

# *the* Hurst

ISSUE 16

MARCH/APRIL/MAY 2022

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- **Walk etiquette**
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- ***and more...***



What's going on in Hurst Green • News, views and information

## EDITORIAL

**When you're smiling, when you're smiling,  
The whole world smiles with you...**

Many people see smiling as a response to something funny or a reflection of a happy mood. However, while this is certainly true, smiling is also a conscious choice. It appears that whether your smile is genuine or not, it can act on your body and mind in a variety of positive ways, offering benefits for your health, your mood, and even the moods of people around you. Here are some good reasons to practice smiling: Helps you live longer, relieves stress, elevates mood, is contagious, boosts the Immune system, makes you attractive, helps You stay positive. So maybe as we walk around the village, if we can be intentionally smiley, it could make all the difference!

Something to smile about this year is the celebration of our monarch's 70 year reign. Not many of us can claim to have stayed in a job for that long! See the article for details of how Hurst Green plans to mark this event. A great opportunity to pull the village together – after the last two years, we need some light relief!

Cake is very much on the menu for any gathering, and I am delighted to introduce some tried and tested recipes. Anthea's Funky Cakes will be an ongoing feature in the magazine as well as more Gardening Tips from our very own 'Reigate Gardener'.

Finally, the cover photo has some interesting history, see the article opposite about the Red Hand of Ulster.

**Annabelle Blackaby**  
thehurst.hg@gmail.com

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## USEFUL CONTACTS

Allotment Association 01580 860251

Breakfast Club (75+) 01580 860760/860358

Brownies 01580 860742

Comedy Capers 01580 860221

Cricket Club 07796 976809

First Responders 07837 224905

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# The Red Hand of Ulster

## Where does that fit into the local history of Hurst Green?

In the seventeenth century Sir Peckham Micklethwaite lived in Iridge Place, London Road, Hurst Green. The Micklethwaite family was originally from Yorkshire and also had land in Longford, in the province of Leinster in Ireland.

Sir John Micklethwaite, a descendant of Sir Peckham, was baptised in Iridge Place in 1824. Sir Thomas used the Red Hand of Ulster as part of his family heraldry symbols.

The Red Hand of Ulster is rooted in Irish Gaelic history. Legend has it that the first man to lay his hand on the province of Ulster would lay claim to it. A band of warriors, who disputed ownership of the land, surged towards it. One enterprising warrior cut off his hand and threw it over the heads of the warriors and it landed in Ulster thus winning the land.

Another version from mediaeval Irish literature is that several real and legendary kings were given the

name 'Red Hand' or 'Red Handed' to signify that they were great warriors.

Sir John's wife Jane, died on 12th August 1819. Sir John died on 20th April 1824. They are both buried in the chancel vault in the church of St Mary the Virgin, Salehurst. Marble memorials to them are in the south vestry in the church. For those interested in local history they are worth a visit. As are the hatchments (heraldic painting memorials) which are displayed in the church. A hatchment bears the coat of arms, crest and motto of a dead person. It was carried in front of the funeral procession to the church and afterwards hung on the gate of the deceased person's house. After several months it was transferred to the church and hung on the wall for all to see.

Images of the Red Hand of Ulster can be spotted on gate posts still on land which was part of the Iridge Estate when it stretched from Coopers Corner to the church at Salehurst. Something to look out for when walking.



## PLAYERS WANTED

Hurst Green Cricket Club are playing short format cricket (20 over) games on Sunday afternoons this summer.

We'd like more players from the village and surrounding area to join our team.

Training and try-out sessions taking place this spring (when restrictions allow), keep an eye on our facebook page for more details.



facebook.com/hurstgreencricketclub    hurstgreenc@gmail.com

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# Anthea's Funky Cakes

## TREACLE GINGER CHOCOLATE CAKE

(Deep roasted flavour, bolstered by black treacle and warmly spiced with ginger)

125g unsalted butter, 3tbsp black treacle, 200g light brown soft sugar, 2 large eggs, 180ml warm water, 1tsp vanilla extract, 40g cocoa powder, 150g plain flour, ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda, pinch of salt, 1tsp ground ginger, ½ tsp cinnamon

### For the frosting

50g unsalted butter, soft, ½ tsp ground ginger, 125g icing sugar, 1tbsp milk, 25g crystallised ginger, finely chopped

1. Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/gas mark 4. Grease and line the base of a 20cm round cake tin (preferably loose-bottomed, as this cake batter risks fizzling out if left to stand).
2. Melt the butter with the treacle over a low heat. Stir in the sugar, eggs, water, and vanilla extract and set aside. Sift the cocoa powder and flour together into a large bowl then add the bicarbonate of soda, salt, and spices. Pour in half the liquid mixture and whisk lightly to form a very thick batter. Slowly add the remaining liquid, mixing until homogenous.
3. Pour the batter into the prepared cake tin and bake for 50 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the middle comes out clean.
4. While the cake cools (10 minutes in its tin and then on a wire rack), you can prepare the frosting. Beat the butter until smooth then add the ground ginger. Stir in the icing sugar a little at a time, adding the milk to slacken the mixture. Add the crystallised ginger at this point or, if you prefer, you can sprinkle it on top

afterwards. Spread the icing thickly over the top of the cooled cake.

Kept in a tin in a cool spot, this cake will last for some days, that is if it survives past the first teatime!

## BLUEBERRY YOGHURT LOAF CAKE

75ml almond oil, 125g full-fat natural yoghurt, 150g caster sugar, 2 large eggs, 1tsp vanilla extract, zest of 2 lemons, 210g plain flour, 1½ tsp baking powder, pinch of salt, 150-200g blueberries

1. Preheat the oven to 180C/350F/gas mark 4. Grease and line a 900g loaf tin about 20cm long.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together the oil, yoghurt, sugar, eggs, vanilla extract and lemon zest. In a separate bowl, stir together the flour, baking powder and salt. Pour the dry ingredients into the yoghurt mix along with the blueberries and fold the lot very gently together, taking care not to mix any more than is necessary: overzealous stirring at this stage could result in a tough cake later.
3. Pour the batter into the prepared loaf tin and bake for 50-55 minutes or until a small knife inserted into the middle comes out clean. Leave to cool on a wire rack before serving.

### Advertise in the Hurst!

For a quarter page: £25 for one issue, £90 for a year (4 issues)

For a half page: £50 for one issue, £180 for a year (4 issues)

For a full page: £100 for one issue, £360 for a year (4 issues)

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# Letter from the Vicar



**Like many people I was very sad to hear about the death of Desmond Tutu on Boxing day. He was a teacher, a theologian, an Archbishop, an anti-apartheid activist, a Nobel Peace Prize winner and a truly amazing man of God.**

Of course, he was not universally liked, people who speak truth to power never are. But of all the tributes and obituaries I have read it seems that almost everyone who met him thought very highly of him indeed. He will be remembered for many things, not least for his good humour and infectious laugh. He has given us many pearls of wisdom.

**"Do not worry, do not feel troubled, do not be perplexed. God loves you as you are"**

Gyles Brandreth's blog entitled, 'Desmond Tutu goes to Heaven' recalls his meeting with Desmond Tutu in 2001 when he had been sent to Cape Town to interview the Archbishop. It is certainly worth looking up and reading in its entirety, but I want to share the final paragraph as an encouragement to you:

The Archbishop has finished his homily, but somehow he can sense that I am not wholly satisfied. He smiles. He recognises a lapsed Anglican when he sees one. He leans towards me one last time and, in a voice barely above a whisper, says, "You are like so many, my friend. You have everything, but, inside, you feel there is something missing: deep down, somewhere, it's not quite okay. Do not worry, do not feel troubled, do not be perplexed. God loves you as you are – with your doubts, with your intellectual reservations, with your inability to make the leap of faith. God says, 'I made you, actually, and I made you as you are because I love you. Don't try to titivate yourself. Just be you and know that I affirm you. You are precious. You matter enormously to me. You matter as

if you were the only human being and, you know something' - he pauses for a moment and smiles a wonderful smile – 'I create only masterpieces. I have no doubt at all about your worth. You don't have to do anything. Your worth for me is intrinsic. Please believe I love you. You are not going to find ultimate satisfaction in anything out there because I made you like me'. As St Augustine says, 'Thou hast made us for thyself and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in thee.' 'I made you for a worshipping creature – and you have worshipped money and fame, I know it – but, ultimately, I am the only one worth worshipping. I won't let you go, my child. I won't give up on you - ever. I won't. I will sit here like the father of the prodigal son, waiting. Come back home, come back home to me, and our celebration will be mindboggling.'"

