BERWICK SELMESTON ALCISTON VILLAGE NEWS OCTOBER 2025



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Donations

Financial donations to support the printing and distribution of the Village News are very gratefully received. Please make cheques payable to "Berwick, Selmeston and Alciston Village News" and pass to: The Treasurer, Brian Calcott at 2 Railway Cottages, Station Road, Berwick, Polegate, BN26 6TA. Alternatively, electronic donations can be made to: Barclays Bank - Account No. 70650625; Sort code 20-49-76. Thank you!

Benefice Priests

Revd Canon Peter Blee Rector of Berwick and Vicar of Selmeston with Alciston - The Parsonage, Berwick, Polegate, BN26 6SR Tel: 01323 870512 Email: peter.blee@berwickchurch.org.uk

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The Vicarage, Wilmington, Polegate, BN26 5SL
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If you would like to join the lottery, please email Kate Lumsden at

admin@berwick100club.co.uk

THE LOTTERY

HAS DONATED £947.52 SO

FAR TO THE BERWICK

VILLAGE HALL

Thank you to everyone for your generous support.

August's total draw was: £252

1st prize: Shirley Low 2nd prize: Kerry Hodgkinson 3rd prize: Peggy Lawrence

October's guaranteed minimum draw total is £252

The Berwick 100 Club is a Small Society Lottery under the Small Society Lottery Gambling Act 2005 and is registered as such with Rother District Council, Registration Number 30266. Berwick Village Hall Trust is a registered charity with the Charity Commission under number 1031341

Thank You

We are very grateful to have received a donation for the production of the Village News from Mavis Newton. Thank You!

Contributions - both financial and by way of photo content and articles - are always much appreciated - for further information please refer to the inside cover page.

The Village Quiz is Back!

From 6.30 pm on Saturday 4th October at Alciston & Selmeston Village Hall

Join us for an evening of fun, fish and 'finking!' Come along as a team of six or join one on the night. Tickets: £16 includes quiz entry and fish/veggie & chips.

Bar open from 6.30 pm; Fish & Chips served from 6.30 pm; Quiz starts 7.30 pm.

Advance booking essential, this popular event sells out quickly! Please contact Mairi 07582 938185 or Helen 07969 732109 to book in.

Rachel Lewis

Medieval Wayfaring in Art on Sussex

7:00 pm Tuesday 7th October at Berwick Church

A free illustrated talk by Emma Rose Barber - all most welcome. For further information see www.berwickchurch.org.uk.

Diana White

Firle and Beddingham Women's Institute

7.30 pm Wednesday 8th October at Firle Village Hall

For our September meeting we welcomed Cliff Dargonne who gave us a most interesting talk on 'Nepal - after the earthquake'.

Back in 2003 Cliff had been with colleagues to climb Mount Everest and he has been back to Nepal a few times since. He and his friends have been helping to repair damage to a school in the area. He explained that as concrete is extremely expensive, most houses are just made of dry stone walls

and therefore collapsed when the 2015 earthquake struck.

He showed us various photos of the area: the bustling city of Kathmandu, precarious bridges across rivers, and the steep paths that the Sherpas use to carry all building materials, plus food and water, to the 'lodges' on the way up to Everest Base Camp.

The Nepalese are a resourceful people and re-use as much as possible in the way of building materials. He also brought along a 'singing bowl', which is used at festivals. Once struck, it was fascinating to see how you can keep the humming going by running a small stick around the outside rim of the bowl.

Our October meeting will be our Castle Group Meeting when we welcome members from Chiddingly and Ringmer institutes.

The speaker will be Rosemary Sloan on 'Reflexology - a talk and demonstration'. Do please join us if you would like to.

Rosy Norris President Tel: 07784 707016

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

10.00 am - Noon, Tuesday 14th October at Arlington Village Hall [BN26 6SE].

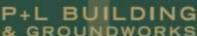
Everyone is very welcome to visit the market and museum; we will be pleased to see you.

