Berwick Selmeston Alciston

Village News

February 2025



Village News

Advertising is coordinated by Brian Calcott. Tel. 07999 788618.
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Contributions, Photos, etc (other than advertising requests) should be sent to Martin by the 12th of the month by email: empty.sea@outlook.com
They can also be passed to one of the coordinators:
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Valerie Shaw at Selmeston House, Selmeston Tel: 01323 811567.

Donations

Financial donations to the Parish News are gratefully received.
Cheques payable to "Berwick, Selmeston and Alciston Village News" can be passed to:
The Treasurer, Brian Calcott at:
2 Railway Cottages, Station Road, Berwick, Polegate, BN26 6TA.
Alternatively, electronic donations can be made to:
Barclays Bank - Account No. 70650625; Sort code 20-49-76.

Church Contacts

Benefice Priests

Revd 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

Revd Shirley Pearce Assistant Priest
The Vicarage, Wilmington, Polegate, BN26 5SL
Tel: 01323 318231 Email: revshirleym@gmail.com
Shirley Pearce's 'on duty' days are Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday.

Churchwardens

Alciston - Michèle Boys Tel: 01323 870623
Berwick - Andy Williamson Tel: 01323 870163 / Paul Lewis Tel: 01323 870927
Selmeston - Jan Matthews Tel: 01323 811380

Benefice Administrator

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

Village Contacts

Parish Council Clerks

Alciston - Sandy Thomas Email: alcistonparishmeeting@gmail.com
Berwick - Lynette Kemp Tel: 07864 637274 Email: berwickparishcouncil@aol.com
Selmeston - Bryan Stevens Tel: 07799 862765 Email: selmestonparishmeeting@gmail.com

Village Hall / Field Hire

Berwick Village Hall - Carole Vine Tel: 07341 660046 Email: berwickhallhire@btinternet.com
Berwick Field - Carole Vine Tel: 07341 660 046 berwickfieldhire@btinternet.com
Alciston and Selmeston Village Hall Website: www.southdownsvillagehall.org

From the Parish Registers: The Right Honourable, The Lord Lloyd of Berwick



Anthony John Leslie Lloyd, Baron Lloyd of Berwick, PC, DL died at his home on 8th December.

His funeral was held at Berwick Church on Thursday 19th December.

Tony was an outstanding jurist (expert in the rule of law) and was appointed a Law Lord in 1993. He said that his greatest pride was the home that he and Jane made at Ludlay. They loved to see people enjoying walking across their fields and sharing the excitement of the lambing of his South Downs flock of sheep with children.

In 2014 he published an anthology of poems 'Poems Remembered' (55 in total) all of which he knew by heart and dedicated it to his beloved Jane. He and Jane made a substantial contribution towards the building of Berwick village hall.

A man of enthusiasm with diverse interests ranging from his passion for, and patronage of, the arts (especially Glyndebourne), a shepherd, a builder of flint walls and his own garden 'temple',

Tony loved life in all its beauty and breadth. He and Jane hosted an annual Ludlay Quartet Concert in their barn to raise funds for charity.

Tony will be remembered for his generosity, great intellect, cheerfulness,

BERWICK 100 CLUB

Please register your interest by email to Kate at admin@berwick100club.co.uk

THE LOTTERY HAS RAISED £1,038 SO FAR FOR THE BERWICK VILLAGE HALL

Thank you to everyone for your generous support.

December's total draw was: £494

1st prize: Peter Blee
2nd prize: James Lumsden
3rd prize: Jenny Cleaver

Guaranteed minimum draw total for February 2025: £247

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

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passionate and wise upholding of the importance of the rule of law and his Christian faith.

He loved the Book of Common Prayer services and he and Jane attended whenever they could.

He served on the Bishops' Council of the Diocese of Chichester and the Cathedral.

He will be greatly missed.

Peter Blee

Poetry Workshop Led by Oenone Thomas

7.00 pm Monday 3rd February
at Berwick Church

No experience needed and no compulsion to share anything.

Oenone leads an enjoyable and creative time of writing and reflection that anyone can enjoy, whether they have ever read poetry before or not.

Peter Blee

Curry Night and Sussex Dialect 'Call My Bluff'!

7.00 pm Friday 7th February
at Alciston and Selmeston Village Hall

Beat off the February blues with a delicious home-made curry, a drink from the bar and the hilarious dictionary definition game drawn from the treasury of local dialect written by Revd W. Parish, 'The Dictionary of The Sussex Dialect'.