A final explosion of laughter and the Archbishop pushes back his chair and says, "Come, we will go outside and watch the sun falling on Table Mountain and smell the flowers together. God is good, man, and he is waiting for you."

God bless, **Rev Annette**  
annette@jhbd.co.uk  
01580 880282 / 07900 332791

**We meet at Holy Trinity every Sunday – we have coffee at 9am and the service starts at 9.30.**

# Walk etiquette

BY DON NICHOLLS

**Late January 2022 and our nearest wood is at its least attractive. A few remaining leaves flutter down from bare branches. The sun is glimpsed low on the horizon and underfoot boots slip on sodden muddy pathways. Progress is slow so walks are shorter.**

Yet there'll always be dog walkers on the path doing their twice daily canine constitutional. No problem – we like dogs. However, mostly being off lead, their charges so to speak make a beeline for you. The cry of "He won't hurt you – he's only being friendly" echoes scarily as mud splattered paws bound towards you. And, sure enough, the pooch will slither to a stop within an inch of your leg panting furiously, while you – now sure that a chunk of your leg hasn't disappeared – can allow your breath rate to return to normal.

"Sorry!" usually accompanies this as dog and owner trudge on along the squelchy trail. "He won't hurt you" and "Sorry" are not that common on our walks but these exchanges are natural in their one-sided responses.

Usually, your fellow walker will appear some distance away, slipping and sliding on the track. A stranger? Well, a greeting is necessary – saying nothing is not an option on a country path, it would be seen as a sign of rudeness, and what would happen the next time you crossed paths – 'a double blanking' – could lay down a future of antagonism or misunderstanding.

Unlike in towns and cities the friendly exchange is the oil that lubricates the future communication between two strangers diametrically opposed in their walks. On roads it need, by necessity, only be brief.

"saying nothing is not an option on a country path, it would be seen as a sign of rudeness"



"G'morning" or "G'afternoon" and you've passed. On a wet slippery uneven woodland path time allows for a slightly longer exchange. "Hello, it's a bit chilly, isn't it?" or "G'afternoon, it's a bit (ie very) muddy today" or, slightly more imaginatively, "Hi, at least the rain's held off this afternoon" coupled with a smile. You have done your social duty and any future walk interchange should be easier with your previous bland exchange to be built on.

These greetings are not intended to lead to further social intercourse at the moment of exchange. Stopping and extending the triviality may lead to embarrassment or annoyance... if there is afternoon tea to be had or a 'soap' to be watched. However, the social interchange could be a bit weightier as you have some warning of the passing as you squelch and slip towards each other. "They should put duckboards on this path!" could be met by a "Yes, indeed" or "I don't know why the council haven't done it yet".

An intellectual step up could be the opener "Of course, with global warming it will only get wetter and slipperier." Here the response could be a simple "Yes" or a more comprehensive... "but if the Hudson Bay ice melts it'll be too cold for precipitation and the earth will remain icebound. At least it'll solve the mud problem", and there you might have a meeting of minds.

Our aforementioned dog walker should have left the exchange at "Sorry" but they pointlessly drew it out by adding "Cold, isn't it?" when it clearly was not and, as a regular dog walker, could have prepared a witty retort as we both slithered off.

Maybe more careful thought should be given to the initial wet winter walk exchange. If first impressions count, then woodland walk first impressions may count for even more as walkers slowly slide apart, perhaps measuring what was just said.

Of course, you can go for the maximum impression as a young dog walker challenged me with after my initial "Good Afternoon"... "They should reintroduce wolves to these woods."

## A Brighton Fan through thick and thin!

**I have always been a Brighton fan. I went to my first match on the 19th April 1965. We beat Darlington 3-1 to clinch the fourth division (now league 2) title. Bobby Smith of Spurs and England fame was playing for us. A crowd of more than 27,000 was in attendance!**

Since then, there have been a few 'highs' and quite a few 'lows'! There was our one and only FA cup final appearance in 1983. We had spent 4 years in the top flight of English football, but that season relegation loomed. We needed a cup win to lift the spirits! Thanks to goals by Gordon Smith and Gary Stevens we were 2-2 with Man U with just a few minutes to go. Smith and Robinson were bearing down on Gary Bailey in the United goal. The commentator then uttered the now famous line, "...and Smith must score!" He didn't and we replayed a few days later. We were trashed 4-0! And relegated!

