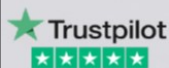


THE VOICE

February 2026



A COMMUNITY MAGAZINE FOR BOROUGH GREEN
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WITH THANKS TO ALL COMMUNITY SUPPORT (see page 9).



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Editorial from the Church of the Good Shepherd

February 2026

Well and a Happy New Year to all our readers! I can't believe how quickly Christmas flew by. It was a good one here at the Good Shepherd and our prayers are that 2026 will bring peace to each one of you and also to our troubled world.

I am writing this just after we have celebrated the 120th Anniversary of the Church of the Good Shepherd. Anniversaries of course are important - time to take stock, to reflect on what has been good, what we might change, how we got to this point and where next?

The Good Shepherd was founded by Christians from St George's Church in Wrotham and the foundation stone laid on 9 January 1906. The building itself was consecrated only 7 months later on 24 July 1906, quite an achievement. Since then, there have been 13 clergy - 9 curates from St George's and, since 1966, 4 vicars, currently none as you know, and hundreds of people who have visited, worshipped and served in the parish to whom we owe much. Now it is our turn to work to serve this community and share our faith – you can check the following pages to see what is available to anyone in this locality.

So what does this anniversary mean? As we give thanks, we also think about the future and pray for God's guidance. Many ask when we will have a new vicar. We don't know is the answer but as we met this morning for our regular service and added a nice lunch - an anniversary after all! - we are clear that the future needs to involve us all. Anniversaries provide a thinking space - time to reflect. So I invite you to do the same for yourself as we begin this year 2026. Some ideas to consider are:

What matters most in your life?

Are you paying it attention or neglecting it?

Were your resolutions the important ones, or can they be ditched for something else?

Where do you find direction?

Is it a helpful place?

Have you ever considered that God might offer you help/support/guidance, whatever you wish to call it, in a key moment?

Have you ever prayed to find the answer?

In my own life, key moments have often been very ordinary - a short conversation at a bus stop, or in a phone call or ... I could say more. The important thing to find our way, is to be open and listening - listening to wise friends and open to God for new ways forward.

'When a great moment knocks on the door of your life, it is often no louder than the beating of your heart, and it is very easy to miss it.' wrote **Boris Pasternak**, Russian author and poet.

So my challenge this month is to listen. Are you listening too?

Warm regards, Elaine

Elaine Almond

Licensed Lay Minister



Church of the Good Shepherd 120th Anniversary



Join us for an enjoyable
evening of
BINGO with "FUN-PRIZES"

Saturday 21 February 7.00pm

Bar and nibbles available

Further information from
Julie Sweeting 01732 885437

Contacting the Church of the Good Shepherd



In the absence of a Vicar:

If you need to speak to someone from the church (including any enquiry about a wedding, a baptism or a funeral) contact one of the churchwardens –

Julie (885437) or Carole (07542 442 140).

If you have an enquiry about burial of ashes contact Elaine (886440).

COGS website www.cogsonline.co.uk

We apologise that the main church building is still locked for security reasons. We are working towards a solution and hope to be open for quiet prayer and reflection again in the near future. In the meantime, the porch is open daily from 10am - 4pm for Foodbank donations. If you need access to the church or annexe for any reason, please contact Julie or Carole. Thank you for your understanding.

Our 120 Acts of Kindness Tree

Celebrating 120 Years of God's Faithfulness
In the Church of the Good Shepherd

What is the Kindness Tree?

Our church is marking its 120th anniversary by growing a tree made of 120 leaves, each one representing an act of kindness offered by someone in our community.

How does it work?

- Take a leaf from the basket in the porch/annexe
- Write down a new act of kindness you have done, you can add your name or a picture if you like
- Add your leaf to the branches on the wall
- Watch the tree grow and flourish over the coming months

What counts as an act of kindness?