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

Arlington's Pop-Up Museum will also be taking place at the same time; this month's exhibit features 'The Cuckmere Pilgrim Path', a circular walk of about 12 miles over varying terrain taking walkers on a pilgrimage around seven ancient rural



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churches. It passes through the beautiful landscape of the South Downs, Low Weald and Cuckmere Valley.

The September market was again very busy, it was lovely to see so many visitors taking an interest in the museum exhibit about Polegate Windmill.

Again, thank you to the many local people and those from further afield, who have continued to support our monthly community event. Please bring your friends and if you have not been before you will be very welcome. It is a very sociable morning and there is always tea and cake.

For further market information please contact Anne Hope:

Tel. 01323 486219 / 07760 424169, Email anntonyhope@gmail.com.

www.thejteam.co.uk

For further museum information please contact Wendy Holmes: Tel. 07889 689844, Email talkingteapot@yahoo.co.uk.

Pauline Jackson

The Alciston & Selmeston Village Hall Hub

11.00 am to 12.30 pm on Monday 20th October at A&S Village Hall

The Hub welcomes you all to enjoy refreshments, tea and coffee as well as delicious homemade cake in a convivial, warm environment. Pop in anytime, open to everyone - bring your little ones for a run around and catch up with neighbours and friends. Please contact any of the committee below if you have any questions or need help with transport to and from the hall.

Janie 07785 940915 / Thea 07772 155772 Helen 07969 732109 / Mairi 07582 938185

Rachel Lewis

Alciston Parish Meeting

7.00 pm on Thursday 6th November in Alciston church

Contact Chris on 07966089105

All villagers welcome.

Sandy Thomas

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The Littlest Yak: Children's Puppet and Theatre Show

3.00 pm on Saturday & November at A&S Village Hall (Door & bar open at 2.30 pm)

Suitable for ages 3+, this 45-minute musical adaptation of the award-winning children's book will delight audiences young and old with beautiful puppets, catchy tunes, and an uplifting tale of self-acceptance for all the family. An adult must accompany all children.

Tickets: Adult £12; Children £6; Free for under 3s.

It's easy to book your tickets - Online at www.applause.org.uk/shows/the-littlest-yak; Email: bookings@southdownsvillagehall.org or text Megan on 07846 260350.

Rachel Lewis

Berwick Produce Show Bingo Evening

7.00 pm on Saturday 8th November at Berwick Village Hall

Everyone is welcome, tea, coffee and squash for the children will be available. We look forward to seeing you at the village hall. Eyes down at 7.30 pm.

Sue Woodgate

Berwick Produce Show AGM

7.00 pm on Friday 14th November at Berwick Village Hall

We will be holding the Produce Show Annual General Meeting followed by the cup presentations. Hope to see you there tea and coffee will be provided.

Sue Woodgate

A&S Village Hall 100 Club

The Alciston & Selmeston Village Hall Committee are fundraising for a new heating system. Installing a modern, energy-efficient system will reduce our carbon footprint, lower our energy bills and make our hall a warmer, more welcoming space for everyone.

We are excited to announce that we have launched the 100 Club - a fun and easy way

to support the fundraising while getting the chance to win monthly cash prizes.

The prize money will be at least 35% of the membership funds taken that month. The remaining 65% goes to Alciston & Selmeston Village Hall Heating Fund. The more tickets purchased the bigger the prizes, so be sure to sign up to be in with a chance!

For more information and to register: www.southdownsvillagehall.org/100club or Email alcistonselmeston100@qmail.com.

Rachel Lewis

This Christmas It's Different!

At 3.00 pm on Sunday 14th December, Arlington will once again resemble Bethlehem of long ago, with people dressed as shepherds, angels and kings coming from all over the surrounding villages.

Those of you who recall the 'Infant King', the story of the birth of Jesus played out in the regalia of ancient Palestine, have told me much about it. I have seen a recording, safely preserved by Patsy Webb.

This year, there will be no ordinary Christmas Carol service, but a 'Living Crib', where you are invited to dress up and be active in this wonderful event.

