THURSLEY PARISH MAGAZINE

St Michael & All Angels

OCTOBER 2025



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EDITORIAL
By Tricia Horwood



***As** the first leaves begin to turn and mornings take on that familiar crispness, we sadly say goodbye to our long and sunny summer. There is, however, something about autumn that feels both new and hopeful; for me it signals the start of the year after decades of schooling and school runs!*

***One** of the highlights of our village calendar is, of course, the Harvest Festival Supper. This year's gathering will take place in the Village Hall on Saturday 4th October. It's usually a lively and memorable evening with entertainment and the sharing of delicious home-made dishes (p28).*

***Shortly** after, on 8th October, Ray Broughton will give a talk on recent developments in horticulture, which promises to be both informative and inspiring, particularly for the many keen gardeners among us. There will be refreshments and time for questions and conversation, so do bring your friends and neighbours. All are welcome (see p35).*

***We** have a few new councillors serving on the Parish Council. Fresh voices and new perspectives are vital, and all seven of them are listed at the back of the magazine, with photos, brief biographies and contact details if you need to get in touch with any of them.*

***And,** though it is rather early to mention the "Christmas" word, it is worth marking your diaries for another cherished tradition of the year: the Advent Concert and Lighting of the Christmas Tree, this year to include a torchlight procession through the village (see p15).*

***May** this season bring you new habits (see Lizzie Young's article on p38), cosy get-togethers with neighbours and a renewed sense of belonging in the place we call home.*

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SERVICES FOR THE PARISHES OF ELSTEAD, THURSLEY, SHACKLEFORD & PEPER HAROW

Please note: Due to building works all services held at St James', Elstead will be moving to St James' Primary School, Thursley Road, Elstead GU8 6DH from 1st May until December 2025.

OCTOBER

SUNDAY 5th Creationtide 5	9.15am	Communion at St James' Primary School, Elstead
	9.45am	**Communion at St Michael's, Thursley**
	10.30am	Modern Service with Communion at St James' Primary School, Elstead
SUNDAY 12th Harvest Elstead	9.15am	Traditional Harvest Service with Communion at St James' Primary School, Elstead
SUNDAY 19th Harvest Thursley	**9.45am**	**Harvest Service with Communion at St Michael & All Angels, Thursley**
	10.30am	Modern Service & Harvest at Elstead Village Hall
SUNDAY 26th Last after Trinity	10.00am	Communion Service at St Nicholas, Peper Harrow

OCTOBER

CHURCH CLEANING

(Please contact Sallie Roles if you can help)

Marion O'BRIAN Claire DAILLY Chris MCCLEMENTS

COFFEE ROTA

(Please contact Caroline Mendelssohn if you can help)

5th Anne SCALES & Sukey LANGDALE 19th Pam CLARKSON

VILLAGE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

OCTOBER

Saturday 4th		**Harvest Supper** at the Village Hall. Booking is essential. See p28.
Saturday 4th/ Sunday 5th	10-5.00pm 10-4.00pm	**Hambledon Art Fair.** Hambledon Village Hall. See p38.
Tuesday 7th	7.00pm	**Thursley Parish Council Meeting**. Village Hall. All welcome.
Wednesday 8th	7.30pm	**New Developments in Horticulture**. A talk by Ray Broughton, hosted by Horts Society. Village Hall. Doors open at 7pm See p35.
Thursday 16th	12.30pm	**Thursley 50+ Ladies Lunch**. Three Horseshoes Pub. Booking essential. Contact Lisa Woods on 07710 070412.
Saturday 20th	10.00am	**Churchyard Working Party**. St Michael & All Angels Church. All help welcome.

SAVE THE DATE!

SECRET WW2
EDUCATE • COMMEMORATE • INSPIRE

Thursley History Society will be having its AGM (very brief!) and social gathering at the village hall on Thursday, 20th November 2025, at 7:30pm. Following his highly acclaimed talk on the Atlantic Wall on Hankley Common, Paul McCue of Secret WW2 will give a talk on Secret Surrey covering secret establishments in WW2 within a 10 mile radius of Thursley.

£7.50 including wine or other drink, pay on the door.
More details to follow.

VILLAGE HALL RECYCLING BIN

Get rid of any clothes, handbags, belts, paired shoes, soft toys, hats, curtains, sheets, all BAGGED UP PLEASE, in aid of various charities, the environment, and the village hall (which gets paid by weight). If you find it is full, take your bags home and wait a day or two until it has been emptied. Many thanks. Clea Beachey



Elstead Foodbank

Helping villagers during times of crisis

Elstead foodbank has moved temporarily. As the building works move into St James Church the Foodbank has moved into the Youth Centre next to the Elstead Village Hall. We will be open for drop ins every Thursday morning from 10.00 am to 11.00 am.

We continue to support those in greatest need of food and household consumables on a regular basis. We are currently supporting 22 households, a mixture of families with children, single mums, couples, pensioners and singles. It is such a joy to see people who come to us in need and are gradually able to retake control and come off our regulars list. For that we are able to draw on a small grant from the Household Support Grant managed by Surrey County Council. We are also dependent upon the generosity of our donors both in finances and the many food gifts which often come to us anonymously as they simply appear in our collection boxes in the church porch.

If you are struggling to purchase sufficient food whilst paying all your other bills, do please get in touch and we will try to help you, either with an emergency food parcel or to work with you for longer. We have contacts to be able to signpost you to Citizens Advice and other agencies that might also be able to help.

The Elstead Foodbank is open every Thursday from 10am - 11am at Elstead Youth Centre GU8 6DG. We are here to help villagers through difficult times, and to make sure that no one ever goes hungry. If you need help call Revd Delia on 0735 9098 655 or visit us on Thursday morning and we will have a food parcel ready for you.

If you cannot come to the Foodbank but are in need of food, we can arrange a home delivery, subject to volunteer availability. We are very grateful for all your donations throughout the year. All food donations can be taken to St Michael and All Angels Thursley where there is a donation box in the porch for non-perishable food and toiletries. At this time of year we particularly would like donations of:

Tinned vegetables
Tinned meats and fish
Custard (packet or tinned)
Tea bags
Instant coffee jar or hot chocolate
Pot noodles
Tinned rice pudding
Jam or Honey or Peanut butter
Toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, shower gel



If you would like to know more about the Foodbank and how you can help, please contact Rev Delia on 0735 9098 655 or

email: minister@parishesofetsph.org

THURSLEY PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE

By Chairman James Mendelssohn



Discussions about Highways formed an important part of our September meeting. Many of you will not only be aware but also have been affected by the closure of the road to Elstead, caused by maintenance works to replace the gas main under the road. This is extremely frustrating, not least because the road was closed only a year or so ago for full resurfacing.

The utility companies are governed by a number of rules and regulations and there would appear to have been a breach of these in terms of routine maintenance work, rather than emergency works, being carried out so soon after resurfacing. The works themselves are within Elstead parish council's area and they have raised this point with the relevant authorities. Nevertheless, many Thursley residents were affected, particularly if they wanted to visit the doctor's surgery or indeed our closest convenience store. There was a similar issue with three weeks of nighttime closure of the slip roads onto the A3.