Anything new that shares love, hope, kindness, or encouragement, for example:

- Helping someone at home
- Writing a card or message
- Visiting or phoning someone who is lonely
- Donating to a cause
- Picking up litter
- Offering a lift or a listening ear
- Any simple act that brightens someone's day



Who can take part?

Everyone.

Children, teens, adults, newcomers, long-timers, and those joining from home

Every act matters. Every leaf helps the tree grow.

Why are we doing this?

To celebrate 120 years not only by looking back with gratitude, but by living forward with generosity.

Each leaf is a reminder of God's love at work in us and through us.

Let's grow something beautiful together.

Add your leaf. Share kindness.

Help our tree flourish.

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Notes from Borough Green Parish Council



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The Council met at 7.30pm Monday 5th January 2026 at the COGS Annexe. Matters raised included:

- **Declaration of Town Status.** We have had a terrific response, online, email and paper slips. All votes were counted by two Councillors prior to the meeting and the breakdown of the **592** votes was announced by the Clerk: "Support changing to a Town" **375**, "Against changing" **200** and "Undecided" **17**. The Chairman then proposed a formal vote and the Council agreed unanimously to adopt Town Status on 1st April 2026 to coincide with our financial year end. The Clerk will change bank accounts to "Borough Green Council" so we can change back quickly if we wish and the decision will be reviewed every 6 months. Our grateful thanks to everyone who took part.
- **Recreation Ground Pavilion.** Roof replacement and clock tower are complete. Cllr Proto and the Clerk are submitting plans and putting together a business case for grant applications. We hope to start the disabled access ramp shortly, with the main works starting in the Spring.
- **Isles Quarry bike club** plans have been put on hold temporarily whilst TMBC decide if we need "Planning Permission for Development in the Greenbelt!" (but it has been too wet to work anyway). Action by TMBC Planning Enforcement means at present we can't even risk putting down log chippings on the muddy sections of path or installing the planned signage that will make it safer for all users.
- **A Volunteer Wildlife Warden** was proposed, and BGPC have appointed Cllr Lisa Reid to take on the role for Isles Quarry, Harrison Rd and Crowhill. Her brief is based on the Kent Wildlife Survey and we will be providing extra training.
- **Potters Mede & Scouts.** BGPC are working closely with the Scouts to enable them to build their new permanent home at Potters Mede. Our original plan was to build south of the existing building but that part of the site is constrained by the underground services, the stream on the boundary, and reduces the safe green play space for children. So we are now looking at siting the new building in the car park and joining both areas of car park together to increase the available car parking for all hall users.
- **TMBC Local Plan Reg 18 Consultation.** BGPC agreed and submitted its own response and endorsed the Parish Alliance Contamination report and the Soft Sand Reserves report - all posted on the website.
- **Christmas Lights Switch-on Festival** on Saturday 29th November was a great success - our usual vote of thanks to the Christmas Lights volunteers.

(Continued on page 11)

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Delivering the Voice



We are looking for some help to deliver this magazine each month in the village as a number of our current volunteers, who have been doing this for many years, are looking to wind down.



If you are willing to put your name forward to help with this, please contact Chris Atkins **01732 366615**.

Advertising

Any commercial bodies or people offering services who wish to advertise should contact **Chris Atkins** email chris.atkins1952@gmail.com or phone **01732 366615** about rates and availability of spaces.

If you have something you want to sell, a caravan or cottage you want to let for holidays etc then contact Margaret Jeffery. The cost of such personal notices are just £2 per issue.

The views expressed in articles are not necessarily those of the Editorial Team. The Editorial Team cannot accept responsibility for wrong information received, or mistakes that occur in publication. The Editorial Team cannot accept responsibility for any delay in distribution. Publication of advertisements does not imply any form of recommendation. All articles in this magazine are covered by copyright and permission must be obtained before reproducing them in any format.

The total print run of the magazine is over 2000 copies and it is also available to read on the COGS, BG Community and Parish Council websites.