This will take some planning, so if you would like to take part (there is no acting) the following are required:

- A Roman centurion, (maybe mounted?)
- Three kings from 'Afar' (camels, anyone?)
- A 'lead shepherd' and more shepherds, young & older
- Shepherd's crook
- Sheep
- King Herod
- Ladies and courtiers of Herod's Palace (dressed in great finery)
- Joseph
- A donkey
- An innkeeper



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Selmeston, East Sussex 07791 864384

- An innkeeper's wife
- The innkeeper's children
- Villagers witnessing the events as they unfold
- Many angels, of all ages (the heavenly host was vast!)
- A baby (I realize I should have planned much further ahead for this!)

A member of the congregation has volunteered to be Mary, and we also have identified the Archangel Gabriel (who will not be suspended in the chancel).

There are some costumes that will come out of storage, and Angie Machel is available with her awesome sewing skills. Shepherds (tea towel on the head) and angels (cardboard wings and tinsel) are the easiest for improvisation. Should you be interested in taking part, please email me at revshirleym@gmail.com as soon as possible.

There will be refreshments afterwards. I do hope you will join in or just come and see.

Rev Shirley

Berwick Produce Summer Show

It was lovely to welcome so many people to the Berwick Produce show in August; the show was a great success and we were blessed with lovely weather.

It was wonderful to see so many entries for the show classes. We were especially impressed with the children's class entries, the standard was very high and we had so many entries that we may have to get a bigger table next year! The photography judge was very impressed with every entry and complemented everyone who entered the photographic classes. Considering the hot dry weather we had, the produce on show was amazing. The hard work put into all the entries in all classes was very evident, well done everyone and thank you! We are planning for the show next year.

provisionally on Saturday 15th August 2026.

If anyone has any ideas that they think

could be brought to the show, please let me know.

We would also like to thank everyone who helped set up, volunteered on the day and helped pack everything away, also to those who donated prizes for the raffle and tombola. The support we get from Berwick is amazing.

Sue Woodgate

ALCISTON, 1550

They call me Brother James, though years have passed

since the king stripped land and titles from us. Now

I answer to Sir John - or rather, to his steward.

You may think little has changed: the tithed wheat

spreads its piled scent in the barn, the carp grow plump,

like cabbages. Father Michael has become

a Reverend, and says a Mass scarce different

from before. Sometimes I come upon him when he says his beads. Don't tell, he asks.

Leaves bud and fall; sheep bear their lambs.

Months pass. Sir John seems pleased. But something's gone: the awe that crept upon us

when bread was turned to flesh; the feeling our small church was a bridge we crossed, to find

a place of mystery that felt like home.

Antony Mair

Carving a Village Hall Sign

The sign for the Village Hall is of Portland stone, as used in so many London churches designed by Sir Christopher Wren, like the Lewes County Court building, and many others around the country.

The lettering is incised in a "V" shape so that, as light falls on the stone from one

side or the other a shadow forms, making the letters readable. Sometimes a stone has to be positioned where there is no natural light, and then the letters can be painted or gilded to aid legibility.

An inscription can normally be carved, as in this case, using a single chisel and a small 'dummy' mallet made from malleable iron with an ash handle. Have tools, will travel!

The letters are drawn onto the stone in pencil, though letter cutters in first century Rome would use paint and a straight-tipped brush which, skilfully handled, created an appealing 'entasis', or swelling of the letter stroke as it curved out to a point which we call a serif. Alternatively the letters can be sans serif, as in the case of the Village Hall sign where the letters still have 'entasis' but terminate with a simple stop.

Once the letters are drawn on the stone, carving normally begins at the bottom line to avoid the falling stone dust abrading the pencil marks as the chisel hand brushes the surface. The chisel then follows the drawn shapes bottom to top, right then left, round and around, outwards from the centre increasing the width with each stroke until the final 'V' is formed.

I am sometimes asked what I do if I make a mistake. In practice, as with driving a car or flying an aeroplane, mistakes are rare, as the need to avoid accidents is built into the learning process. Once stone is removed it cannot be put back; equally with sculpting from a block. In this respect the craft is very different from that of modelling where, prior to firing or casting, material can be both taken away and added.