14 years later in May 1997 another memorable match in Brighton's history took place. This was at Edgar St. Hereford where the home side took on the Albion. Both teams had had a bad season in league 2 and depending on the result of this match, one of them would go out of the league. Brighton needed to win or draw as they had superior goal difference. Hereford needed to win but they had home advantage. At half time Hereford led by 1-0 thanks to an own goal by Brighton left back Kerry Mayo. At this point we faced oblivion! In the second half Robbie Reinelt scored what was perhaps the most important goal in the history of BHA football club! We drew 1-1 and were safe!

Now we come to the current season probably the best ever! Our two trips to Merseyside have yielded four points! It seems that whoever we play we have a chance of getting something from the game! I'm living the dream...!

# The Queen's Platinum Jubilee

**On 6th February this year Her Majesty the Queen became the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee, marking 70 years of service to the people of the United Kingdom, the Realms, and the Commonwealth.**

To celebrate this unprecedented anniversary, events and initiatives will take place throughout the year, culminating in a four day UK bank holiday weekend from Thursday 2nd to Sunday 5th June.

Over 1,500 beacons will be lit throughout the United Kingdom, Channel Islands, Isle of Man and UK Overseas Territories.

Councillor Graham Browne has volunteered to light the beacon on Stage Field, on the 2nd of June. Wagon Rolls, the catering van that operates at the top of Haremere Hill, are very happy to attend to provide refreshments.

Plans are well under way for our very own Hurst Green Jubilee Celebrations to be held on Saturday 4th June on Drewett's Cricket Field.

As Covid restrictions have prevented us holding the annual Hurst Green fete for

the past two years, this is a fantastic opportunity to have a bumper, extravagant, special village event which will mark the occasion and bring us some joy!

As always there will be a Tea Tent, Band, Raffle, Tombola, Sweet Van, Bouncy Castle, plus a special local Community choir, Dog show, Children's cake bake-off, Crown making, Face painting and the following stalls:



Crafty Owllets (handbags, cushions, bunting), Sussex Scent Company (handmade candles), Flora Ceramics (pictures and paintings), Arty Bee by Victoria (handmade cards), A Crafty House, Bubba Johnsons (children's clothes), Jennifer Jackson, Hurst Green author of *The dinosaur who found his roar*, Only Lovely Cakes, Urban Ferret Embroidery & Print, Eco food wraps,

GoneQwackers gift shop, Pawfectly Crafted Creations, Enchanted Forest (wooden crafts & toys), Katie's Fizz Bar, North Candle Company, The Kitchen of the Old Dragon (chutneys and jams), Soaps and Sorts (handmade soaps), Wills Bakery (pimped up doughnuts), Silver Bespoke Jewellery, Willis Bloom (high end kitchen textiles) Hopehouse Hens and more...

Mr Chippy will be there from 12-3pm, The Pizza Van will also rock up in the afternoon...

To round off the day there will be a ticketed music event and BBQ in the Village Hall from 7.30pm., and on the Sunday various Street Parties will be held.



# Hurst Green

Join in the celebrations!



- **2nd June 2022 (Evening)**  
Lighting of the Beacon on Stage Field
- **4th June 2022 12:30 – 18:00**  
Jubilee celebration at the Cricket Ground with live music, craft stalls, food, drink, competitions and arena displays.
- **4th June 2022 (Evening)**  
Jubilee celebration in the Village Hall
- **5th June 2022 (Lunchtime)**  
Host or join in with street parties across the parish



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Any Questions or want to volunteer your help? Email:  
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# Gardening Tips for March to May

## MARCH

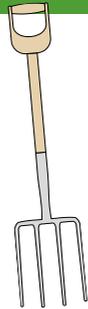
The weather this month varies more than any other month of the year. Don't be tempted to plant out anything that hasn't been hardened off first in a cold frame, or if taken from the greenhouse.

- Finish planting border plants, lifted trees and shrubs, as soon as possible.
- Take off new base side shoots from existing border plants. Take only strong side shoots about 4" (100mm) and pot them up in good rooting compost. Then place in a cold frame or unheated greenhouse until rooting has taken place. A gentle tug after a few weeks will tell you if they have rooted well.
- Roses and many other shrubs can be pruned back this month.