Thanks

Thank you to the Borough Green Parish Council for their generous grant and to all our advertisers for their financial support which makes the production of this magazine possible. Also thank you to all our distributors who get the Voice to every house in the village.

Articles for the next magazine

The Voice is your community magazine and it relies on the people of Borough Green to make it as interesting as possible. Organisations, clubs and individuals are welcome to submit articles on their activities and subjects likely to be of interest to the village.

The deadline for articles for the next magazine will be **Tuesday 10 February** and these should be sent to the address below. The next magazine will cover **March** so if you have any events planned for that month and you would like them to appear in the diary section please send to :-

m-jeffery@talktalk.net
01732 883978

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- **Borough Green Sandpits.** Mud and other debris on the A25 continue to be a safety hazard. Cllr Rayner is working with KCC Enforcement to try and bring an end to this unacceptable problem. One element will be a new Quarry Liaison Group that will meet regularly with the operator in the hope that the personal touch may bring results.
- **Nepicar Sandpit** has submitted an application to extract sand west of their current pit towards Platt Industrial Estate. BGPC and Platt PC strongly support the application which could further delay the eventual restoration of the pit, constraining the area's suitability for development.
- **4x4 Santa.** Our thanks to Cllr Butterfill and South East 4x4 for Santa's visit to Platt and Borough Green, where over 300 children came out for their treats.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on **Monday 9th February 2026 at 19.30 in the COGS Annexe.** The agenda will include a period for public contributions and questions.

Council Contacts

Chairman mike.taylor@boroughgreen.gov.uk 01732 882880

Clerk clerk@boroughgreen.gov.uk 07568 536405

Full minutes are posted at [MINUTES](#) | [mysite \(boroughgreen.gov.uk\)](http://mysite.boroughgreen.gov.uk)



IGHTHAM & DISTRICT GARDENERS' CLUB

INVITE YOU TO OUR FIRST MEETING FOR 2026 TO START OUR YEAR WITH A QUIZ NIGHT AND SOCIAL GET TOGETHER.

WHY NOT COME ALONG AND MEET US AND FIND OUT ABOUT THE CLUB AND WHAT'S ON FOR 2026

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For further information contact the Club Secretary

Dee Samways – 0779 900 2129



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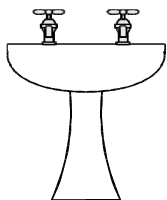


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Thanks

Thank you to the **Borough Green Lights Committee**, their helpers, those who contributed to the Christmas market and performances for the switch on. A successful event and another spectacular display.



These are the 2 new lights designed by pupils at Borough Green Primary School to mark the 40th year celebration.



SOUTH EAST
4x4
RESPONSE

Also thanks to **South East 4x4 Response** and the **Parish Council** for the Father Christmas tour of Platt and Borough Green.





Exciting Progress at Borough Green Village Hall

We're delighted to share some excellent news about improvements to your Village Hall!

New Electric Doors Installed

Our new electric entrance doors are now in place, which will make a real difference to both the comfort and security of the building. The improved insulation will help us keep the hall warmer in winter and cooler in summer, while also reducing our energy costs. The enhanced security features give us better control over access to the building.

What's Next?

We're now pressing ahead with two major projects:

- **New disabled toilets** - ensuring the hall is fully accessible to everyone in our community
- **Heat pump air conditioning** - providing efficient heating and cooling throughout the building

These improvements represent a significant investment in your community facility, funded by hall hire income and grants.

Your Hall, Your Community

All of these improvements are only possible because of the dedication of our volunteer committee and the support of our hirers. If you'd like to get involved, have suggestions, or would like to hire the hall for your event, please get in touch.



Bryan Rawlins, Chair
01732 646040

boroughgreenvillagehall@gmail.com
www.boroughgreenvillagehall.co.uk

Borough Green & Wrotham u3a

This is to remind readers that Borough Green and Wrotham u3a monthly meetings are held on the second Monday of each month at 2 pm in Borough Green Village Hall, with tea, coffee and biscuits. Parking/disabled access available.

