

Berwick Selmeston Alciston

Village News

September 2026

Cuckmere Pilgrim Path Walk

Saturday 5th September
starting at Berwick Church

Following the postponement of the walk last month due to the hot weather the walk has now been rearranged.

8.00 am Depart Berwick Church
9.30 am Cooked breakfast at Selmeston
12.00 noon Coffee at Arlington
1:45 pm Picnic lunch at Wilmington
3:15 pm Tea at Berwick in the parsonage garden.

If you would like a cooked breakfast at Selmeston please book by Thursday 3rd September with Jan Matthews — Email: janet.matthews1@btinternet.com or Tel: 07802 841440.

Diana White
Benefice Administrator

Berwick Paintings Audio Descriptions Launch

4.00 pm Sunday 6th September
at Berwick Church

A local teacher/director of drama, Andrea Brooks, has made recordings of audio descriptions of some of the main paintings in Berwick Church for the visually impaired. Andrea has been visiting the church since she was a child when she was brought by her grandparents. The recordings are also helpful guides for those who are not visually impaired and will be used with educational and visiting groups. At the same time they communicate in a beautiful way the Gospel message for whose glory the paintings were installed.

The recordings will be accessible using headphones provided and a QR code.



BERWICK 100 CLUB

If you would like to join the lottery, please email Kate Lumsden at admin@berwick100club.co.uk

THE BERWICK 100 CLUB HAS DONATED £1,257 TO THE BERWICK VILLAGE HALL THIS SUBSCIPTION YEAR

Thank you to everyone for your generous ongoing support.

July's total draw was: £300

1st prize: Linda Champion
2nd prize: Paul Ballington
3rd prize: Angela Spiers

Guaranteed minimum draw total for September 2026: £300

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

As most modern phones do not have a headphone socket, adaptors are also provided which enable the headphones to be plugged into the phone's charging socket. These are available in the church now for people to try out, and we would welcome feedback.

If you know of individuals or groups for the visually impaired please let us know so that we can send them an invitation to this event, or invite them along yourselves.

Diana White
Benefice Administrator

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

10.00 am – Noon, Tuesday 8th September at Arlington Village Hall [BN26 6SE].

There is something for everyone with a good variety of sales tables. 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 at the September Market featuring 'Nevill Children's Bonfire Society', so please do visit.

Everyone is very welcome to join us at the market and museum; we will be pleased to see you. Once again, 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 an extremely popular, sociable morning and there are always tea and cake.

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

Benefice PCC Meetings

Please let you churchwarden know if you have something you wish to be raised at any of the PCC meetings below.

Tuesday 8th September Berwick PCC
Wednesday 9th September Arlington PCC



Wednesday 9th September
Alciston and Selmeston PCC
Wednesday 9th September
Wilmington PCC

Diana White
Benefice Administrator

Firle and Beddingham Women's Institute

7.30 pm on Wednesday 9th September at Firle Village Hall

In August we held our Summer Party at the village hall. The evening coincided with the solar eclipse.

Ten of us had a lovely evening enjoying the brief time of twilight and some good food and conversation.

After the heat of the day, it was good to be eating al fresco in the cooler air.

Our September meeting will be 'Stress Less – Age Better' by Dr Alison Grimston. Anyone is welcome to join us as Alison is a local lady and grew up at Middle Farm, Firle.

Rosemary Norris
07784 707016

The Alciston & Selmeston Village Hall Hub

11.00 am to 12.30 pm on Monday 21st September 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. 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

A Day of Prayer

7.00 am to 7.00 pm on Wednesday 30th September at Alciston Church

There is to be a prayer day in Alciston church; it will be punctuated with services, but the aim is to have individuals praying all day. To this end there is a rota to which you are invited to sign up to. The prayer slots are 1 hour long. As well as people committing to the rota, others are welcome to come and go throughout the day for shorter periods of time.

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I would also welcome contributions from people who would like to offer to play a musical instrument, or sing and play, lead chant, read poetry – for 10-20 minutes or so during a time of their choosing on the rota or at one of the services. People pray in different ways and sometimes with different aids, such as prayer beads or a handheld cross. Further ideas and information will be made available nearer the day but please do sign up and contribute ideas.

