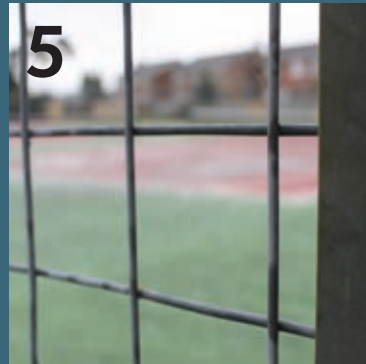
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Do you know Cuckfield? Cuckfield Quiz

We went out with a camera and captured some sights that will be familiar to many readers. But how many locations can you name? It's just for fun, the answers are on page 30 or you can see the reveal photos at our blog <http://bit.ly/1CKJ7i8>



A helping pair of hands

Cuckfield resident Sarah Palsler has recently set up a new business focused on helping busy people.

She describes the services of the Lady Butler as 'your home concierge'.

It seems that there is very little Sarah can't help you with, from walking the dog, waiting in for a

delivery to arrive and house-sitting to organising a surprise birthday party or looking in on your elderly parents. She promises a very flexible service.

"I have seen the concept work elsewhere," said Sarah, "and I really wanted to try something like this here as I think a lot of us have too much to do. I am able to take away a number of tasks from clients, leaving them with more spare time!

"I have always been the kind of person to get things done, so this line of work is perfect for me."

Sarah lives in Cuckfield with her sons Jack and Sam and has done for 11 years. See her advertisement on page 10 for details.



Rogue Traders

Sussex Police are reporting that Rogue Traders are currently operating in the Mid Sussex area.

If a tradesperson comes to your door to say that they can do work for you – stop and think ... this can wait while I get trusted advice.

The trader may make it sound urgent but this is unlikely to be the case - you will probably have plenty of time to contact a trusted local trader for full advice.

Sussex Police have previously issued warnings about this type of crime. Works offered can include basic building or drains work, UPVC fitting, tarmacking, gardening or tree works etc. A reasonable sounding fee may first be agreed but along the way 'more serious problems' may be identified that raise the cost to an unreasonable level. The works may actually be unnecessary, or may not get completed, or may be to a poor standard.

In October last year a Police spokesperson gave a message that remains relevant: "We strongly advise residents not to engage with any cold callers of this type.

"Please report sightings of suspicious vehicles, persons or activities such as those described to us, using the 101 non emergency contact number, via our website, www.sussex.police.uk or, if there is an offence in progress, on 999."

Abseil for hospice



Thrill seekers are invited to abseil 100 feet down the outside of the Sandman Signature hotel in Crawley to raise money for St Catherine's Hospice. The abseil has a superheroes theme, so participants are encouraged to dress up as their favourite superhero to descend the seven storey building on 18th April.

Louise Brown, Events Fundraiser for St Catherine's, said: "This is a really fun and unusual new challenge for thrill seekers who also want to make an important difference to local people. We're really looking forward to seeing all of our abseillers, not to mention the fantastic costumes. We are aiming to raise a heroic £11,000 through the abseil, which will make a huge difference in helping us to reach the £5.5m we must raise every year to continue caring for local people with a terminal illness."

The event is sponsored by local firm Elekta. Registration costs £25, with a required fundraising target of £150.

As well as individuals taking part on 18th April, St Catherine's is holding a special corporate teams only day on 17th April. Any company that enters a team of 10 can also enter their CEO for free. For more information go to www.stch.org.uk/abseilhero

Photo: Garth Harris, who took on an abseil for St Catherine's Hospice

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March Food Market

Sat 14th Talbot Courtyard
9:30am-12:30pm



Come and bring you seeds to swap at the Cuckfield Local stall...

For market updates follow us on Twitter @Cuckfield Local

www.cuckfieldlocal.wordpress.com

Book a stall at the spring fair

Now is the time to book your space at Cuckfield's annual Spring Craft and Gift Fair.

This year's event will be held at the Old School in Church Street, Cuckfield on Saturday 25th April between 10.30am and 2.30pm.

There are 40 stalls available for the sale of home produced cupcakes, knitted items, handbags, scarves, jewellery, candles, greetings cards, handmade soaps, home wares, photo prints, books and other gift ideas.

Home-made soup, cakes, tea and coffee will also be available from the tearoom.

Indoor and outdoor stalls are available and cost: indoor either 6ft (£15) or 4ft (£10) or outdoor, bring your own gazebo, (£15).