David Harmer, our SEC councillor, is trying hard to enlist the support of the two MPs whose constituencies are affected by the ongoing A3 situation, so that improved communications with National Highways can be reinstated. He believes, and we fully support him in this, that we need to have regular and improved communications with National Highways so that we are fully aware of their future plans and become involved so that we can help them understand the implications of their plans, and how potential problems for local residents can be alleviated.

In addition, we believe that these discussions should go one stage further and involve not only National Highways but also SCC Highways. With the A3 going straight through our parish, it is important that these two bodies, responsible for different parts of the highways in our area, talk to one another so that the maintenance that they are planning is coordinated in such a way that the disruption caused to people in Thursley is kept to a minimum.

We also discussed the importance of improving communications with Natural England. We would like to know about their plans for Thursley Common and we would also like a forum for local residents to put forward their ideas and concerns.

You may remember that we did suggest the creation of a Thursley User Group (TUG) earlier this year, but this was turned down by Natural England on the basis that they wanted to create a larger user group for the new Wealden Down Super Reserve.

This has not been forthcoming, and we therefore pressed again for the creation of a local user group as we see that this could provide real benefits not only to us as residents of Thursley, but also to Natural England themselves.

Unfortunately, this has again been turned down because, whilst they '*appreciate the potential value of a dedicated user group ... we are not in a position to participate meaningfully*.' I find this deeply frustrating and very shortsighted. With better communication, we could have avoided at least some of the issues that we will inevitably be raising with the Natural England in the months ahead, which I suspect will take more time to resolve than the time that they would have had to invest in a user group.

Finally, as the mowing season comes to an end, could I please take this opportunity to thank all those in the village who have kindly cut the grass on various pockets of Parish land outside their homes. This is a huge help, and a significant cost saving for the village.

On this point, at this time of year, perhaps I could also remind people that if they have hedges and trees on their land which overhang pavements, footpaths and bridle ways that it is their responsibility to keep these paths clear. Therefore, anything that can be done to cut back bushes and hedges would be very much appreciated.

The next Parish Council meeting will take place in the Village Hall on Tuesday 7 October at 7.00 pm. All are welcome.

ADVENT CAROL CONCERT & CHRISTMAS TREE SWITCH ON

Saturday 29th November promises to be a magical start to the Christmas festivities in Thursley. We are lucky to have two events occurring in our village on the same evening.

The Advent Concert takes place in the Church between 4.45pm and 6pm and we are delighted to announce that the talented Chamber Choir, Ovis Cantorum, will be visiting Thursley for the third time this year and joining us for our Advent Carols.

Straight after the concert Ovis Cantorum will lead us all in a musical torchlight procession through the village to The Clump arriving at the Thursley Christmas Tree.

Thursley Parish Council have once again kindly offered to fund mulled wine, soft drinks and warm sausage rolls for the annual "Christmas Tree Switch On" which will officially mark the start of the Yuletide celebrations for 2025.

Please put the date in your diary. Saturday 29th November promises to be a wonderful village occasion and all between the hours of 4.45pm and 7pm. What an exciting start to Christmas!

More details in coming editions of the magazine.

A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A BLUR DRUMMER

By Dave Rowntree



In Blur's first couple of decades, we followed the standard music industry waltz – write-record-tour, write-record-tour, with barely a week off in between. It's a relentless, punishing schedule that makes it difficult, if not impossible, to have a home life. But the greatest strain of all is on the relationship between the band members themselves. Living in each other's pockets 7 days a week, 365 days a year can become excruciating after 20 years. More often than not, bands splitting up over "musical differences" simply mean they can no longer stand the sight of each other.

After a few wobbles, my bandmates and I decided that we'd better scale things back a little, lest we suffer the same fate. The album and tour cycles now roll around roughly every five years. The last one wrapped in spring 2024, and in between I've found other ways of flexing my creative muscles. For the past year I've been working on something I've never tried before: writing a book.



In the years immediately before and after Blur were signed, I carried a film camera with me everywhere we went. I took hundreds of photos of the four of us, mostly off-stage between the shows and photo sessions. I put these treasures safely away in a metal box, secure in the knowledge that they were now safe forever.

Then I lost them.

Luckily, just before COVID, they turned up again and I was able to share some of them when I put on Blur Fan Club events during the various lockdowns. As you can imagine the fans were intrigued, and several of them suggested they might make a good book.

Last year I took the plunge. I asked my friend, the journalist Miranda Sawyer, to help edit the collection, and it was finally released at the start of September. My manager has putting together a book promo tour, and today I'm doing interviews with newspapers in Chile and Australia. Every journalist asks the same three questions: How did the book come about? When will Blur tour again? And inevitably, are you going to see Oasis?





When I'm not promoting the book this summer, I'll be heading back to what I sometimes call my 'day job' — writing music scores for film and TV. I've got two TV series lined up over the next six months.

First up is the TV adaptation of the Hollywood blockbuster franchise starring Gerard Butler — 'Olympus Has Fallen', 'London Has Fallen', and 'Angel Has Fallen'. The films follow a plucky, unconventional cop who single-handedly takes down an entire network of villains, ending in a final showdown where (spoiler alert) the hero just wins. The spin-off series, Paris Has Fallen, starts in the same spirit but quickly blurs the lines between hero and villain. I scored season one for Amazon and was delighted when the producers asked me back for season two.

Today though, I'm starting work on the new season of 'The Capture' for the BBC — a show I've worked on since its inception in 2018. I scored the first two series and I'm now returning for series three. Filming is underway, with today's scenes being shot in Bromley's old council offices, today transformed into a secret military HQ. I'm on set to meet one of two new directors joining the show and talk about the music.



Playing at Coachella

But there's another reason I'm here. A few years back, the producers and I were joking about directors who sneak cameo roles into their work — Hitchcock being the classic example. We laughed about where we'd pop up in The Capture, and what we'd be doing. Word got back to the director, who decided to make it happen. Which is how I find myself filming my very first (and probably very last) on-screen acting role today. I can't tell you what I'm doing — you'll have to watch the series to find out.

Background actors — once called 'extras' — are now called 'supporting artists' usually abbreviated to SA's. There's a strict comfort hierarchy in the acting world: lead actors get their own trailer and a personal assistant to make them coffee; the supporting cast share a trailer and make their own coffee; SAs bring coffee in a thermos and get herded around with a cattle prod. I'd mentally prepared myself to join that last group.

So, imagine my surprise when I checked in at the production office and was greeted by Emily, who cheerfully said, "I'll show you to your trailer. Would you like a coffee?" My trailer was enormous, with my character's name written on the door. Inside, there was a



sofa, a table, and a copy of the script for my scene.