## APRIL

- Plant summer bulbs if not already done in late March, for example, Caen anemones, coloured St. Brigid's, Galtonians or summer hyacinths.
- Prune back spring flowering shrubs like forsythia.
- Plant up rhododendrons towards the end of the month.
- Sow seeds of perennials, such as oriental poppies (Papaver), lupins, in a pre-prepared seedbed outside.

This is a great way to get inexpensive plants.



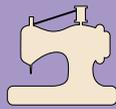
- Plant gladioli for a beautiful summer display.
- Late April is a good time to plant evergreen shrubs, including conifers.

## MAY

May can be a funny month as it can be very wet or very dry. In a drought situation, newly planted shrubs and plants will need regular watering to prevent them coming under stress.

- Spray roses with an eco-friendly product to prevent aphid and fungal problems.
- Stake plants in the herbaceous border, and sow annuals to fill in the gaps between plants. Give a dressing of fertiliser to these plants and watch out for any slug damage to the delphiniums etc.
- Do not cut back or tie old foliage on narcissi (daffodil) foliage, as doing this prevents goodness going back down to the bulbs for the next years flowering.

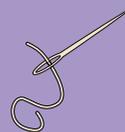
### The Reigate Gardener



*Any Hitches  
in your Stitches?*

*Do you need it  
Making or Mending?*

*Curtains, hems,  
make good or mend*



*Speak to Debbie  
on 07592 62 99 96*

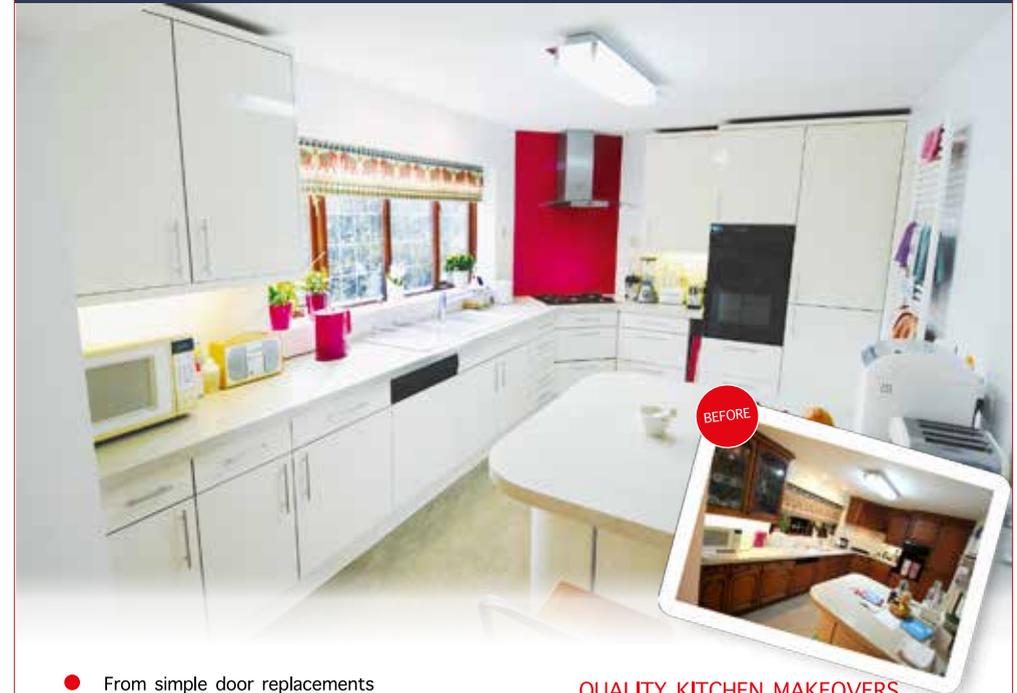
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## What's happening at Holy Trinity?

### Walk up and smell the roses

If you use the footpath from the London Road up to the church, you will have noticed that there are a lot of old or dead roses.



So, to mark the **Queen's Platinum Jubilee**, we are planting some new standard roses which will brighten up the path and hopefully last for years to come.

The **'Oakley' bench** has been relocated to a lovely sunny position so hopefully it will be another spot to stop, sit and soak in the peace of the churchyard just yards away from the busy A21.