At our meeting on **9 February** we will welcome Captain Brian Biggs (retired) who will entertain us with an account of his experiences on tugboats, from a boy of 15 to Captain on the Thames and at sea. He will tell us how the Thames has changed over the years, from steam to diesel, and will talk about his experiences from the East End of London to Oman. We look forward to seeing his coloured slides of London, which will no doubt evoke memories for many of us.

We look forward to welcoming existing and new members (free) and guests (£5). Parking is free for village hall users, so please remember to register your car in the village hall lobby when you arrive.

For further information, or to join your local u3a, please contact:
info@bgwu3a.org.uk or visit our website <https://bgw.u3asite.uk>



NOTHING FROM THE PARISH REGISTERS THIS MONTH

Thanks

Tony Hurll

Tony Hurll lived in Borough Green from 1969 to 2025. He suffered a major debilitating stroke in August 2023 leaving him with significant needs and in constant pain. On 19 November, a month off his 92nd birthday and surrounded by his family, Tony passed away. We have been overwhelmed with the number of cards and condolences that have been received from family and friends, plus a lovely eulogy from his carers at Harpwood. On 18 December we celebrated his life at Bluebell Crematorium, followed by a wake at The Landing Hotel. As a family we would like to thank Stephen P. Gay Funeral Directors, Joanne Bamford, Celebrant, and Knightly Flowers for the kindness, support and advice they have given us at this difficult time.

Thank you all
Chris Hurll

Monday Minis Toddler Time

Play and socialising for pre-school children and their grown ups.

Mondays 9 and 23 February 10 to 12 noon in COGS annexe.

No charge, just a donation for tea and coffee please.



Games, Tea & Chat



On alternative **Mondays** (for dates see diary section) at 2 - 4pm in the annexe to the Church of the Good Shepherd. Come and enjoy board games, tea and a chat. Plenty of room for new folk so, if you are wondering whether it's for you, do get in touch and ask for more information or just turn up at 2.00.

Contact Elaine Almond on 886440 or etalmond@aol.com

Cinema at COGS

Wednesday 18 February 2pm in the Church of the Good Shepherd. Please check the Church's noticeboard for this month's presentation. All are welcome so come for an afternoon of free entertainment. Refreshments available during the interval.



Events in the Village for the month of February

- 1 SJCC - Mass - 9.30
COGS - All Age Worship - 10.00
BGBC - Service - 10.30
Bash the Trash - BGVH - 11.30 to 12.30
- 2 BG Library - Natty Stitchers - 10.00 to 12.00
Games, Tea and Chat - COGS Annexe - 2.00 to 4.00
- 3 BG Library - Scrabble Club - 2.15 to 4.15
- 5 SJCC - 10.00 Mass followed by Adoration
BG Lunch Club - BGVH - 10.00 to 1.00
BG Library - Coffee & Chat - 10.15 to 12.15
- 6 BG Lunch Club - BGVH - 10.00 to 1.00
BG Library - Baby Bounce and Rhyme Time - 10.15 to 10.45
- 7 **Saturday Open House - COGS - 10.00 to 12.00**
- 8 SJCC - Mass - 9.30
COGS - Holy Communion and Children's Church - 10.00
BGBC - Service - 10.30
- 9 BG Library - Natty Stitchers - 10.00 to 12.00
Toddler Time - COGS Annexe - 10.00 to 12.00
BGVH - u3a meeting - 2.00
BG Library - TLC Bookworms - 2.15 to 3.30
BG Parish Council - COGS Annexe - 7.30
- 10 BG Library - Scrabble Club - 2.15 to 4.15
- 11 Sticky Fingers - BGBC - 10.00 to 11.15
- 12 SJCC - 10.00 Mass followed by Adoration
BG Lunch Club - BGVH - 10.00 to 1.00
BG Library - Coffee & Chat - 10.15 to 12.15
- 13 BG Lunch Club - BGVH - 10.00 to 1.00
BG Library - Baby Bounce and Rhyme Time - 10.15 to 10.45
BG Library - Friday 2 Book Club - 2.15 to 4.15
- 14 **Saturday Open House - COGS - 10.00 to 12.00**
- 15 **COGS - Breakfast Church - 9.00**
SJCC - Mass - 9.30
BGBC- Service - 10.30
- 16 BG Library - Natty Stitchers - 10.00 to 12.00
Games, Tea and Chat - COGS Annexe - 2.00 to 4.00
- 17 BG Library - Scrabble Club - 2.15 to 4.15
- 18 **COGS - Film Afternoon - 2.00**
SJCC - Mass with Imposition of Ashes - 6.00
Platt Church - Ash Wednesday Service for the cluster parishes
Imposition of Ashes and Holy Communion - 7.30
- 19 SJCC - 10.00 Mass followed by Adoration
BG Lunch Club - BGVH - 10.00 to 1.00
BG Library - Coffee & Chat - 10.15 to 12.15