From there, it was off to make-up. Unfortunately, I'd arrived on set slightly sleep-deprived. The night before, I'd booked a nearby hotel for an early night—but while checking in, I bumped into a producer friend from the show. Dinner turned into hours of conversation, and I didn't get much rest. The make-up artist took one look at my tired face and said that without prosthetics, there wasn't much she could do. "You're in the background," she said. "No one will notice." Hmm… Wardrobe fitted me into army fatigues, and that's all I can say—you'll have to watch the show to catch my 'starring' moment.

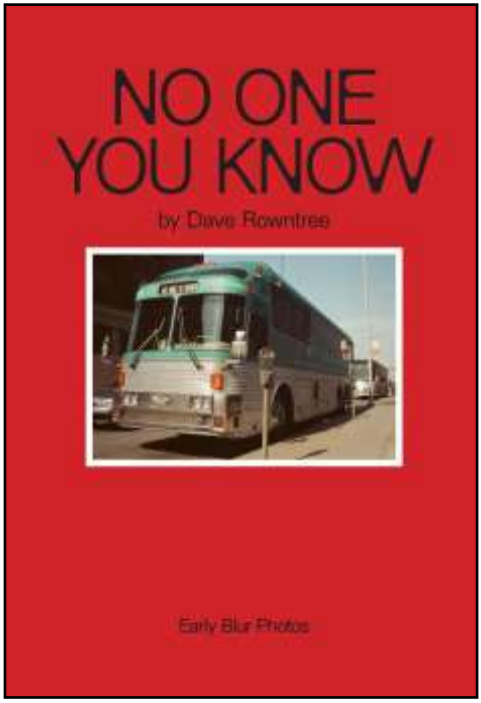
After filming, I headed to Foyles book shop to check out the space for my book launch and meet the events manager. Then off to Gatwick to fly to Malta to meet the director of the '… Has Fallen' franchise. I tell her of my cameo on 'The Capture', but she doesn't take the hint.

In many ways, scoring for film and TV is a completely different universe from being in a band.

In Blur, the process is collaborative between the four of us. Usually Damon, our singer, will bring in the seed of an idea, and the rest of us will build on it—throwing in melodies, rhythms, textures—until it becomes something that sounds like us. It's a conversation between musicians, and once the music is ready, the whole thing shifts into the vast machinery of the music industry. The record label, tour managers, and booking agents take over, deciding where we'll be and when. It's chaotic, exhausting, and exhilarating—but at its core, it's about the four of us being front and centre.

Film and TV scoring is collaborative in a completely different way. You're still part of a massive machine, often much larger than anything in the music business, but here you are not the star. Your job is to serve the story, to complement the scene, to set the emotional context. And it's right when the director says it is, regardless of your feelings in the matter. No arguments, no sulking; there's simply no room for ego.

If I had to choose between the two I'd definitely choose being in a band, but I count myself very lucky I'm able to do both.



WHAT IS HAPPENING ON THE FARM THIS MONTH?

By Jo Ranson



Autumn has arrived with a bang; wet and windy but at least cooler. It does play havoc with the wardrobe though, raincoats required but still too hot for trousers, and as soon as the sun comes out coats are off, but you could guarantee if they're left off the downpour will come, and another set of clothes are needed. We have been madly looking at all the weather apps to get silaging and drilling jobs done at the right time and we haven't been too far out on those.

Calving has been in full swing and in the last four weeks we have done 220. There was a couple of hectic days of 14 and 11 born in two days but otherwise it has tickled along at seven and eight's a day. We have had a lot of twins this year - on one hand when it is from a sexed Friesian it is a bonus to get two calves from one semen straw - but on the other hand you have a smaller calf and a cow that looks poor and struggles for a while to get the weight back on her. One very odd calving happened Matthew put his hand in to help a cow that had been struggling for a while and felt a football type thing so asked Nick for advice. Nick pushed it back in to then pull out a live calf and then needed to get the ball thing out. It was very strange, it was like a second calf had grown inside her but in a ball smaller than a football, the placenta it was in was twice the thickness of a normal one. When we spoke to the vet he had heard of it happening before, but it was rare. At least cow and remaining calf are all good. There have been some late nights waiting for some to calve before we could go to bed; one night was dry and warm so we waited in the field and saw the most amazing meteor shower, we did then both fall asleep in the field to be rudely awaken by a cow licking our wellies, I think, and an indicator that the one we had been waiting for had now calved and that we should leave their beds and go to our own. An hour and a half of being safely tucked up in bed we had a phone call from the tanker driver saying he was stuck (new driver and he hadn't read his manual telling him there are two roads to the farm which can't be used by a tanker) so he got short shrift and told to sort himself out which he did somehow.

The building is finished bar a couple of jobs that can be done with cows sleeping in them; one is lighting (must do that soon now we have darker mornings – boo) and the other is one last side to put a gutter on. It was hard work getting it done, particularly with the cows calving as all our helpers were busy doing cow jobs, but it is a project ticked off. The cows enjoyed having a housewarming drink in there too with us. Some came in for a nosy around and weren't sure about the new surroundings to start with, now though with nicely built-up straw beds they are very popular houses to be in.

We harvested the maize - rain was predicted and we did have a couple of showers during it but nothing to worry about as the sun came out and soon dried things up again. It wasn't as bigger a crop as last year, but we have filled the clamp and have some to spare. We are sitting very pretty

compared to some farmers we know around the country. For some of them the crop never established or grew so they have had to buy it in for extortionate amounts of money. And we got it in and sheeted within two days (a record I think) and all just before two or three days of wind and rain were predicted. If we didn't feel sorry for others that aren't in the same position as us we would feel smug but that would be unfair.

Now the maize is off we were itching to get the cover crops in. The quicker they are in the quicker they will grow (fingers crossed) for the beef cattle and heifers' winter feed, and also to hold our sandy soil in place before the real heavy rain comes. The seed took a little while to come but it has and so Toby was off, and got all the cover crop done in two days with some small showers on it, not enough to stop him but too close for comfort. If it's too wet the soil blocks the drill. Then we got on with some reseeding of the grass paddocks - again the seed was late to arrive, so it has been a race against time, and we have two small paddocks left to go.

We have had an array of vet students; one good, one ok, one that didn't make the full week and one extremely rude, oh and one more still to come. Fortunately, the good one and the ok one were here when it was full-on calving and harvesting which was really helpful. The one that didn't make the full week was ill (through exhaustion -she did two days). The extremely rude one may need to work on her bedside manner when she treats animals in the future!! Very bright and knew a lot of stuff which she felt compelled to tell us - we were doing things wrong a lot of the time - but she didn't know the body temperature of a cow and refused to disinfect her boots when entering and leaving the calf pens, (a bio security essential for us) and after being told repeatedly to keep out of the way of machinery we went our separate ways. It was an accident waiting to happen. Hopefully next weeks' one will be a good one, although I'm happy to have an ok one too.

We are still plugging away at the silage bales made nearly 6 weeks ago, not because there are too many of them but it's finding time to get it done. Hopefully, though, calvings are slowing, some big jobs are ticked off and there is light at the end of the tunnel.