Rev Canon Peter Blee



Berwick Produce Show, Bingo and AGM

Thank you to everyone who came to the Produce Show and made it a huge success. We had some great entries in the classes — which was amazing considering the dry weather we had prior to the show.

We will be starting up with our monthly bingo evenings starting at 7.00 pm on 2nd October with eyes down for 7.30 pm. Families with children are very welcome to the bingo evenings; bring your own drinks and snacks — tea, coffee and soft drinks are available.

The Produce Show AGM for this year will be held at 6.30 pm on Friday 6th November, before the bingo on that night. Everyone is welcome to attend the AGM and Cup presentation or just come to the bingo at the normal time of 7.00 pm with eyes down for 7.30 pm. Look forward to seeing you at the bingo.

Sue Woodgate
Show Chair

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Tea and Tripe

4.00 pm on Saturday 10th October
at Alciston and Selmeston Village Hall

You are invited to join us for a celebration of George Orwell's writings on food and drink. A light-hearted entertainment derived from some of Orwell's seldom heard writings, from his account of the infamous "tripe house" to his Defence of English Cooking. This was devised by Sally Jenner and will be read by Miles Jenner who will be accompanied by Stephen Rooke on the piano.

Tickets cost £10 and include tea and treacle tart after the performance. Proceeds are for Alciston and Selmeston churches. For catering purposes please book your place by Wednesday 7th October by emailing the Benefice Administrator: benefice.administrator@berwickchurch.org.uk - Payment to be made by cash or card on the door.

Diana White
Benefice Administrator

The Autumn Quiz is Beckoning!

6.30 pm Saturday 17th October
at Alciston and Selmeston Village Hall

Everyone is invited to join another popular village hall quiz. Come along in a team of six or join one on the evening. The quiz entry cost is £16 per person and includes delicious fish/veggie and chips supper. Advance booking is essential. The bar opens at 6.30 pm with the quiz starting at 7.30 pm.

Contact Mairi 07582 938185 or Helen 07969 732109 to book your place.

Rachel Lewis

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Service of Commemoration of the Departed

A reminder that this special service is due to take place at 3.00 pm on Sunday 25th October at Alciston Church.

Diana White, Benefice Administrator

A&S Village Hall 100 Club

The 100 Club has reached its first birthday! Please continue to support our hall by signing up or renewing your subscription to the Club.
To do this, please email alcistonselmeston100@gmail.com.
The annual fee is £60 which is payable upfront, or in two instalments for an extra charge. July's winners are:

1st Margaret Wilmot
2nd Beryl Smith
3rd Thea Buckthorp

For more information and to register: www.southdownsvillagehall.org/100club

Rachel Lewis

The 2026 A&S Flower Show

Happy September from the Flower Show Committee. Well, what a fabulous show that was. Thanks to all our wonderful neighbours and friends for making it such a successful day.





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Despite this year's dry weather, we had more brilliant flower entries than last year and, although the fruit and veg were affected, we still had some amazing massive onions!



The new outdoors events proved a great success, and the wellies were wanged with gusto as usual.
What a fun event for us all to enjoy.

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Our biggest thanks go to the volunteers

that helped out before, during and after the show — an event like this can't be run without us all coming together and making it happen — we hope you enjoyed it as much as we did.

And on top of that we made nearly £800 that goes straight into the Village Hall fund - well done everyone!

We look forward to seeing you next year.

Neil Creaton

THE ALL NEW: September Gardener's Diary

September continues the harvest season.

Lift maincrop potatoes and store them somewhere cool and dark once they've dried.

Keep picking beans and check if your sweetcorn is ripe by squeezing a kernel — if milky juice appears it's ready.

Chris Bonus

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Beds that are cleared can be tidied for winter crops such as garlic or autumn broad beans.

Courgettes may still be appearing, though by now friends and neighbours are becoming suspicious when you arrive carrying a bag.