- 20 BG Lunch Club - BGVH - 10.00 to 1.00
BG Library - Baby Bounce and Rhyme Time - 10.15 to 10.45
SJCC - Stations of the Cross - 6.00
- 21 **Saturday Open House - COGS - 10.00 to 12.00**
COGS - Bingo - 7.00
- 22 SJCC - Mass - 9.30
COGS - Holy Communion and Children's Church - 10.00
BGBC - Service - 10.30
- 23 BG Library - Natty Stitchers - 10.00 to 12.00
Toddler Time - COGS Annexe - 10.00 to 12.00
- 24 BG Library - Scrabble Club - 2.15 to 4.15
Ightham Gardeners' Club - Ightham Village Hall - 7.15
- 25 Sticky Fingers - BGBC - 10.00 to 11.15
- 26 SJCC - 10.00 Mass followed by Adoration
BG Lunch Club - BGVH - 10.00 to 1.00
BG Library - Coffee & Chat - 10.15 to 12.15
BGVH - Heart of Kent Hospice Charity Sale - 2.00 to 4.00
- 27 BG Lunch Club - BGVH - 10.00 to 1.00
BG Library - Baby Bounce and Rhyme Time - 10.15 to 10.45
SJCC - Stations of the Cross - 6.00
- 28 **Saturday Open House - COGS - 10.00 to 12.00**



Note: COGS Services maybe be subject to change in the interregnum.

Abbreviations

COGS	Church of the Good Shepherd
BGBC	Borough Green Baptist Church
SJCC	St Joseph's Catholic Church
BGVH	Borough Green Village Hall

Church of the Good Shepherd Food Bank



Thanks to your continuing generosity we have been able to support many local families in need.

Donations of non-perishable goods may be left in the Church's porch (where there is a list of the items we need most) on any day - the porch is usually open 10am - 4pm.

Thank you

For any enquiries regarding our Food Bank please contact
Ian Simpson on **07801 135 460** or foodbank.cogs@gmail.com

Village Directory

The Church of the Good Shepherd

VICAR	Vacancy	
LICENSED LAY MINISTER	Elaine Almond, 5 Stone Court	886440
CHURCHWARDENS	Carole Simpson	07542 442 140
	Julie Sweeting, 3 High Street	885437
PCC SEC	Thea Cason	cogspccsecretary@gmail.com
PCC TREASURER	Mark Sweeting, 3 High Street	885437
PARISH CHURCH HALL		
CHAIRMAN & BOOKING SEC	Alan Williams, 4 Rock Road	07436 115 425