Over the next month we will still be full-on busy with more silage bales to make as the grass on the silage fields is too long to leave over winter, freeze branding to do, and more calves to come.



GIVE IT A GROW

By Debbie Spencer



OCTOBER

A month to 'compose' yourself

in the garden**....**

LISTEN

October brings a quiet music to the garden. The bright chorus of summer flowers fades, replaced by softer notes: the russet leaves of the trees, the golden light of shortening days, and the seedheads that rattle like gentle percussion. It is as though the garden is singing its last song before winter's silence.

MELODY

Leave seedheads for birds (sunflowers, coneflowers, teasels).

Gather fallen leaves to make leaf mould — nature's own compost.

Plant spring bulbs for the promise of colour after winter (but not tulip bulbs as yet).

Bring tender plants under cover before frost.

HARMONY

October is not only a month for looking back, it is also a month for preparation. Much of what falls or fades in the garden now becomes the raw material for renewal in seasons to come. Leaves, stems, peelings, and clippings — all can be gathered together into one of the gardener's most valuable treasures: compost.

COMPOSE

How to Build a Simple Compost Heap

Making compost at home is one of the easiest – and most satisfying – ways to reduce waste and feed your garden. You don't need fancy equipment; a



simple compost heap will do the job beautifully.

1. Choose the right spot

Pick a level, well-drained patch of soil. A spot with some sun helps speed up decomposition, but partial shade will prevent it drying out.

2. Create your heap structure

The simplest method is to make a free -standing heap.

For a tidier look, you can build a container from old pallets, wooden boards, or even chicken wire fixed to posts. A heap about 1m x 1m x 1m is an ideal size: large enough to heat up, small enough to manage.

3. Gather your materials

Good compost needs a mix of:

Greens (nitrogen-rich): fruit and veg peelings, tea bags, coffee grounds, fresh grass clippings.

Browns (carbon-rich): dry leaves, twigs, cardboard, shredded paper, straw.

Aim for a balance – too many greens make it soggy, too many browns slow things down.

4. Build it up in layers

Start with a coarse layer (sticks or twigs) at the bottom for drainage. Then alternate greens and browns as you add material. Tear or chop larger items to help them break down faster.

5. Keep it healthy

Turn the heap every few weeks with a fork to let in air.



If it looks dry, sprinkle with water; if it's too wet, add more browns.

Avoid meat, dairy, cooked food, or anything diseased, as these attract pests and cause problems.

6. Be patient

Depending on the weather and how often you turn it, compost takes 6–12 months to be ready. You'll know it's done when it's dark, crumbly, and smells earthy.

7. Use your compost

Spread it on flower beds, mix into vegetable plots, or use as mulch around shrubs and trees. Your plants will thank you ….maybe even a standing ovation?

BREAKING THE ATLANTIKWALL: SECRETS, SPIES & THE ROAD TO D-DAY

By Jackie Rickenberg (from the archives of the History Society)

As already reported in the Parish Magazine, Thursley History Society arranged an "Atlantic Wall, Walk and Talk in August 2025. The talk was given by Paul McCue of [**SecretWW2 secret-ww2.net/**] and those who participated hugely enjoyed his presentation.

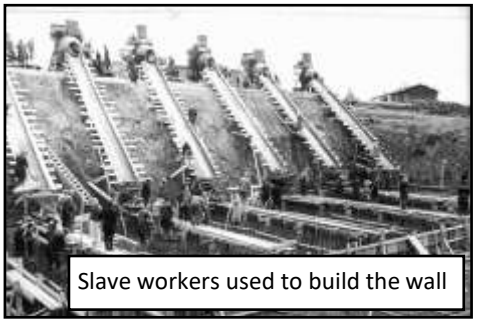
This is a précis of that presentation and you will find an almost verbatim transcript on the society's website:

www.thursleyhistorysociety.org/post/atlantic-wall-walk-and-talk-august-14th-2025

When most people picture the Second World War in Western Europe, the D-Day landings of 6 June 1944 dominate the imagination. Yet long before Allied troops waded ashore, a vast German defensive line — the Atlantikwall — stood in their way. Its creation, its vulnerabilities, and the secret efforts to pierce its mysteries tell a story of ambition, espionage, and innovation.

Building the "Wall"

The idea of defending Europe's western seaboard arose in 1941 when Field Marshal Erwin von Witzleben replaced Field Marshal von Rundstedt as Commander-in-Chief West. With Britain still defiant and the United States entering the war in December 1941, Hitler issued Directive No. 40 the following March. It ordered a fortified belt from Norway to Spain, designed to smash any landing on the beaches before Allied forces could establish a foothold.



Slave workers used to build the wall

By 1942 the term "Atlantikwall" was first used, narrowed in scope from Antwerp to the Spanish frontier — a daunting but achievable project. The Todt Organisation, the Nazi engineering agency famous for building autobahns, was charged with construction, relying heavily on forced and slave labour. After the sudden death of Fritz Todt in a plane crash, his successor Albert Speer oversaw the work.

Concrete bunkers, minefields, artillery batteries, dragon's teeth, and beach obstacles soon dotted the coastline. Yet such massive defences also attracted Allied attention — and intelligence gathering became essential.

The Painter Who Stole the Wall

Among the unlikely heroes of this





intelligence war was a 40-year-old painter-decorator from Caen, René Duchez. A heavy drinker, smoker, and raconteur, Duchez belonged to the French resistance group Confrérie Notre-Dame (CND), which reported to General de Gaulle's London-based intelligence service, the BCRA.

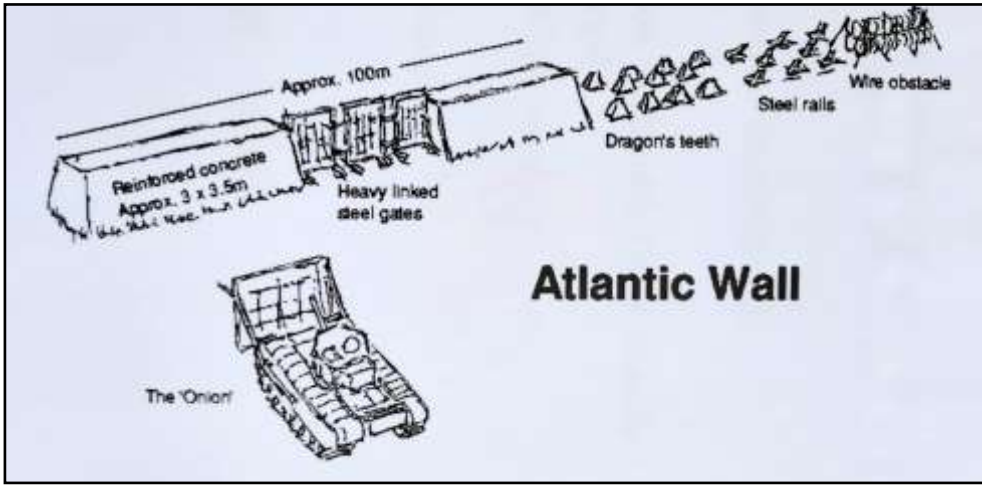
In 1942, while redecorating the Caen headquarters of the Todt Organisation, Duchez stumbled upon detailed Atlantikwall plans. With audacious coolness, he hid them behind a mirror, later smuggling them out to his resistance comrades. The documents were eventually spirited across the Channel inside a biscuit tin carried by Gilbert Renault ("Colonel Rémy"), CND's founder.