Tip of the Month: Save seeds from favourite plants for next year.

Lisa Collington

Recipe of the Month: Apple and Tomato Chutney

(Makes 5 pots)

Ingredients

1.7 Kg (approx.) ripe tomatoes - peeled and chopped
225 g onions - chopped
225 g eating apples - peeled and chopped
650 g sugar
425 ml white malt vinegar
1 tbsp salt
1 tsp ground ginger
½ tsp ground black pepper
½ tsp all spice
2 cloves garlic - crushed
½ tsp cayenne pepper
150 g sultanas

Method

Prepare all the ingredients and put into a large, wide, stainless-steel saucepan.

Bring to the boil and simmer steadily until reduced and slightly thick — about an hour.

Pour into sterilised jars and cover.

Allow to mature for two weeks before using.

Valerie Shaw

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Family Support Work (FSW)

Dear Friends,

At the time of writing — in the midst of a heatwave and with drought warnings in place — we're going to ask you to think about the autumn! Whilst our summer activities have been in full swing, we are already planning what comes next. We hope you have all enjoyed the summer and, as we move into a new season, we look forward to continuing to work together to support families across Sussex. There is plenty to come over the next few months and, as always, we are so grateful for your continued support of FSW.



As we look ahead to the autumn, we are entering another busy period at FSW. Our Annual Eucharist and AGM will take place on Wednesday 30th September (see below). Following the AGM, we will be looking ahead to Harvest Festival. We are always very grateful for Harvest Festival donations, which help us to keep our food bank well stocked and provide much-needed food for families across Sussex. After a quieter few months over the summer, we will be especially grateful for your support. Every tin, packet and contribution makes a difference, helping us to support families who may be struggling to make ends meet. Thank you once again for your continued support as we head into the autumn and the final months of 2026.

Get Involved with FSW

There are many ways to support Family Support Work, from donating and volunteering to fundraising. As we prepare for Harvest, we would be very grateful for donations of food, whether given individually or collected through your church.

Upcoming Events

On Wednesday 30th September, we will be holding our Annual Eucharist and Annual General Meeting in Rustington. The service at St Peter and St Paul's Church

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will begin at 11.00 am. We are delighted that the Bishop of Horsham will be with us this year, and if you are free, we would love to see you there. For more information about our events, visit: familysupportwork.org/events



Why I Joined Family Support Work...

"I first heard about Family Support Work while working as a Social Worker. I referred a father and his two sons who were struggling to cope, and with the right support, the family was able to move forward. Seeing the lasting difference FSW made to their lives inspired me to join the charity myself. Today, I'm privileged to support families facing challenges of their own, helping them build hope and a brighter future." Richard Andrews, Practitioner for Rotherfield & Uckfield

July's Work in Numbers

- 18 new families began receiving support
- 169 home visits to families
- 402 phone calls and remote support sessions, supporting 281 adults and 421 children
- 36 supported meetings with partner agencies
- 36 group sessions attended by 484 adults and 619 children
- 89 food deliveries to families in need
- 58 dedicated volunteers gave their time

Chloe Burrell

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- 262 volunteer hours were shared with families across our community

Please pray for the children and families we support as many prepare to start at new schools, move into new year groups and settle into a new school term.

Hannah Rothwell, Digital Communications and Fundraising
hannah@familysupportwork.org.uk
Telephone: 01273 832963.

Subterranean Heatstroke Blues

This summer has been a tad warm. We've been seeking shade, suddenly all too aware of the importance of the cover of trees and a faint leaf-fanned breeze. Whilst we sweat in our gardens, another struggle is taking place under loungers and paddling pools, in baked earth. The heat is a challenge for our wildlife, and our subterranean friends are no different.

Moles have large spade-shaped digging paws to enable them to move through thick soil and are additionally equipped for underground life by velvety fur that sits in either direction to allow for easy reversing. Their tunnels, sometimes used for generations, are habitual to the mostly solitary-living Moles, who whizz around them like little fuzzy subway trains.