Other Borough Green Contacts

BAPTIST CHURCH (BG)	Pastor - Mr B Roberts	882624
BADMINTON CLUB (BG)	Mr P Sales	884405
BADMINTON (MIXED - Wed am)	Mrs Pauline Deards	884755
BADMINTON CLUB (Ightham)	Mr N Dennis	882078
BOWLS (BG)		bgbc@boroughgreenbowls.co.uk
BOROUGH GREEN AND PLATT PLAYERS	Tony Cassidy	07876 248 430
BOROUGH GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL		school.office@bgpschool.kent.sch.uk 883459
CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT RURAL ENGLAND	Mr M Taylor	882880
CAROLINE CLARE DANCE	Caroline Madden	07944 332 275
CHRISTMAS LIGHTS (BG) ORGANISER	Mrs M Vick	884101
CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU		440488
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IGHTHAM & DISTRICT GARDENERS CLUB	Dee Samways	07799 002 129
J5 SLIPS ORGANISATION	Tim Shaw	883375
KENT COUNTY COUNCILLOR	Mr H Rayner	03000 421 606
LIBRARY (BG)	Village Hall Car Park	03000 413 131
LUNCH CLUB	Pauline Nix	07503 156 713
PARISH COUNCIL (BG) CHAIRMAN	Mr M Taylor	882880
VICE CHAIR	Mr M Ramsden	885779
CLERK	Mr B Galopin	clerk@boroughgreen.gov.uk
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SCOUT GROUP		bgscoutmembers@gmail.com
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Chris Atkins

office@wrotham.kent.sch.uk

07748 633 200

882880

info@bgwu3a.org.uk

646040

883978

366615

884207

For any new entries, or changes to existing entries, in the directory
please contact Margaret Jeffery



**1st Wednesday
and
3rd Monday**

Singing Group: 3pm - 4:30pm

Singing can help people with dementia develop and maintain relationships with others and improve their wellbeing. This group is for people with dementia and their partner/carer/family member to attend together.

**2nd Wednesday
and
4th Monday**

Music and Movement: 2:30pm - 4pm

A session based around music and movement designed for those living with dementia and their carers. This is a mainly seated exercise session. £3 per person (no charge for carers).

**4th Wednesday
of each month**

Dementia Carers Support Group: 2:30pm - 4:30pm

This is a group for anyone who is caring for a loved one with dementia.

**2nd Monday
of each month**

Dementia Arts and Crafts: 2:30pm - 4:30pm

An arts and crafts group for people living with dementia with a variety of craft projects including painting, modelmaking, woodwork and collage.

**1st Monday
and
3rd Wednesday**

Memory Café: 2:30pm - 4:30pm

A coffee afternoon for those living with dementia and their care givers to share memories and stories in a safe and welcoming environment. There is usually an entertainer, speaker or a quiz.

**4th Monday
of each month**

Young Onset Peer Support Group: 10am - 12pm

This is a group for people under 65 with a recent diagnosis of dementia to meet others in the same situation and get support, advice and information.

**3rd Monday of
each month**

Carefree Bereavement Group: 10am - 12pm

A group for people whose loved one with dementia is now in a care home or has passed away.

Spadework, Teston Road, Offham, ME19 5NA.

If you would like more information about any of our services,
please call the team on 01732 870002 or email

dementia@spadework.org.uk





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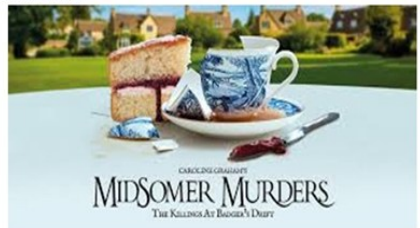
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Tom Tugendhat MP's Column

December 2025

The Rt Hon Sir John Stanley, who served our community for 41 years, has died at the age of 83 following a short illness. Sir John served Tonbridge and Malling as MP between 1974 and 2015. He dedicated much of his life to our concerns and cared deeply. I have learned so much from so many who have shared stories of his dedication to responding to those who needed his help.