"What font are you using?" I am often asked; or a client, or even an architect, will sometimes request that a certain font or typeface be used. This can be difficult for the letter cutter, who might have to point out that carved lettering preceded the invention of printing by several centuries. In fact, in the interests of a good result the craftsman should use his own letter forms, carefully developed to suit his material and

the job in hand. In developing this, he or she will have observed the finest examples like the 'Roman' letters of the first century AD. When letter cutting was still taught in Art Schools, a cast of the Trajan Column lettering in Rome was often available for study. Sadly, the lettering arts are no longer part of an art education except in specialist colleges like the City and Guilds Art School in London and Weymouth College in Dorset, or in courses organised by the Lettering Arts Trust based at Snape Maltings in Suffolk.

Geoffrey Aldred

October's Gardener's Diary

This month it's mainly preparation for next year's crops, but first a few tips on getting more from this year's plants. If you grew peas this year, just cut off the top and leave the roots in the ground. As they rot, they release nitrogen, which will be good for next year's crops.

When you cut cabbages, leave the roots in the ground, and cut across the top with a knife. This will encourage new leaf growth.

Plant your garlic this month for a bumper crop next year, and autumn onions can now be planted as well. For the rest of the month get clearing off any weeds and perhaps prepare trenches for beans in the spring, digging in manure at the same time.

Lisa Collington

Recipe of the Month: Pumpkin Pie

Serves 8

Ingredients

700 g Pumpkin flesh cut into 2 cm cubes 3 eggs beaten 150 g caster sugar 2 ½ tsp mixed spice ½ tsp flaky sea salt 340 ml evaporated milk lcing sugar for dusting

Pastry

250 g plain flour 125 g unsalted butter chilled and cubed 50 g caster sugar

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Method

Put the flour in a large bowl and rub in the butter with your fingertips until it resembles fine bread crumbs. Stir in the sugar and mix in 4 tbsp cold water until it comes together, adding more water if needed. Wrap in cling film and chill for 15 minutes.

Steam the pumpkin for 25 to 30 minutes until very tender. Set aside to cool. Preheat the oven to 200°C/180°C fan/400°F/gas mark 6. Roll the pastry and use it to line a 3 cm deep 22 cm loose bottom tart tin. Cut off the excess pastry and push up the sides until they are just higher than the side of the tin. Line the case with baking parchment, fill with baking beans and place on a baking sheet. Bake blind for 15 minutes until golden on the edges.

Remove the parchment and the baking beans and brush the pastry base with a little of the beaten egg. Return to the oven for 10 to 12 minutes until the pastry is golden and crisp.

Set aside to cool.

Whizz the pumpkin in a food processor to make a smooth puree, transfer to a large bowl, beat in the sugar, 2 tsp of the mixed spice and the salt followed by the evaporated milk and remaining egg until combined. Pour into the cooled tart case and bake for 15 minutes.

Reduce the heat to 170°C/150°fan/325°F/gas mark 3 and bake for 25 minutes until set, with just a slight wobble in the middle. Set aside for 5 minutes and remove from the tin and cool on a wire rack. Mix the icing sugar with the remaining mixed spice and dust over the pie. Serve warm.

Valerie Shaw

Family Support Work (FSW)

Dear Friends,

Returning to school is always a challenge for children, no matter how much they enjoy it! Here at FSW we are ready to step in and offer additional support to our parents as their children return to school. It is also a period when we see a large influx of referrals to our services. Over the next few weeks as children settle into school,

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we will start to receive these, as teachers get to grips with new classes and identify educational needs, or problems that are impacting on a pupil's life.

One of our school-related cases is Becky's. She has been supporting a lone parent with three children, including two with ASD. The eldest, 13, had been out of school for 18 months due to severe mental health difficulties and complete withdrawal from professionals. Becky provided consistent emotional and practical support for the mother, while gradually building trust with the 13-year-old through weekly walks. which eventually enabled her to return to school four days a week. Becky also supported the family in securing a Special Educational Needs school place for the 7year-old, who is now thriving. Her sustained, compassionate support has helped the family regain stability and access education tailored to the children's needs.