But it's a different story when the ground



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is too dry; it becomes impenetrable. Additionally, the Mole's prey of earthworms and other soft-bodied invertebrates like beetle larvae are in short supply or will move deeper underground in search of moisture and cooler soil.

Moles can somewhat prepare for drought: a toxin in their saliva can paralyse earthworms, which they store in larders in deeper chambers, but these are finite.

With Moles needing to eat 50% of their bodyweight every day, and living an almost exclusively underground life, the situation is making them hungry, dehydrated, and desperate. Many are being found above ground in the daytime, where they can quickly fall foul of heat exhaustion or predation from birds of prey or pet cats.

It can seem rather hopeless - but you can help. Providing water in gardens and outdoor spaces aids wildlife all year round, but especially during times of water stress and drought. Creating shade is also hugely beneficial and could be the difference between a Mole's home being manageable, or impossible.

Moles are a gardener's friend, taking care of plant-munching slugs, and aerating soils with their digging, which supports garden drainage. The excess soil Moles excavate can be used elsewhere in the garden, a far easier way of coping with molehills than trying to interfere.
If disturbed, Moles are likely to start excavating in another spot, so a hands-off approach means fewer molehills for you, and less energy expended by the Moles.

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When it finally rains, rejoice. Those expert diggers can put their paws to use, feed up on plump juicy meals, and once again manoeuvre below our feet with ease, keeping the soil, which we so depend on, healthy and resilient.

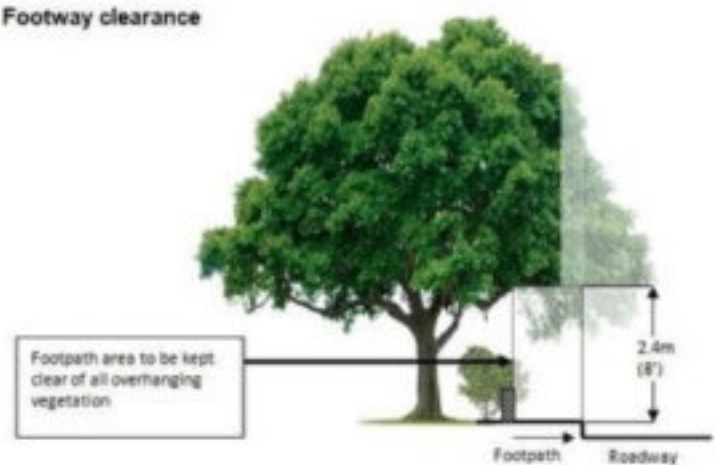
Kerry Williams Communications Officer
Sussex Wildlife Trust
Picture:
Mole © Steve Bottom

Hedge and Tree Cutting

A polite request from Berwick Parish Council. Hedges can be cut from the 1st September, and we ask residents to ensure that roads and footpaths are clear.

East Sussex Highways have produced a guide providing details of the clearances required. It can be found at https://live.eastsussexhighways.com/services/services-vegetation

Lynette Kemp
Clerk to Berwick Parish Council



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Cuckmere River

In a hidden place
I push through
the sheltering earth.

Others join me—
we run downhill
like children at play

till it's time to rest,
meandering through
the Wealden clay

round Michelham's moat
and Arlington
then between the Downs

You will see my surface
from your small bridges
but not pause to watch

my moths and dragonflies
bream and carp;
nor will you know

the joy I feel
on joining the sea
as if I were driven

unconsciously
to find fulfilment
in vanishing.

Antony Mair





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From the Vicarage: Drought

Have you smelled it? That 'dry earth, dead grass' odour — so different from a garden in a usually green and pleasant land. Dry landscapes are common on the South African Highveld in winter; one becomes used to it and the Kikuyu grass always recovers.



Also, the fires that burn on Table Mountain are all part of the regeneration of the unique Fynbos scrubland plant community of that area.

But here, you may cry, here we are in a different place, where all this is new and frightening. We wonder with some trepidation what the future holds. Houses, gardens and infrastructure are not designed for prolonged periods of extreme heat and drought.

I recall that many times during my years in South Africa the churches held special services so that the people could gather and pray for rain.