One of Sir John's many achievements was his vigorous opposition to the plans at Borough Green Sandpits for a 250 acre freight terminal, towards the end of the 2000s. Many will recall his passionate speech in Wrotham School at the public meeting at the time which showed just how deeply he cared for our community.

He also served with distinction in Parliament on the Foreign Affairs Committee and as a Minister in government. Sir John had the privilege, as Margaret Thatcher's PPS, of being the one who welcomed her into Number 10 for the first time. He went on to bring through the law allowing council tenants to buy their homes, the biggest transfer of wealth in a generation. From there he went on to serve as the Minister for the Armed Forces in the Ministry of Defence and later as a Minister in the Northern Ireland Office. His unique style brought change and focus to each role. He served our country with distinction.

Even after he stepped down he was a kind friend and counsel to me and was the best predecessor I could ask for. No issue was too big or small for Sir John to deal with. In Parliament he was devoted to serving his country in the same way he served our community. I know I will not be alone in missing Sir John, he helped many of us in Kent and across the United Kingdom. His life was one of dedication and service. I send my deepest condolences to Elizabeth and to his whole family.

January 2026

At Christmas many of us were lucky to spend time with family, friends and loved ones. For some of us, distance makes that harder and that's where technology comes in, but that relies on having fast and reliable broadband. That's a long way from universal. As so many of us know, there are still many areas in our community where the signal is appalling and a very real challenge for those of us living here.

Last year I started a survey to understand the extent of the problem affecting our rural villages. I have had around 1,000 people get in touch with me. Thank you if you have shared your experiences. It has informed my work and allowed me to map best where the issues are.

The frustration of having no data, even when your phone indicates you should have coverage, can be a daily struggle. This affects us whether we are making calls from our phones or using unreliable Wi-Fi.

The technology phone companies use allows for high-speed capacity across our area. Phone companies can make our signal better if they want to invest in our community. In every meeting I have held with operators since launching the survey, I have made this point. It is simply a failure to act from the companies who provide the service. That's why we need to keep the pressure on them.

(Continued on page 23)



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Whilst EE and VodafoneThree are both expecting significant upgrades in the next few years, Virgin Media O2 are working on timelines of 8 years. This is far too long to wait.

I've escalated this in Parliament because, sadly, it isn't just our community affected. Rural areas across the country suffer from slow broadband and poor connectivity. Even in our towns, the issues are seen. Many people can't even get a phone signal to pay for parking or access shopping apps in the middle of Tonbridge. Train journeys are often disrupted by lost signal.

As I continue to build the picture to present a case to the mobile phone companies, I would appreciate your help in telling me your experiences. Please fill out the form on my website and share it with neighbours so we can keep the pressure up, and secure the improvements our community deserves. You can find it at www.tomtugendhat.org/mobile-phone-survey

tom.tugendhat.mp@parliament.uk

01732 441563 130 Vale Road, Tonbridge, Kent, TN9 1SP
Social Media - @tomtugendhat



Wrotham Historical Society

After the winter break the new season will start on Friday 13 March.

BOROUGH GREEN LIBRARY

The library is open – with a wide range of services, from free access to books, computers, WiFi and information on the hire of music, audio books and films.

Opening hours are

10 - 1 and 2 - 5 on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday
and 9 - 1 on Saturday.

Events for which no booking is required see diary section

Ancestry - Monday 10.00 - 12.00 need to book an appointment

For more advice please call the library on 03000 413 131 or
email boroughgreenlibrary@kent.gov.uk where staff will be able to help.

We look forward to seeing you.

The next clinic for sound support for deaf and hard of hearing people is on **Friday 27 February** 2.30 to 3.30.

No appointment needed. Drop in and wait your turn.



Hi Kent

(Digital Kent are no longer holding sessions at BG Library - the nearest sessions are now at Larkfield Library.)