Special dietary requirements happily catered for.

Cost is £12 per head (£6 per child).
To book:
Jan Matthews
Email: janet.matthews1@btinternet.com /
Tel: 01323 811380 or Michèle Boys
Email: michele.boys@live.com /
Tel: 01323 870623.

Peter Blee

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

10.00 am - Noon, Tuesday 11th February at Arlington Village Hall.

All are welcome - as usual we will be very 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' in aid of the Parkinson's Society, 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; the focus for February will be 'Stanley Salvage - a Personal History'. Naturalist Stanley spent much of his life at Placketts Corner, Arlington, keeping diaries of his life there.

Thank you to the many people, local and 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. At the January market the hall was once again full of people chatting and browsing amongst the stalls.

We were pleased to be able to donate £200 to St. Wilfrid's Hospice, Eastbourne, from the December market's raffle and cafe proceeds.

For further market information please contact Anne Hope: Tel. 01323 486219 / 07760 424169,
Email anntonyhope@gmail.com .

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

Pauline Jackson

Firle and Beddingham Women's Institute

7.30 pm Wednesday 12th February at Firle Village Hall

Unfortunately, the snow and ice put the kibosh on our January meeting when we were expecting to discuss and chose which one of the four draft resolutions submitted for consideration at National Council in June. This, thanks to modern technology, was resolved by resorting to on-line voting.

At our next meeting Adrian Backshall will regale us with the history and future of Polegate Windmill. Do join us, we will be very pleased to see you. Please give me a call if you would like further information.

Rosemary Norris
President Tel: 07784 707016

The Alciston & Selmeston Village Hall Hub

Always held on a Monday and open to all between 11.00 am to 12.30 pm - the February Hub is on the 17th. The Hub welcomes you all to enjoy refreshments, delicious tea and coffee as well as homemade cake in a convivial, warm environment. Pop in anytime - it's open to everyone; bring your little ones for a run around and meet up with neighbours and friends of all ages.

Please contact any of the committee below if you have any questions or need help with transport to and from the hall.
Janie 07785 940915
Thea 07772 155772
Helen 07969 732109
Mairi 07582 938185

Changes in Farming Practice Locally

7.00 pm Wednesday 26th February at Alciston and Selmeston Village Hall

Regenerative farming, set-aside and re-wilding, organic, satellites, remote sensing, self-driving tractors and conservation…

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Cost is £5 entry on the door.

Peter Blee

Bingo is Back in Berwick!

7.00 pm on Friday 28th February
and Friday 28th March 2025
at Berwick Village hall

Please join the Berwick Produce Show Committee for a fun filled family evening, all ages welcome. Doors open at 7.00 pm with 'Eyes down' for the first game of the evenings is 7.30pm. Bring your own drinks and snacks; tea and coffee will be available.

Proceeds will go toward helping the running of the Produce Show, and a percentage donation will also go to the village hall.

Looking forward to seeing you all.

Sue Woodgate
Produce Show Chair
Tel: 01323 870078

Onyx Brass Play the Brass Music of Malcolm Arnold (Plus 1!)

3.00 pm Sunday, 9th March
at St Andrew's Church, Alfriston

Programme

Brass Quintet No. 1
Symphony for Brass
Fanfare for a Royal Occasion
Railway Fanfare
Fantasy for Tuba,
Fantasy for Trumpet
Brass and Organ 'Dialogue' (by Eugène Gigout)

(Organist: David Ollosson)

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Tickets cost £25 with all proceeds to the church and are available from: Eventbrite - search for 'Onyx Brass St Andrew's Church'

Katherine Arnold
(karnold@btinternet.com)

Spring "Fun, Fish & Finking" Quiz

From 6.30 pm on Saturday 15th March at Alciston & Selmeston Village Hall

Expect the usual fabulous hosting team, delicious Village Chippy supper and a well-stocked bar at this extremely popular evening.

Limited tables available so book early to avoid disappointment. Bring your own team of 6 or we can join you up with other friendly faces.

The cost is £15.00 per person, which includes the brain-stretching quiz and fish/veggie and chips supper.

Contact Helen 07969732109,
Mairi 07582 938185
or Phil 07538 187552 for tickets.

This is an A&S Village Hall Fundraising evening, so we politely ask that all drinks are purchased at the event. Thank you.

Rachel Lewis

Thank You

Jean, Peggy and Linda would like to thank everyone who supported us in our fundraising during 2024.