The stolen plans reached Britain just weeks before the ill-fated Dieppe Raid of August 1942, when Canadian forces and tanks stormed ashore in a rehearsal for invasion. Dieppe ended in heavy casualties, but it underscored the need for even greater intelligence and specialist assault equipment. Duchez's coup had provided a rare glimpse of both existing and planned German fortifications, enabling Allied planners to sharpen aerial reconnaissance and deception measures such as Operation Fortitude, which convinced the Germans that Pas de Calais — not Normandy — was the intended invasion site.

Testing Ground in Surrey

To fight concrete with steel, Britain built its own stretch of Atlantikwall — not on a beach, but on Hankley Common in Surrey. Constructed in early 1943 by Royal Engineers and Canadian sappers, the 300-foot wall with bunkers, obstacles, and minefields became a vital testing ground. Here engineers trialled demolition charges and experimented with armoured vehicles designed to smash through German defences.

The most famous of these became known as "Hobart's Funnies," after Major-General Percy Hobart of the 79th Armoured Division. Based on Churchill tanks, the Assault Vehicle Royal Engineers (AVRE) carried a massive 29mm petard mortar that fired a 40-pound demolition charge — the "flying dustbin." Originally conceived by Canadian officer J.J. Denovan after Dieppe, the AVRE allowed sappers to blast bunkers and roadblocks without exposing themselves to murderous fire. Not all prototypes saw combat, but the AVRE did — and proved decisive on D-



Day. Hankley Common's experimental wall thus had a direct link to the liberation of Europe.

Mapping the Coast

Other clandestine operations probed the German coastline. Combined Operations Pilotage Parties (COPP), based at Hayling Island, secretly landed on French beaches to gather sand samples, assess defences, and chart potential landing sites. These hazardous missions, combined with signals intelligence, aerial photography, and resistance reports, built the mosaic of knowledge required for Operation Overlord.

Enter Rommel

In late 1943, Field Marshal Erwin Rommel was appointed to oversee the Atlantikwall. Touring the fortifications, he was unimpressed by their weakness and the reliance on mobile reserves. Rommel insisted on a "cordon" defence — meeting the invasion at the water's edge. Determined to make the beaches a death trap, he ordered more mines, obstacles, and stronger coastal batteries.

Yet Rommel was too late. Allied deception had convinced the German High Command that Calais remained the true target. On 6 June 1944, when the invasion finally came in Normandy, Rommel was absent, visiting his wife in Germany.

What Became of Them

The central players of this story met very different fates. Von Witzleben, who had first championed coastal defence, joined the July 1944 conspiracy against Hitler and was hanged after a show trial. Von Rundstedt, who favoured manoeuvre over fortifications, was captured in 1945 but never tried for war crimes, dying in 1953. Rommel, implicated in the same conspiracy, was forced to commit suicide in October 1944.

René Duchez, the painter turned spy, continued resistance work but narrowly escaped arrest. He later joined the Maquis Saint Clair and was awarded the Croix de Guerre after liberation.



He died in 1948, his widow Odette living until 2005. In death, as in life, they were reunited.



Legacy

The Atlantikwall was a feat of engineering but also of propaganda: Hitler's promise of an impregnable fortress Europe. In practice, it was riddled with weaknesses — exposed by resistance intelligence, tested against British replicas, and ultimately breached on D-Day.

From the stolen plans hidden behind a mirror in Caen to the concrete wall on a Surrey heath, the fight against the Atlantikwall reveals how ingenuity, courage, and secrecy paved the way for one of history's greatest military operations.



The Atlantic Wall on Hankley Common today


THURSLEY PARISH
HARVEST SUPPER
JOIN US FOR AN EVENING OF GOOD FOOD & ENTERTAINMENT
SATURDAY 4TH OCTOBER, 2025
7PM
THURSLEY VILLAGE HALL
TICKETS
Purchase tickets via thursleyevents@gmail.com
£15 PER PERSON
INCLUDES FOOD & WINE
If you would like to help with food, please contact Sally Scheffers via scheffers@btinternet.com


Parishes of Elstead, Thursley, Shackleford & Peper Harow
Church in the community, community in the church
HARVEST
Festival
OCTOBER 19TH 2025
9:45AM AT ST MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS,
THURSLEY

YELLOW-LEGGED ASIAN HORNETS

By Anne Schiettecatte



Yellow-legged (previously known as the Asian) hornets are an incredibly destructive invasive species and voraciously prey on all pollinators smaller than themselves. Honey bees are particularly at risk because they are a lot of hornet food gathered all in one place. The hornets 'hawk' the front of target bee hives, killing honey bees, dissecting them and feeding them to their larvae. One Yellow-legged hornet (YLH) alone can kill up to 50 honey bees per day, and an average established nest has been estimated to eat around 11kg of pollinators and other invertebrates per year.

One YLH queen was accidentally introduced to France from China in 2004, since then they have spread through France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Belgium and the Netherlands.



They are making inroads in Germany and Denmark currently. They are an amazingly adaptable insect, admirable in many ways, but they just do not fit into our ecosystem, quickly becoming an apex predator and creating a bio-desert around their nests. The only defence we have is to track them down and destroy the queen with the nests before they can put out hundreds of queens at the end of the season, ready to set up nests the following year.

In the UK they have been mostly discovered around ports, predominantly in Kent, but also Plymouth, Southampton, Portsmouth and Hull to name but a few. They come in on lorries, in camping equipment, on boats and possibly when conditions are favourable on the wind from France. This year so far they are in East & West Sussex, Hampshire, Dorset and Greater London. Our area is being encircled.

Although beekeepers have spearheaded this campaign, and the National Bee Unit (NBU) together with DEFRA and APHA are hard at work tracking and destroying nests - 53 up to the 7th August 2025 - there aren't enough of us to cover all of the areas that these insects may colonise. So, we are asking everyone to learn how to identify YLHs and to know how to report them by using the Hornet Watch App or by email at

alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk.

A photograph is essential in order to mobilise the NBU. YLHs are no more trouble when away from the nest than our native wasps and hornets, and will happily come to bait. However, a word or warning, if you suspect that you have a nest of them DO NOT APPROACH IT, as they are much more likely to stage a group attack on anyone they feel threatened by.

These hornets are slightly smaller than our native European ones, though much bigger than the common wasp. They have yellow legs, an orange face and a prominent stripe on the 4th segment of the abdomen. Whereas the European hornet is mostly brown and yellow, YLHs are predominantly black.