To book your space contact:

Peter Groves

Manager

Tel: 01444 456900

e-mail: oldschoolmanager@tiscali.co.uk

Support local businesses

FROM THE MAYOR'S TABLE

By Rob Helliwell

January draws to a close without masses of snow here in the South. Good for me because people can get to the pub but there will be the odd sledge lying sadly in the hallway! Your time could still come brave tobogganer!

Walking down the High Street last week in brilliant sunshine I was impressed by the charm and quality of the shops and businesses, and I was reminded how fortunate we are in Cuckfield. We have so much 'on our doorstep'.

I thought if it does snow and I can't drive all I need to do is put on the wellies and walk to the High Street.

I could buy food and wine, order a brand new bathroom, buy an outfit for the girl in my life and give it to her with a massive bouquet of glorious flowers. I could sneak in for a facial and a massage, have a haircut and buy carpets and curtains for the house that I could buy. If my boots were leaking I could replace them, and buy medicine for whatever ailment I had got on that day. I could buy greeting cards and wrapping paper for presents, sweets and toys, get cash out and have my teeth filled, cleaned and polished. I could gaze with awe at beautiful antiques or buy a snazzy pair of specs.

Then, having popped into The Talbot for much needed refreshment after my imaginary shopping spree, I would then trudge back through the snow to The Wheatsheaf laden with super shopping.

"Goodness knows why Cuckfield hasn't got a decent butcher" I heard a pompous male exclaim the other day. I'll tell you why sir, because when we did not only have one but two decent butchers we didn't use them. So the businesses failed and the shops closed.

The old adage 'If you don't use it you'll lose it' springs to mind.

We need to support and use our beautiful, accessible High Street so that it can flourish and grow, not decline and wither.

Local businesses are the pulse of our community and it's our responsibility to keep that pulse pumping.

Enjoy your next Cuckfield High Street shopping experience.

Suitable gifts for the Mayor leave at 'The Wheatsheaf' – I'm sure you will find plenty!

However, I don't hold out much hope as I have just walked up and down the High Street and it is deserted! Come on Cuckfield residents, you can do better than that. Get shopping!

Comedy 4 Kids
Thursday 19th February 2.00pm | Clair Hall
James Campbell the pioneer of kids stand up comedy.

The Classic Legends
Friday 27th February 8.00pm | Clair Hall
Three legendary bands perform their part in the history of rock and folk all in one show!

The Manfreds
Thursday 12th March 8.00pm | Clair Hall
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The Duck In The Truck
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Coro Nuovo concert

Holy Trinity Church, Cuckfield is the venue for Coro Nuovo's next concert on Sunday 8th March at 2.30pm.

The Coro Nuovo choir is fast gaining a reputation locally as a choir that delivers an exciting programme of high quality music. Our aim is to perform those pieces larger choirs don't tackle. Last summer the choir sang a whole segment from Britten's opera Peter Grimes and our music director - Andrew Rees, the international tenor - was able to give the choir first-hand experience as he was performing the same work with Grange Park Opera!

Last year the choir performed a concert of British music celebrating great composers such as Byrd, Tallis, Elgar, Vaughan-Williams, Gilbert and Sullivan and even Paul McCartney. The choir were delighted to have Kieran Carter, the highly talented young cellist, to play the Elgar Cello Concerto.

The Coro Nuovo choir also recently sang carols over four nights for the 5,000 or so people who visited the very popular Glow Wild event in December at Wakehurst Place. Coro Nuovo will increasingly be carrying out events to fulfil their aim of funding a bursary to help young musicians.

Coro Nuovo is different from other choirs in that we draw soloists from within our own ranks, many of whom are professional performers. We also support emerging young musicians by giving them the chance to perform at concerts, helping them to get valuable performance experience as well as mentoring from someone at the top of their profession.

The Hallelujah! concert at Cuckfield on 8th March will be an afternoon of traditional classical music - some well-known opera pieces, some folk, some show-time classics. We are delighted to welcome Calum Jones, a young tenor from Brighton who shows great promise as a future performer.

Cuckfield has its own musical talent and Rebecca Milford, a promising soprano, is part of the choir along with her dad Orlando who sings bass. Rebecca is in her final year at Lewes College and she is actively pursuing a singing career as a member of Glyndebourne

Youth Opera. She has performed on the main stage in collaborative and new operas, including Noye's Fludde at the Royal Festival Hall and performing a solo role in that opera. She recently performed a solo role in Dido and Aeneas.