**Renew Café** is proving very popular, every Thursday from 10am–12 there is a warm welcome, some fresh coffee and always homemade cake! It is a friendly place to meet up and get to know new faces, have conversations about all sorts of things and put the world to rights, or not!

There is a **food and hygiene bank** collection in the church, and we take these donations to Hastings where they get distributed. There was also a huge response to the warm winter coat appeal for the homeless charity Seaview in Hastings. They sent a big thank you to everyone who gave coats which were gratefully received.

Of course, we continue to have our **weekly Sunday services starting at 9am** with coffee to which everyone is very welcome. So, if you have never tried church or thought about God, if you have a faith or if you have none, why not come and see what its all about?



**We have finally got a new ceiling in the main hall, which looks and feels much better so if you are around, pop in and have a look! Thanks to all the hard work by Sam Tyler Roofing and Hastings Windows who have now replaced the last one in the gantry up the top, opposite the stage.**

### WHAT'S ON WEEKLY

<b>MONDAY</b>	<b>7pm</b> Short Mat Bowls
<b>TUESDAY</b>	<b>8.45am</b> Pilates <b>4pm</b> Children's Dance Class (term time) <b>7pm</b> Jive & Lindy Hop (07766 881045) <b>8pm</b> Parish Council Meeting (4th Tuesday of each month)
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	<b>10am</b> Upholstery (term time) <b>10.30am</b> Breastfeeding class <b>5.30pm</b> Brownies (term time) <b>7.30pm</b> Pilates
<b>THURSDAY</b>	<b>8.45am</b> Pilates <b>1.30pm</b> Short Mat Bowls <b>8pm</b> Zumba
<b>FRIDAY</b>	<b>10am</b> Breakfast Club (2nd & 4th Friday each month)
<b>SATURDAY</b>	<b>9am</b> Children's Dance Class (term time)

**Booking agent: Sue Endean 01580 860425, 07541 800537, 07718 282605**

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## COMEDY CAPERS RELAUNCHED

**On Thursday 21st January at the Village Hall, Comedy Capers held their first meeting since the Covid lockdowns. In March 2020, two weeks before lockdown, we held our AGM and everyone was very excited about the forthcoming year. You know the rest...**

At this AGM we elected a new Chair – Steven Ripley, Treasurer – Alan Mills and Secretary – Colleen Burt. All our members are committee members.

We decided to relaunch our society, as many members circumstances have changed in two years and we need to recruit new faces.

Who are we looking for? We welcome anyone who is interested in performing or taking part in production roles. Some members of CC had some experience of amateur dramatics before joining us but I would say the majority

did not, and many said they would like to help but 'you'll never get me on stage!' We also will welcome children, and if your child is interested, please forward their name to us and we will be in touch when we begin productions. Many of us originally got involved with our children, it's a lovely family activity.

A production needs the involvement of many different people and skills. We need technicians for lights, sound and stage management. We need people to make props and costumes, to put together programmes, to paint scenery, to promote productions and to help front of show selling tickets, and making tea.

If you are interested in meeting new friends, learning new skills, singing, dancing and acting or helping backstage, and joining us for future productions, please call Colleen Burt 01580 860771 or email: colleensburt@gmail.com and you can be informed of future meetings and proposed productions.

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## DISC DEMENTIA CARER SUPPORT GROUP

Robertsbridge Village Hall  
(in the Committee Room)

10.30–12.30pm

Every 1st Wednesday of the month

If you care for somebody with dementia, or have a family member suffering from it, you are welcome to join the Robertsbridge Support Group on the first Wednesday of each month. It's a very informal chat (with good coffee and biscuits), and everybody who has come so far has found it immensely helpful and encouraging.

If you can't make the group, the ladies at DISC are always at the end of the phone so you can give any of them a call for help, advice or just a listening ear:  
Emma Jones - 07591 250 988  
Louise Smith - 07591 251 005  
May Howes - 07874 864 898  
Call or email:  
[admin@discdementiasupport.org](mailto:admin@discdementiasupport.org) to book

## Hurst Green Over 75's Breakfast Club

The Breakfast Club meets on the 2nd and 4th Friday of the month in the Village Hall.