LIFE ON THE COMMON 112

By James Giles

Dear all,

It's been so hot and dry, in fact a record -breaking early summer, with a new record being set, over 130 years of dry and warm weather. I can remember 1976 and that seemed never ending. Good news for pubs, where keeping hydrated isn't an issue, and good for their bank balance too.

For nature and the NNR it's not quite so rosy. On the surface everything looks wonderful. Wildlife seemingly abundant, there is, though, sadly an issue of synchronisation, with many species falling out of line with their food source, and flowers and plants over and done with earlier than usual and the same with certain insects.

The lack of rainfall created problems with low lying wet areas which are such important breeding areas for wetland birds. Where once they were safe places from predators, now the drier land created causeways where foxes could access the birds who were previously safe.

One of the most worrying aspects, and the one that gave me most cause for worry and anxiety, was the very high fire risk, as it would only take one carelessly discarded cigarette, an unattended BBQ, a campfire in a stupid place, or indeed arson for the whole place to become a massive fire and this year the whole site was so vulnerable. All that wonderful wildlife would be gone in an instant, the ground was tinder dry and the vegetation was sadly the same, Every time my phone rang from an unknown number my heart raced, fearing the worse, and added to that we had the school holidays to contend with. Every evening and every weekend, with more people around, those "disposable BBQs come out to incinerate sausages", and it could have been a disaster. Luckily this year, people were sensible, careful, and mindful of the implications.

Anyway, to some wildlife news and a bit jollier! During the hot weather keeping the volunteer group occupied and busy when practical work is not really an option, we tend to undertake surveys. Recently we have looked at the following: Silver Studded Blue Butterflies, Heath Tiger Beetles, Dragonflies, Nightjars, and in the future Grayling butterflies.

These are all important heathland species, and reflective of management undertaken the previous year. Silver Studded Blues seems to be doing very well in certain areas of the reserve, where their larval host plants thrive; these are bell heather in the drier areas and cross-leaved heath heathers in the



Lousewort

damper areas. Managing the heather sward is critical to this species' future, again mowing through cut and collect to create a mange structure within the heathers is vital.


Grayling Butterfly

I have not got the numbers to hand to hand yet it's all on iRecord. Early implications are great for Nightjars with over thirty territories across Thursley, Elstead and Ockley common. Which is great news. I should have all the breeding numbers shortly.

The very rare Heath Tiger Beetle, Cicindela Sylvatica, has certainly fared well after the warm spell and the management we have been undertaking of late; the creation of lots of bare sandy scrapes for hunting, feeding, and mating opportunities. This is really a species that thrives on our lowland sandy heathlands around Surrey, Hampshire, Sussex, and Dorset. Their dispersal is quite poor, with a reluctance to spread far or perhaps the lack of suitable habitat, but with so much magnificent work being undertaken the future should be bright for them.

This is where the new Super NNR (Wealden Heaths NNR) should and could really play and important role in the beetle's future. With the help and guidance of the Species Recovery Trust who are championing the Heath Tiger Beetles' cause and willing partners carrying out appropriate management on a landsape scale.

The recently declared new NNR, The Wealden Heaths NNR, will over time hopefully engage the many landowners across a wide landscape to address these very sorts of projects. By managing a much broader area of land and linking up suitable habitat the rarities that call parts of the NNR home will be able to function as exemplars and reservoirs of the rich biodiversity. Other species, such as the butterfly The Grayling, also considered rare, thrives on these open sandy heaths. A large butterfly whose very cryptic markings make it quite hard to spot until disturbed, when it flies off in a very erratic way, will also benefit from this joined up approach. So, I think you can now see the benefit of a shared management approach and shared vision.

This approach works for very many species on our beautiful heathlands, be it areas of managed gorse, birch and pine scrub, acid grasslands, areas of boggy wet places, to open water


Heath Tiger Beetle

habitat. All these areas provide a rich mix or mosaic of habitat types, with a wealth of species, either specific to those habitats or a combination of them. As well as rare and endangered Insects our lowland heaths hold a wealth of plants and other botanical delights. Often overlooked and considered "not very interesting" by the casual observer (as I have heard so many times), moaning that there is not much about or nothing to see - well look again a bit harder. The wet parts of the sites hold a marvel of botany and uncommon or rare species in abundance.


Sand Spurrey

One such marvel is the Marsh Clubmoss Lycopodiella Inundata - it's not even a moss! This is one of our earliest species of vascular plants, i.e. those with a circulatory system. This again rare species lives on areas of open bare peaty substrate, when competition is low and managed by human or animal intervention. A plant from the Carboniferous period, about 3500 – 300 million years ago. It used to be huge and was an early constituent of coal.


Marsh Club Moss

Plants such as sand spurrey, Spergularia rubra a beautiful small pink flower, lives on a very sandy substrate, again where competition from dominating grasses or scrub is very low. Other plants worthy of note are the Cudweeds, mossy stone crop, lousewort, and the wonderful family of lichens the Caldonia's.


Caldonias

And finally. Thursley NNR holds regular volunteer work parties. Meeting on a Thursday during the week and one Sunday a month in the Autumn and winter months, if conservation on this precious reserve is on interest to you then please get in touch on the details below.

Reserve manager
James.giles@naturalengland.org.uk
Telephone: 01428 685375
Mobile: 07971 974399

THURSLEY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

By Pat Clake



The Horticultural Society's Autumn Show was amazing for the large number of entries and the creativity of the entrants. The judge, Hazel Chant – no relation to Tina Chant our Treasurer- declared it to be 'super, super' and a credit to the gardeners of Thursley after the challenging weather of the summer. Stand out entries were the Floral Art from Mart Veerhus and the aptly named squash 'Tromboncino' grown by John Manches and Mike Roberts, and also the 'Turks Turban' squash grown by Mart. Novelty fruit and vegetables abounded! There were even figs and tiny pomegranates, and the hugest pumpkin that I have seen at the show, grown and carried in by Adam Gardner, arms straining.

Adam Gardner also excelled with the number and quality of his vegetables and his flowers, especially the beautiful dahlias. Patricia Coles entered a variety of flowers in perfect condition to win the Top Vase competition. Michelle Pearce entered an impressive table centrepiece in the Floral Art section, with pretty pink and white roses, lilies and even grapes! She was highly commended for her entry. Susanne Hunter brought an unusual, variegated houseplant in flower to sit beside the white orchids. How do people manage to transport these houseplants to the Hall?

The committee really hope that next year we will have even more entrants. Out of our 115 members only 25 entered the Show this time. It would be encouraging to see more people joining in for what is a really enjoyable day with a competitive edge for those that want it, or a fun approach for the rest of us. I was delighted when my 5 blackberries were recognised to have some merit! My garden has been a desert this summer. Do come to the next Show if you are new to the Village.