We raised £1922.71 and the organisations supported are:
Cuckmere Bus
Children with Cancer Polegate
Berwick and Selmeston Produce Shows
Parkinson's Hailsham branch.

Since beginning our fundraising in 1992 we have raised £73,293.90.

Jean Bradford,
Peggy Lawrence
and Linda Boys

Alciston & Selmeston Village Hall Committee - The Role of Chair

With the forthcoming AGM held in the Spring, 2025 finds us looking for a replacement Chairperson. Our current Chair's term, serving 3 years, ends in March when she stands down but continues to support the Committee in a different role.

Please consider joining this vibrant, enthusiastic and supportive Committee who work together as a brilliant team.

Ring Helen on 07969732109 for more information or speak to any of the Committee.

Rachel Lewis

Plough Sunday

The Plough Sunday services recently held at Arlington and Wilmington churches may have seemed out of place, especially with snow lying frozen on the fields, but the Church of England has a rich tradition, often rooted in practices from Mediaeval times, which fit well in rural parishes.

In some places, villagers used to store their ploughs in the local church during the months when they were not in use, and so, on the first Monday after Epiphany they would be dragged out of the church as the new farming season began. (Some places had a Plough Monday, with Morris dancers, and much imbibing at the local pub.)

The plough was blessed and sent on its way for doing the vital job of turning the earth for the crops needed to feed local people and provide a tithe to the church. Of course, ploughs required human hands to work them, just as tractors need someone behind the wheel to plough much larger fields now. It is right then to bless farmers, farm workers, soil and seeds.

Anyone living in this community knows at least one farmer by name; also knows how stricken the farmers are by the new inheritance tax. But what will be the effect

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on our lives, those of us living next to the fields of crops or pasture?

We are not now a country who struggles with food shortages, although I am sure many of you will be able to remember a time of food rationing during the war or just after. During the transition after Brexit, there were warnings that we would have difficulties in getting fresh foods after 31st January 2021. Despite the occasional empty shelf, though, things have returned to normal. Except that food is much more expensive.

There is much to be said about not worrying over such things. Christians are encouraged to be focused on the present and not allow energy to be wasted in useless speculation about what the future may hold. But, for some farmers, whose families have worked the farms they own for 100 years, the fallout of this new tax could be devastating. It is vital that we pray for goodwill and integrity among all who are concerned with decisions about their future, and I do hope that our prayers and blessings give some hope, for God hears every prayer, and has great care for us all.

Shirley Pearce

Family Support Work (FSW)

Dear Friends,

The Christmas festivities seem a long time away, as life for our families has settled back to their ongoing struggles.

Despite our help with extra food and presents at Christmas, many families experienced a particularly challenging time with energy costs in the cold weather, so it was a real relief for them to have access to our winter fuel fund which is so generously supported by many individuals.

The continued rise in general prices across food, energy and petrol is of great concern still, and practitioners are spending much time helping families with budgeting and accessing other sources of support and advice.

We are very fortunate to have very close links with Christians Against Poverty, the Citizens' Advice Bureau and other more local groups that can give families specialised advice.

We hope shortly to be able to announce new members of staff across various areas of our work, following the departures of valued team members at the end of last year and the need to expand our back-office team to support the frontline work.

Please do look on our website and social media pages for information about upcoming events - we will soon be publishing this year's Open Garden calendar as well as many fundraising events which may be local to you, and we hope you feel able to support them.

December's work in numbers

- 309 individual visits and 720 calls with families supporting 278 adults and 314 children.
- 33 supported meetings with other agencies.
- 74 group sessions held supporting 788 parents and 407 children.
- 150 food deliveries made, plus 180 Christmas hampers.

Prayer points

- Pray for comfort for those families and staff who have lost loved ones in recent weeks.
- Give thanks for the generosity of individuals and organisations over the Christmas period.
- Pray that new contacts will help us to increase our visibility across Sussex and that more families will become aware of our services.

Nikki Kerr
Director of Fundraising and Marketing
www.familysupportwork.org
nikki@familysupportwork.org.uk

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February's Gardener's Diary

Spring is getting closer, so we need to start thinking about what to do in the vegetable garden during February.

Keep your egg boxes for chitting your seed Potatoes, which can now be placed in a cool dark place so they can start sprouting.

Broad Beans can be put into pots and then in the greenhouse, cold frame, or indoors on the windowsill. When they are strong enough plant them in the garden.

Sow Onion, Leek and Tomato seeds in trays and again put them in the greenhouse, or similar, to germinate.