This was nothing new: people in ancient

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Palestine believed that drought was a punishment from God.

There is a description of a drought in Jeremiah 14:
'Nobles send their servants for water, they come to the cisterns, they find no water and return with their vessels empty. The ground is cracked because there has been no rain in the land, the farmers are dismayed; they cover their heads.'

Perhaps what we are experiencing is not called punishment, but is it a consequence of our thoughtlessness, our lack of care for the resources we have?

Christians know that when things go wrong in our lives, it is so often a consequence of our wrong actions, but we also know that God has great mercy, and that we can call on him in our time of need, and He hears and forgives us.

Now would be a good time to assess the harm we have done, put things right, reorder our lives so that there is great flourishing in the land.

And, please God, send rain.

Revd Shirley

Cover Photos

Thank you to Mike Biddulph who recently flew over Berwick Station at 3000 feet and took these aerial photos of Berwick Station.

If you have any interesting local photos that could adorn the cover of the Village News, we are always grateful to receive them.

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Local bakehouse in Firle making artisan bread each Saturday, monthly pizza nights and bread making classes. More information can be found on www.kittywitchbakehouse.co.uk or by contacting Paula on 07743 705609.

A. S. Window Cleaning
Residential and Commercial.
Windows, frames and cills, solar panels, fascias, soffits and conservatory roofs.
Up to 60 ft. pure water window cleaning.
DBS checked and approved.
For a free no-obligation quote call / text Jason on 01435 408048 or 07739 039944.
Email: ascleaning@live.co.uk

Yoga Classes in Selmeston and Berwick
Offering varying styles of yoga for all abilities including breathwork and a guided relaxation. Contact Kelly on 07850 015911 or visit www.kellysladeyoga.com



Village News Contacts

Advertising is coordinated by Brian Calcott. Tel. 07999 788618. **Distribution** is coordinated by Jeremy and Valerie Shaw. Tel: 01323 811567. **The Production Team** is Liz Golden and Martin Chilvers. **Contributions, Photos, etc** (other than advertising requests) should be emailed to Martin by the **12th** of the month: empty.sea@outlook.com They can also be passed to Liz Golden, 2 Cornford Crescent, Berwick Tel: 01323 870163 *or* Brian Calcott brian.calcott@gmail.com *or* Valerie Shaw at Selmeston House, Selmeston Tel: 01323 811567.

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!***

Parish Council Clerks

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Alciston and Selmeston Village Hall
Website: www.southdownsvillagehall.org

Benefice Priests

Revd Canon Peter Blee The Parsonage, Berwick, 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.

Churchwardens/Administrator

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

Safeguarding Officer - Christine Skinner
Tel: 07813 382580 Email: pso@berwickchurch.org.uk
Benefice Administrator - Diana White
Email: benefice.administrator@berwickchurch.org.uk.

September Church Services

Sunday 6th September - Trinity 14
9:30 am Arlington - Holy Communion
10.00 am Selmeston - Holy Communion - Harvest Festival (Alciston and Berwick unite with Selmeston at Selmeston church)
11:00 am Wilmington - Holy Communion

Sunday 13th September - Trinity 15
9:30 am - Arlington - Holy Communion - Harvest Festival
9:30 am Alciston - Holy Communion
11:00 am Berwick - Holy Communion
11:00 am Wilmington - Harvest Festival Family Service

Sunday 20th September -Trinity 16
9:30 am Arlington - Holy Communion
9:30 am Selmeston - Holy Communion
11:00 am Berwick - Holy Communion
11:00 am Wilmington - Holy Communion

Sunday 27th September - Trinity 17
9:30 am Arlington - Holy Communion
11:00 am Berwick - Holy Communion (Selmeston and Alciston unite with Berwick at Berwick church)
11:00 am 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 Wednesday at Wilmington Church. If you are unable to attend in person this service is also available via Zoom.
Please contact Shirley at revshirleym@gmail.com who will send you the link.

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.

To receive a Sunday Link notification about services please email the Benefice Administrator at benefice.administrator@berwickchurch.org.uk

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