Perhaps cooks in the Village can give boost to the Cookery sections next year. If you have ideas for the cookery classes for 2026, do email:

thursleyhortsoc@hotmail.co.uk

The Horticultural Society's next talk on Wednesday October 8th is from Ray Broughton, entitled '**New Ideas in Horticulture'.** Ray is an entertaining and experienced speaker and I am sure we will learn a lot during the evening. Doors open at 7pm for a 7.30 start. Entry is free and everyone is welcome. There will be a raffle, wine and soft drinks. All are welcome. Do bring your friends.

ECO-FRIENDLY LIVING - IT'S ECO-LOGICAL

By John Swift



Why Hydrogen is a solution for climate change – but maybe not in the way you might think. Hydrogen is often talked about as a solution for decarbonising our energy system because when it is burnt, water is the only byproduct. Hydrogen has been proposed as a replacement for natural gas which is used in 85% of UK homes and also promoted as an alternative fuel for vehicles. The problem with hydrogen is that while it is one of the most abundant elements in our world, it's locked up in the form of water, fossil fuels and other compounds. Unlocking it takes a lot of energy, which makes it expensive. There are a number of technical challenges in using hydrogen too.

Manufacturing processes for hydrogen have been given different colours to help rank their environmental impact. Green hydrogen is made from renewable energy and the electrolysis of water. Blue hydrogen is made by steam reforming of natural gas (fossil fuel) with carbon capture (CCUS). Grey hydrogen is like Blue, but without the carbon capture. Black hydrogen is made from coal without carbon capture. There are other options and colours too. Green hydrogen has received the most interest, but Blue hydrogen probably has the most potential for large scale applications. Currently hydrogen is produced as part of industrial processes to make chemicals, fertilisers and transportation fuels. This is mostly from Grey hydrogen but Black hydrogen is also a large source. Some Green hydrogen is being produced, but in relatively small quantities.

Hydrogen has a number of challenges to overcome before it can really be considered more than a niche option for decarbonisation of our energy system. Hydrogen gas is a very small molecule and is able to diffuse through materials and leak through joints. Hydrogen leaks are particularly flammable (and not visible to the naked eye) so this issue needs to be resolved, particularly around refuelling options. Hydrogen leaks would also have a serious impact on making existing greenhouse gases more potent (ie worse), so definitely to be avoided! Hydrogen also requires a special grade

of steel to prevent the pipelines from embrittlement and most of the existing high pressure gas distribution network is unsuitable for hydrogen. This would require investment to either modify or replace the existing high pressure gas network.

The generation of Green hydrogen (from renewable electricity) poses another set of issues. If hydrogen was to replace the natural gas in homes, it would require a significant expansion of the renewable (wind, solar power or nuclear) capacity at a time when we are already trying to deal with the growth in electricity required to decarbonise transport and the new home heating requirements (using ASHPs). If the hydrogen was to be used as an alternative to batteries in vehicles, we are back to the safety and distribution issues mentioned earlier as well as a huge efficiency deficit. The overall efficiency of hydrogen fuelled vehicles is approximately 3 times worse than using batteries. It takes more than 3 units of electrical power to make the hydrogen, compress, distribute and convert it back to one unit of electricity in an electric motor. A battery EV just has the inefficiency of charging the battery so slightly more than 1 unit of electricity is required.

Apart from these technical challenges, there is an economic one too. However elegant the solution is in terms of emissions, it has to be economically competitive with alternatives. Take hydrogen fuelled cars as an example compared with battery electric vehicles. We've noted the inefficiency of making and using the hydrogen, which is a big cost penalty, but hydrogen vehicles are also a lot more expensive due to the fuel cell and small battery. Although there is some support for developing hydrogen fuelled vehicles for duties that are difficult for batteries, the technology for battery storage is advancing quickly and it's unlikely that this will be viable either. There are already buses and lorries operating with batteries.

So how could hydrogen be part of the solution? As noted earlier, hydrogen is already used to make chemicals, fertilizers and fuels. One of the ways to make sustainable aircraft fuel (SAF) is from hydrogenating non-edible oils, and there is a need to greatly increase the production of SAF to replace fossil fuel derived fuel. This is commercially proven and already used to make "blended" SAF. Another valuable use for hydrogen could be to make "green" steel by direct reduction of iron ore, which avoids most of the carbon dioxide produced by current blast furnace technology. The source of hydrogen for these options is most likely to be Blue hydrogen, rather than Green hydrogen (and this is being planned to be part of the industrial hubs in the UK). The current production of Grey hydrogen could also be upgraded to Blue by adding CCUS technology.

If you want more information about any of these ideas or help, please contact **jdswift@btinternet.com**.

A NEW HABIT

By Lizzie Young



Do you know how long it takes to form a new habit? Sixty-six days. So AI tells me. My Google has decided unilaterally that AI has a much better answer to any question I have than it does, much like David tells the girls to ask me when they ring up to query something. Unless it is to do with cars. Or ISAs. Or cricket. I can't argue with Google – there is no forum for that.

I have no way of petitioning Google not to defer to AI, since AI, circa 2025, has more kinks than…a Kinks fan club fancy dress ball. Ask AI about something you know a lot about, and spot the mistakes. When I was a teenager, long before Leonardo and Kate climbed on the prow of James Cameron's version, I was obsessed with Titanic. And I mean properly obsessed. At one point, I knew the weirdest stuff about it – how many pounds of butter were onboard, and how many bottles of champagne. I could practically recite the list of third class passengers, and tell you John Jacob Astor's last words. My point – I was better than AI…on Titanic. I could do the facts, and the stories, and the weird little details. A dear friend whose father had been a heroic Polish RAF pilot in WW2 put his name into ChatGPT, and was amused and then irritated to read the wrong middle name, date of birth and medal count. I know it will get there, this extraordinary, terrifying technology, and take over the world, and make all our children redundant and unable to provide for themselves and all that thrilling stuff, but it's embryonic so far, and full of flaws. When it plunders a writer's style to regurgitate it, it's called scraping. Nothing new about the practice, of course. Plagiarism, copying, 'being inspired by'. Some criminal, some 'flattering'. But scraping? Delightful, definitely immoral. Have I tried to see if I can write my article for me, deadline looming, the esteemed editor hovering menacingly outside my front door (she doesn't do this. I added it for dramatic effect. She probably should.)? Of course I have. Does it sound like me? Of course it

doesn't. I could test the theory with a poll, and maybe one month I will, but not this month…

But I digress. AI isn't all that comfortable with digressing. That meandering style of stream of consciousness is too…human. I was talking about new habits, wasn't I? Sixty-six days. AI adds, for clarification, that some new habits are easier to form than others. And there I wholeheartedly agree. I could very easily get into the new habit of eating Toblerone for breakfast. I reckon that wouldn't even take six. Two litres of water a day? Harder, since you have to get used to the sloshing. Ten Burpees? Never going to happen. Not having your mobile phone by your bed? Sixty-six months and counting.