Shallots can be planted into the garden now if you have good drainage, if not wait until it is drier; they will soon catch up.

Rhubarb crowns should be covered to encourage early pickings.

As the weather has been kind to the garden this winter hopefully everyone has spread their compost and dug it in. A tip for early sowing, if you have an area prepared, is to cover it with black plastic to keep it drier and warmer in preparation for spring planting.

Lisa Collington

All Change - New Bus Fares for 2025

Fares across East Sussex will continue to be lower in the new year thanks to funding from East Sussex's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). A £3 national bus fare cap was introduced on 1st January, meaning the maximum fare for a single bus trip is limited to £3.

Thanks to BSIP funding from the Department of Transport, the county council is introducing lower single adult fares of £1 and £2 in East Sussex. The new lower fares will ensure passengers will pay less than £3 on some journeys, with some trips being cheaper than they were in 2024.

Under the East Sussex BSIP fare reductions, short hop trips will be capped at £1, with medium length rides costing £2.

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Longer journeys will be £3 under the new national fare cap. Children's fares will be even lower, with short journeys starting at 50p.

Councillor Claire Dowling, lead member for transport and the environment at East Sussex County Council, said: "The county council is committed to supporting bus services in East Sussex. With the support of bus operators, the new BSIP funded fares will ensure low-cost single trips continue for residents. We hope the reduced fares will encourage even more people to use buses in 2025."

Recipe of the Month: Hot Seville Orange Pudding

(Serves 6)

Ingredients

75 g softened butter
250 g caster sugar
Grated rind and juice of 3 Seville oranges
5 large eggs
50 g flour
300 ml milk

Method

Butter an ovenproof souffle? dish. Put the butter into a bowl or food processor and cream it gradually adding the sugar. Beat together until pale and fluffy. Beat in the grated orange rind and then gradually beat in the orange juice.

Separate the eggs and beat in the yolks one by one. Sieve the flour and beat it in in small amounts alternating with tablespoonfuls of milk.

Whisk the egg whites until they are stiff. With a large metal spoon quickly and thoroughly fold them into the orange mixture.

Pour into the buttered dish and stand the dish in a roasting tin. Add hot water to the tin until it reaches halfway up the side of the pudding dish. Place in a moderate oven 350°F/180°C/160°C fan/gas mark 4

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Valerie Shaw

Bad Internet Behaviours and How To Fix Them: Impersonation Fraud

Scammers are always on the lookout for opportunities to catch out unsuspecting internet shoppers. A common kind of fraud is impersonation fraud.

With this scam, you might receive a fake call or message that appears to be from someone you trust. For example, a friend or family member, a financial organisation like your bank or credit card team, the police or a government body like HMRC. This is because fraudsters can use technology to make it look like they're contacting you from a legitimate phone number.

So, even if you recognise a caller's details, or a message appears in an existing thread, don't assume the person trying to reach you must be genuine. Watch out for the clues:

Be suspicious if you're contacted unexpectedly - particularly if it's to tell you about something distressing like owing money or being a victim of crime. Fraudsters use stories like this to try and throw you off guard.

You may be urged to act quickly or share personal information like your PIN or passcode. Sometimes you might be asked to call a false phone number.

Never agree unless you're certain it's safe. You could be giving a scammer access to spend with your bank or credit card.

Another update next month. In the meantime, Which? Magazine offers a useful free Scam Alerts Service - www.signup.which.co.uk/wlp-scamalert-newsletter.

The Little King

In this, our littlest month, I'd like to celebrate our littlest bird, the Goldcrest. Crowned with a yellow tuft, this aptly named species has an equally grand and, if you ask me, quite adorable, Latin name: Regulus regulus, or 'little king'.At a mere 9cm in length, the Goldcrest weighs a featherlight 5-6 grams; the same as a 20 pence piece. Despite their size, Goldcrests are a surprisingly easy spot.

A fan of coniferous and mixed woodland, these birds can often be seen zipping about in pairs in your local gardens, parks and nature reserves, picking morsels like spiders and moth eggs from tree needles with tiny expert beaks. Their characteristic squeaking refrain, a 'fiddle-di-di' on loop, is so high pitched that not everyone can hear it. If you think you hear one, stop, wait, and listen, as you will most likely hear it again.