This work with families is slow as the time it takes to build the trust with the children can be long, but at the end of the day the results are worth it.

August's work in numbers

- 134 individual visits and 517 calls with families supporting 242 adults and 223 children
- 27 supported meetings with other agencies
- 44 group sessions held supporting 618 parents and 546 children
- 66 food deliveries made

As usual the August figures are always lower but there have been lots of activities during the school holidays for the families, and there are always opportunities for informal support at these events.

Prayer points

- For all who volunteer with our families and in the food bank
- For those children refusing to go to school

 Give thanks for all the support we have received over summer

Martin Auton-Lloyd CEO www.familysupportwork.org martin@familysupportwork.org.uk Telephone 01273 832963.

A Red Kite Tale

On holiday in the late 90s, my family and I made a visit to a working farm in Mid-Wales. As we watched from purpose-built hides, a group of magnificent wild birds of prey started to gather in the surrounding trees, eventually descending to pick up scraps of meat from the ground in a flurry of auburn feathers and forked tails. I remember being stunned by the sheer number; I was used to spotting a lone Kestrel or Buzzard but had never seen so many birds of prey at once.



The farm is famed for their supplementary Red Kite feeding, held there daily since advised by the RSPB in 1992, to support efforts to encourage the preservation of the species. The UK Red Kite population had been decimated due to long-term persecution, driven by an incorrect belief that they threatened game birds. Red Kites will hunt small mammals, such as rabbits,

Chloe Burrell

BSc (Hons), MCSP, HCPC Registered

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but are mostly scavengers, preferring to take carrion rather than live prey. By the late 1980s numbers were drastically low, and with only a handful of breeding pairs in Wales, the species was nearly extinct in the UK.

But change was in the air. Following a release of several birds in the Chilterns in 1990, efforts by many conservation organisations and committed individuals to support and resettle the species have made the Red Kite reintroduction one of the most successful and renowned conservation stories in the UK. The species now soars over many areas of the British Isles, which is home to an estimated 4,500 breeding pairs. Whereas during my Welsh farm visit we perhaps saw 80 birds, they now welcome up to 500. The Red Kite is an increasingly familiar sight in the skies above Sussex, soaring effortlessly over the South Downs on an almost-six-foot wingspan.

We know that memorable interactions for children and young people with our natural world can create lasting connections that can be vital to the continued conservation of our precious wildlife and habitats. Even though they are now abundant in some places, I am still overjoyed to see a Red Kite, perched in a bare branch or hovering over a motorway. When I do, I am often put in mind of that experience at the farm 25 years ago. I had no idea I was witnessing part of such an incredible story.

Kerry Williams:

Communications Officer - Conservation Photo: Red Kite © Dave Kilbev.

Digital Wallet Scams -Even if You Don't Have One!

The tech is so helpful, but so-called digital wallet scams are on the rise. Fraudsters are stealing card details to set up a digital wallet (e.g. Google or Apple Pay or) on their own devices. This can happen even if you have never set up a digital wallet.

Adding your debit and credit cards to your own digital wallet won't put you more at

risk - it could even help you, by making you more aware of the process and notifications from your bank. But the 'Bad Internet Behaviours' warnings still apply. Good practices include:

- 1. Heeding warnings If your bank notifies you that your card has been added to a digital wallet and you did not do this, call the bank immediately to investigate by using a trusted phone number (e.g. on the back of your credit/debit card or website). Many banks can also be reached via the '159' fraud helpline.
- 2. Turning on notifications from your mobile banking app to help you spot fraudulent activity as soon as it occurs because you will receive 'push notifications' whenever money is spent on your account.
- 3. Taking care when receiving One-Time Password messages (OTPs)- also known as verification codes that are typically used for two-factor and multi-factor authorization when logging into an app or website. These can 'flash up' on your mobile phone screen, etc., so you should shield your device so that no one else can see it.
- 4. Never clicking on links in emails or messages that claim to be from your credit card company or bank. If you're unsure if a message is legitimate, contact the organisation directly (see 1. above)
- 5. When shopping online, check website data: make sure the web address is correct and use a domain checker to verify the site's age. Be cautious of ads with prices that seem too good to be true. Using the additional security of a VPN can often 'spot' untrustworthy sites.
- 6. Check your bank or credit card statements and report any suspicious transactions immediately.