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March 2026!!**

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 Saturday 28th March 2:30pm and 7:30pm
 Sunday 29th March 2:30pm

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tony-cassidy@blueyonder.co.uk

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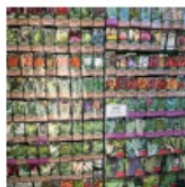
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01732 884726

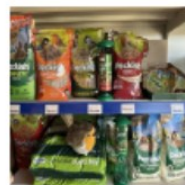
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TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL - UPDATES



Empty houses. Around 470 homes across Tonbridge and Malling are long-term empty. TMBC has appointed a dedicated Empty Homes Officer to help bring properties back into use, supporting local housing needs and communities. If you know of an empty home you can report it at www.tmbc.gov.uk/housing/report-empty-home

Rough sleeping in the cold. Cold weather can be life-threatening for people sleeping rough. If you are worried about someone sleeping rough in the cold, call 01732 844522 or report it at <https://thestreetlink.org.uk/>.

Local Plan. The consultation has now closed, thank you to everyone for your comments. All comments received will be reviewed and considered alongside the supporting evidence as we continue to develop the Plan. We are analysing the consultation responses and carrying out further technical work where required. This will inform the next stage of the process, known as Regulation 19, when a proposed final version of the Local Plan will be published for consultation before submission to the Government for independent examination.



Local Government Reorganisation

Further to the article in the October edition of the Voice, at the end of November KCC, Medway Council and the 12 district and borough councils in Kent submitted their proposals to Ministers for the preferred number of new unitary councils needed in the county and the geographical areas they should cover. The number of options have increased somewhat as follows :-

- a) single authority for the whole of the county - proposed by KCC,
- b) three authorities - proposed by TMBC and 4 other councils,
- c&d) four authorities - two options with different boundaries each proposed by 3 councils,
- e) five authorities - proposed by 2 councils.

TMBC's preference includes a West Kent authority consisting of Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells. For details for the various proposals go to <https://kentcouncilleaders.org.uk>.

Ministers are expected to analyse the proposals and launch a public consultation early this year. A decision by the Government on the final structure of unitary councils is expected in the summer.

Margaret and Richard Jeffery

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Village Hall

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Bernard Galopin 07568 536 405

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b) **When premises are open**

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or email: healingvoiceskent@gmail.com

Facebook – *Healing Voices Kent*

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West Malling Community Choir - Registered Charity no. 1157075



Tonbridge and Malling Ramblers

You don't have to be a Ramblers member to try up to three 'taster' walks with us. If you're new to our walks, please contact the walk leader to check that their walk will suit you. For details of these and other upcoming walks and walk leaders see our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/groups/tonbridgeandmallingeramblers or visit www.tonbridgeandmallingeramblers.org.uk.



February	Route	Distance in miles
Thursday 5th	Fairly flat leisurely walk from Shipbourne Common via Point Wood, The Hoad, Cataract Cottage and Coldharbour. Returning via Tinley Wood and Shipbourne Church.	5.4
Sunday 8th	An inspiring circular walk through varied countryside from Ightham Mote via Godden Green, Seal Chart and Stone Street. Moderate difficulty.	6
Thursday 12th	Circular walk from Eynsford climbing up one side of the Darent Valley, passing Eagle Heights Wildlife Foundation (temporarily closed to protect the birds from avian flu) and walking through woods to the top of Lullingstone Country Park. We will then descend with views of the beautiful Darent Valley. The return includes quiet lane walking past Lullingstone Castle and the Lullingstone Roman Villa. Moderate difficulty.	5
Sunday 22nd	Circular walk with a gently rising climb from Plaxtol through Yopps Green with views over the Bourne valley before returning via Dunks Green. Moderate difficulty.	5.5
<p>Walks usually start mid-morning. There's a short half-way break (bring refreshments) and we usually finish near a pub. Most walks are dog-friendly (see website).</p>		



*Leaving Shipbourne churchyard
5 February walk*

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