The only real confusion species is the similarly diminutive Firecrest, Regulus ignicapilla (meaning 'fire-capped'). This rarer species, whilst sharing in the Goldcrest's olive-green plumage, has notable black lines around the head and eye. Think of the Goldcrest as having not yet applied its eyeliner. Following the on-point naming convention, the Firecrest has an orange crest. This creates an additional challenge for identification, as the male Goldcrest does have a line of orange feathers hidden within their crest, which they show during territorial displays.

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Goldcrests breed around April time, creating intricately curated nests of moss, lichen and spider webs high in the treetops. Overall, Goldcrest numbers are stable, with a 600,000 strong breeding population throughout the UK. These are joined by a Scandinavian migratory population for the winter, boosting your chances of seeing one during the colder months.

Despite their success, Goldcrests are at risk from several threats. Their size means they are vulnerable in the wintry weather, so the more erratic weather patterns we experience, including unexpected cold snaps and storms, are a danger to these birds. As with all UK species, habitat loss is a problem, and in the Goldcrest's case this includes deforestation.

If you are walking in woodland and catch a glance of a little ball of energy in the treetops, try to spot them with binoculars to be rewarded with a millisecond's glimpse of their worried-looking little face, before they're off again, much to do. Heavy is the head that wears the crown.

Kerry Williams:
Sussex Wildlife Trust
Communications Officer - Conservation
Photo: Firecrest © Martin Casemore

From the Parsonage

When we look at or listen to anything through a speaker or on a screen we increasingly wonder if it is real. The power of digital editing tools and AI to create fakes is scary. Wondering whether we are being duped, scammed, conned or manipulated in our thinking makes us uncertain, mistrustful and vulnerable. As we are all pushed into using screens for many essential tasks, the possibilities of succumbing to digital falsehood have greatly increased.

Most people have a natural hunger for what is real and what is true; a need for it as much as they do for air and water.

In the wider world a recent decision by META to end 'fact checking' in the wake of the election of Trump and the rise of Musk into the political sphere might suggest that we're entering a more chaotic period in history in which truth becomes much harder to distinguish from fiction. One in which power and might is all that is right.

In some spiritual traditions, including Judaeo-Christian, the Devil has been characterised as 'The Deceiver', the teller of falsehood and the spreader of chaos. A note which was placed in the clay 'pilgrim pot' in Berwick church recently and which read 'I am fearful, self-critical and full of doubt and uncertainty…' might be representative of a rising tide in these emotions.

Trust is something that needs to be placed and this is nothing new. The Bible Psalmist wrote, perhaps in desperation and adoration:

'In You, O Lord, I put my trust;
Let me never be ashamed;
Deliver me in Your righteousness.
Incline Your ear to me,
Deliver me speedily;
Be my rock of refuge,
A fortress of defence to save me.'
Psalm 31:1-2.

We have all been given a spiritual as well as a rational capacity to help us navigate life. Jesus said quite simply 'seek and ye will find'. The beauty of nature, the worship of God, the words of scripture, music, the sharing of the Sacraments and the sacred spaces of our churches provide the ways in which we can momentarily turn from that outward task of distinguishing truth from falsehood and feeling vulnerable and uncertain, to discovering an inner truth and wisdom that equips us for life. As Saint Peter said to Jesus 'Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life'. He was just a fisherman at the time in a tiny community on the shores of Lake Galilee.

Peter Blee

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Church Services and Morning Prayer

Sunday 2nd February
11:00 Berwick Holy Communion (Joint service with Selmeston)
11:00 Wilmington Holy Communion

Sunday 9th February
09:30 Alciston Holy Communion (BCP)
09:30 Arlington Holy Communion
11:00 Berwick Holy Communion
11:00 Wilmington Holy Communion

Sunday 16th February
09:30 Selmeston Holy Communion
11:00 Berwick Holy Communion
11:00 Wilmington Holy Communion

Sunday 23rd February
09:30 Alciston Holy Communion (BCP)
09:30 Arlington Holy Communion
11:00 Berwick Holy Communion
11:00 Wilmington Holy Communion

Prayer

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

5.00 pm each Thursday 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 the Benefice Administrator at benefice.administrator@berwickchurch.org.uk

Pastoral Prayer or Talk

Peter Blee and Shirley Pearce are available to speak to people on the phone and are also able to pray with people on request in church at Morning Prayer and to offer help in any way possible.
Telephone: 01323 870512, 01323 318231 or Email peter.blee@berwickchurch.org.uk, or revshirleym@gmail.com

Please visit the benefice websites to check on services and times:
www.sussexdownlandchurches.org.uk or www.berwickchurch.org.uk.

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