Tickets for Hallelujah! at Cuckfield are available from Wealden Stores, Cuckfield, Carousel Music, Haywards Heath and on 01444 882649.

www.coronuovo.org.uk

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What's on this month

AT QUEEN'S HALL

AND ELSEWHERE

Regular weekly classes (many are drop-in classes):

Monday

- 9.30am **Fluid Physio (Pilates)**
11am **Weigh In – Weigh Out**
7.30pm **Haywards Heath & District Canine Society – Dog Training**

Tuesday

- 9am **Tiny Soccerstars** for 18 months to 5 years
9.30am **Tinkerbells** - music classes for children
3pm **Codanza**
6.30pm **Haywards Heath & District Canine Society**
7pm **Pilates**

Wednesday

- 9.30am **Tinkerbells**
10am **Stroke Communications Group**
12.30pm **Zumba Dance Fitness®** (Live Wire)
1.30pm **Modern Line Dancing**
4pm **Codanza**
8pm **Best of Ballroom Cuckfield Dance Club**

Thursday

- 9am **Tumbletots**
9.30am **Tinkerbells**
10am **Pilates**
7.30pm **Social Ballroom and Latin American Dance**

Friday

- 7.30pm **Evening Flower Club**
(second Friday of the month)

There is now a list of regular activities and classes on the Notice Board that includes contact details.

February

- 25th **Cuckfield Museum illustrated talk** 8pm.
'Haywards Heath - Then and Now' by Colin Manton. Tickets £5 (£3 for members and patrons) from Sandra Burns on 01444 412082 or events@cuckfieldmuseum.org
- 27th– **Cuckfield Dramatic Society: February Frolics**
28th A meal separating a comic short play and a selection of sketches. Tickets (food included): £12 (Friday) and £15 (Saturday – with a more substantial meal) available from Mansell McTaggart or online at <http://bit.ly/14tIGLk>

March

- 8th **Cuckfield Evening Flower Club AGM**
7.30 for 7.45pm. All welcome (Sue Spooner 01444 831602)

February

- 17th **Cuckfield Evening WI Talk**, The Old School Cuckfield 8pm. 'Volks Railway' by Ian Gledhill
- 18th **Mid-Sussex Decorative and Fine Arts Society Lecture**, Clair Hall, Haywards Heath 10.15 for 10.45am. 'The Medieval Art of Love and Life' by Patricia Wright (www.mid-sussexdfas.org.uk)
- 25th **Royal British Legion Women's Section**
The Old School, Cuckfield 2.30pm. 70th Anniversary Celebration.

March

- 3rd **NHS Retirement Fellowship**, Franklands Village Hall, Haywards Heath 10.15am. 'The Burren of Western Ireland' by Patrick Coulcher
- 6th **Holy Trinity Lunchtime Concert**, soup: 12.30pm, concert: 1pm. Nick and Ruth Wetherall performing music by Mozart, Bach and Marcello on the piano, recorder and oboe (hannah.carter@me.com)
- 8th **Coro Nuovo concert: Hallalujah**, Holy Trinity Church 2.30 pm. Opera pieces, folk music and show-time classics. Tickets available from Wealden Stores, Carousel Music and 01444 882649 (www.coronuovo.org.uk)
- 11th **Death Café**, The Cuckfield Pantry and Tearoom 7.30pm. Free – coffee tea and cake available to buy (Joanna Warrington at joannawarrington@hotmail.com)
- 14th **Cuckfield Local Food Market**
courtyard of The Talbot 9:30am to 12:30pm
- 21st **Sussex Chorus: French Sacred Music**, All Saints Church, Hove BN3 3QE 7.30pm. Duruflé – Requiem, Gounod – Messe Solennelle de Sainte Cecile, Dupré – Cortège et Litanie and Widor – Toccata. Tickets: £15, concessions £12, students and under 16s £5 available from www.sussexchorus.org or 01444 412579
- 29th **Ardingly Choral Society With Mid-Sussex Sinfonia: Palm Sunday**, Ardingly College Chapel 7.30 pm. Dvorak – Stabat Mater. Tickets £14 (concessions £12.00) from Michael Kershaw 01825 791241 or Carousel Music

Thorpe Park winner

Mary Smithen won the prize of five theme park tickets in last month's competition. Congratulations Mary!

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Cuckfield Quiz: answers from page 22

Answers: 1) Cuckfield Lodge, 2) Holy Trinity Church, 3) Former Ship Inn, 4) Marshalls, 5) Tennis Courts, 6) Wealden Stores, 7) Bus Stop London Road, 8) No 1 South Street, 9) The Rose & Crown, 10) The Talbot, 11) The Clockhouse, 12) The Queens Hall

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