Hurst Green Parish Council very kindly sponsor breakfast for the over 75's residing in Hurst Green on the 2nd Friday of the month. A charge of £5 is made for the 4th Friday. Limited places available for under 75's and those living alone.

Please contact us if interested in joining the Breakfast Club, Clive 01580 860760 or Elaine 01580 860358.

Looking forward to seeing you all soon.  
**Elaine Ralph**

## Generous Giving

- Thank you to everyone who supported the annual Poppy Appeal and raised £19,000. 
- Thank you to all the amazing people who supported our coffee morning and helped to raise funds for Macmillan cancer care. We made £900.03 which considering the Covid restrictions was amazing! A big thank you from Elaine Ralph who organised this annual event, and huge thanks to her for doing it!

## Some helpful local services

- Building and Renovations** Mark Roby 07586 702809. [Pioneeringcarpentry@yahoo.com](mailto:Pioneeringcarpentry@yahoo.com)
- Cars** Mobile Car Mechanic: Cliff Mercer 07909 911869
- Dogs** Holiday and day care: Lorely Watson 01580 880061 / 07796 392653  
Pippin's Pet Sitting and walking: 07717 681972  
[Sarah.janeheasman@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Sarah.janeheasman@hotmail.co.uk)
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- Ian Moore-Rushworth 07703 021767
- Leather repairs**  
Kay Lloyd, Wealden Saddlery 01580 860860
- Pest control** Paul Messenger 07940 744411  
[paul@roecallservices.com](mailto:paul@roecallservices.com)
- Plastering and tiling**  
Edd Ripley, 07875 494493.
- Plumbers** Aaron Plumbing & Heating Ltd - Aaron Rowsell 01580 230330  
Steve Walker 07564 405702
- Private car hire and taxi service** Hugo, 01435 883803 Mob. 07931 605057
- Rocco Yoga** Lyengar yoga classes at Etchingham Village Hall. Open to all ages, try for free. Leah, 07927 484828 [leah@roccoyoga.com](mailto:leah@roccoyoga.com)  
[web:roccoyoga.com](http://web:roccoyoga.com)

*If you or anyone you know would like to be included in this list please email [thehurst.hg@gmail.com](mailto:thehurst.hg@gmail.com). This is a free listing. For a more comprehensive advert, the cost for ¼ page is £25 per issue or £90 for a year (4 issues), payable in advance.*

## You're never alone with a book (club)

**Anyone who enjoys a good read knows that you are never alone with a book. But what do you do if you want to share your love of literature with like-minded people for whom a quiet nook with a good book is their version of heaven on earth?**

Hurst Green resident Talena Sharp's solution was to start a book club and on a sweaty evening in July she waited outside the Royal George to see who would turn up for the first meeting. I was the first to arrive followed by David Johnson and, eventually, a handful of lovely ladies all called Sally.

Over glasses of lukewarm white wine of indeterminate origin, we chatted about what the book club should be. The key principles were that we should cover a variety



of genres that could take us out of our comfort zones; invite members to suggest book titles; and meet up once a month in a member's home to discuss the book and generally have a good time (not necessarily in that order).

Six meetings on, we have read an eclectic range of titles starting with the harrowing tale of *Shuggie Bain* by Douglas Stuart to the hilariously surreal *Enter the Aardvark* by Jessica Anthony. Our group now includes newbies to the village and an Etchingham bookworm. We enjoy our meetings and making new friends (including our members' respective cats and dogs who also appear to enjoy the company).

Just before Christmas we also set up a book exchange for adults and children outside the Village Hall, so please do use it as book stocks are regularly replenished.

If you would like to join the book club, please contact Talena on 07502 847124 but be warned, you must be a cat lover!



**Did you know Hurst Green Brownies has spaces for girls aged between 7 and 10 years old?**

We have been meeting face to face at Brownies since May 2021, and we have a lovely group of girls with room for more to join us.

We are still being careful about spacing

and ventilation in Hurst Green Village Hall where we meet, with drop off and pick up by parents and we have a Risk Assessment in place.

This term the girls are playing games, crafting, cooking, learning new skills, earning badges, making friends and more than anything else having fun!

But we'd love to grow our unit so if you have a daughter, granddaughter or know a little girl who would be interested in joining us they can be registered at: [www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-parents/register-your-daughter/](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk/information-for-parents/register-your-daughter/)

**Susan Eyres** (Brown Owl)

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