From the Parsonage: 'October'

Letting go is needed sometimes in order to receive, and allowing things to die is part of nature's process of renewal. Loss is part of the dynamic of life, and the season of autumn is a powerful evocation of this



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reality. One of the ways in which we stifle life is by not accepting and allowing this letting go. Sometimes loss may involve some sort of trauma, which can have the effect of embedding the loss so deeply within a person, that they are beyond reach emotionally, sealed up in a safe place. This can mean that the person carrying such a loss is unable to grasp it and let go of it. This can happen even when there hasn't been any trauma, apart from the pain of losing someone you love. Letting go is not the same as forgetting. It can herald another essential process to happen, that of the task of remembrance.

At the end of this month a simple candle-lit service is being held at Alciston church with a local choir led by Stephen Rooke singing beautiful sacred music. It is to commemorate and to remember those who we love who have died. In thankfulness, commemorating the life of someone who has been part of our lives and perhaps our formation as individuals, helps us at the same time to know and accept ourselves, which itself is a spiritual gift, and brings its own healing.

Alciston is an ancient church, and a considerable amount of work has been undertaken on the fabric of the building over the past year and a half. First to under-pin the east end wall and buttresses, and secondly to completely replaster the chancel. We're grateful to the Church Commissioners for their support in this financially challenging task. The foundations of a semi-circular Saxon apse were exposed just below the ground outside the east end. Old quoin stones were exposed during the replastering of the chancel interior. Like parts of our own past which may have been overlain by later developments they still contribute to, and are part of, the nature of this special sacred place; the enduring continuity of its history. In a world of such rapid change, where nothing seems to last, and where it's difficult to distinguish what is real from what is fake, the depth of history and sense

of what is truly permanent, of God who has no beginning and no ending, is tangible here.

During the service there is the opportunity to light a candle as an act of remembrance. The ephemeral burning flame becomes a reminder of what is 'real' and 'lasting' but 'invisible'. A transient representation of what persists eternally and is, in some mysterious way, woven into material reality and particular lives. The candles are placed as an offering of remembrance and of thankfulness to God who is the 'ground of all being'. The life, death, and resurrection of Christ symbolise the perfect way in which the two are joined, and through whom the two are joined still.

Anyone is welcome to attend this service which lasts about 35 minutes. If you would like an individual remembered, then there will be lists at the back of each church a fortnight beforehand for people to write the names of those who they would like included, and their names will be read out aloud at the service.

Peter Blee



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5.00 pm each Thursday online Zoom meeting - please contact Shirley Pearce for login code (revshirleym@gmail.com). To receive a weekly notification about services (the Sunday Link) please email

benefice.administrator@berwickchurch.org.uk

to pray with people on request in church at Morning Prayer and to offer help

Telephone: 01323 870512, 01323 318231 or

Email peter.blee@berwickchurch.org.uk,

the Benefice Administrator at

Peter Blee and Shirley Pearce are available to speak to people on the phone and are also able

Pastoral Prayer or Talk

in any way possible.

or revshirleym@gmail.com

CHURCH SERVICES AND MORNING PRAYER

09:30	Arlington Holy Communion
09:30	Selmeston Holy Communion
11:00	Berwick Holy Communion
11:00	Wilmington Holy Communion
Sunday	12th October
09:30	Alciston Holy Communion
09:30	Arlington Holy Communion
11:00	Berwick Holy Communion
11:00	Wilmington Holy Communion
Sunday	19th October
09:30	Arlington Holy Communion
09:30	Selmeston Holy Communion
11:00	Berwick Holy Communion
11:00	Wilmington Holy Communion
Sunday	26 th October
09:30	Arlington Holy Communion

Alciston Service of

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