September is a far better time for new habit forming than the traditional January, when the only repeat behaviour you can interest me in is sofa, blanket, and box set. September has lighter mornings and longer evenings and warmer days. I still have white bits. And hope. New cottages are a very good time for new habit forming. The one in one out wardrobe habit is foist upon us by the reduced size of said wardrobe. The place for everything and everything in its place habit is essential – we would, otherwise, be unable by now to move freely between rooms. Daily walks have been an easy one – we are developing quite the repertoire and have shorthand for the various loops. When you consider that eight years ago when we moved to Thursley I didn't have my own walking boots, that's pretty good. It wouldn't win any prizes for speedy habit forming, but, as fridge magnets and wall art everywhere tell you, it's the journey, not the destination. Actually I still don't have my own walking boots – I wear the old beaten up boots my younger daughter climbed Kilimanjaro in, which I figure is pretty good provenance.

Habit is good practice, right? It's a good rhythm for life. It's comforting, and safe. Shakespear's Seven Ages of Man has us, I reckon, somewhere between fifth, where he still 'plays his part' and sixth, when the 'world [is] too wide', and, I hope, years from the 'sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything' seventh. That sounds rubbish. David is moving towards full retirement from the publishing world by the end of the year, and I haven't given the creative world anything much to scrape for a few years now. I saw something online (on the phone by the bed) that said 'I'm not an empty nester, I'm a bird launcher' and I liked that, but I miss the chirping, and the worm collecting, and I need new habits to feather, and new shapes in my day.

THURSLEY PARISH COUNCILLORS

James Mendelssohn - Chair (Email: j.mendelssohn@thursley-pc.gov.uk)



James has lived in the area for almost 30 years and moved into the village in 2008. He is married to Caroline, a long-time resident of Thursley. They are both actively involved in many aspects of village life and believe strongly in the need to maintain our heritage whilst recognising the need to plan for the future.

In his business life, he continues to provide consultancy services to a number of international professional services networks, and he has recently been appointed as the Chief Steward at the Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Championships.

Responsibilities: *PC Chair, Planning Committee Member, Stand In (all areas), Recreation Ground Trustee.*

Chris McClements - Vice Chair (Email: c.mcclements@thursley-pc.gov.uk)



Chris was born in Australia but moved to the UK at a young age, growing up in Cheltenham and attending Cheltenham College. After starting his career in the finance industry in London, Chris then relocated to Sydney where he joined Schroders Investment Management in the Information Technology department.

In 2021, Chris and his partner Bruce decided to move back to the UK and chose Thursley where they are currently renovating a Grade-II listed cottage and have become active members of the village community. Chris enjoys walks on the Commons with his dog Rusty, gardening and learning about all aspects of DIY!

Responsibilities: *Vice Chair, Planning Committee Member, Highways/VAS, Climate & Sustainability*

Helen Flavell (Email: helen.thursleypc@gmail.com)



Helen was born in Harrogate and spent much of her early life in Cheltenham. She has lived in Thursley since 2008. She is married to Leon and has two sons, Jake and William.

For most of her professional career, Helen has worked as a property development solicitor for a large, City of London firm. Her role consisted largely of site assembly and project funding with considerable overlap in the areas of construction and planning law. Her interests include playing tennis, horticulture and life in Thursley.

Responsibilities: *Planning Committee Chair, BOAT's*

Michelle de Vries (Email: m.devries@thursley-pc.gov.uk)



Michelle was born in The Bahamas but moved to the UK at a young age growing up in Berkshire and Oxfordshire, before attending senior school in London. After leaving school she entered the music industry working in recording studios and managing artists before moving to New York for 7 years and worked as a music publisher. She now works for herself overseeing all aspects of music in UK and US television and film productions.

Her hobbies include, walking her dog, Izzy Stardust, riding her horse Charlie on Thursley and Hankley Commons, and taking photographs of the Devils Punchbowl.

Responsibilities: *Planning Committee Member, MOD Liaison, Bowlhead Green, New Parishioners, Fire Liaison*.

Phoebe Sullivan (Email: p.sullivan@thursley-pc.gov.uk)



Phoebe is a long-time resident of southwest Surrey, having grown up in Haslemere before moving back to the area in 2018. Phoebe, Ryan and their working cocker spaniel Maggie now live on Highfield and Phoebe currently serves as the Borough Councillor for Witley & Milford. Her professional background is in the Built Environment sector.

Passionate about fostering community spirit and increasing participation, particularly among younger residents, Phoebe has spearheaded various initiatives and worked to improve highways, social care, and youth outreach. Phoebe is especially interested in helping Thursley Parish safeguard its natural environment.

Tom Taylor Mathews (Email: t.taylormathews@thursley-pc.gov.uk)



Tom is a naval architect specialising in the offshore energy sector, with experience working both onshore and at sea. After spending more than 10 years working in London, he returned to the countryside with his wife, Tamsin, and their now two children, Jago and Willa. They were fortunate enough to find Thursley and relish life in the village.

Outside of work, Tom enjoys sailing, tennis, cycling, woodwork, and cooking with the family.

Responsibilities: *Planning, Recreation Ground, Young Thursley*

Sarah O'Brien (Email: s.obrien@thursley-pc.gov.uk)



Sarah has lived in Thursley, on and off, all her life. Her parents have lived in the village since 1964. She lived and worked in New York and then London, before the Covid lockdown presented an opportunity to work from home and a return to living full-time in Thursley a couple of years later.

Most of her professional career has been spent in the Auction world. She is also a qualified Psychotherapist and her interest in the well-being of others has included volunteer counselling for ChildLine as well as acting as Safeguarding Officer for the Parish of Thursley.

Sarah enjoys making the most of the Common and Punchbowl, walking with her dog and friends, as well as travel and spending time with family.

SUGAR & BAKES

By Camilla Daubeney

Pear, Blue Cheese & Pesto Tarts



It is a bit early in the season for soup, so these pastries make a great alternative for a quick lunch with friends.

Ingredients

320g Sheet of Puff Pastry
1 Egg (beaten)
300g Blue Cheese
4 Pears (peeled and cut into slices)
Olive Oil
Sundried Tomatoe Pesto
Walnuts

Method

1. Pre-heat your oven to 200 C, 180 Fan, Gas 6.

2. Line 2 baking trays with grease proof paper

3. Unroll your pastry and cut into six rectangles. Score a border of roughly 1cm around each square and brush the border with the beaten egg. Score a lattice pattern inside each border.

4. Pop your tart cases on your baking trays and bake for about 10 minutes until the pastry has puffed up and the borders are a light golden brown colour.

5. Remove your tart cases from the oven and leave to cool for about 5 minutes, then crumble the blue cheese inside the borders, top with the sliced pears, drizzle with a little of the Olive Oil and then put them back in the oven for roughly 11 minutes, turning the tray around half way through.

6. Remove from the oven, drizzle over the Pesto and decorate with a walnut and enjoy!

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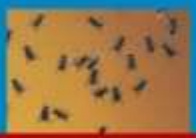
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