



Cobham & Luddesdowne

News

August 2026

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Pastoral assistant- Janet Weaver, 36 Highview, Vigo Village, DA13 0RR
01732 823936

Church Safeguarding Officer - Hilary Savage - 01634 723027

Church Office Phone no. 01474 813495

Church Officers St. Mary Magdalene, Cobham

Lay Chair	Hilary Savage	01634 723027
PCC Secretary	Greg Atkinson	
Churchwarden	Hilary Savage	
Treasurer	Vacant	
Deanery Synod	Hilary Savage	01634 723027

Church Officers St Peter and St. Paul, Luddesdowne

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PCC Secretary	Greg Atkinson	
Treasurer	Janet Weaver	01732 823936

Parochial Church Council Members

Cobham	Luddesdowne
Greg Atkinson	Diana Bampton
Peter Balanck	Jill Beety
Ron Chamberlain	Sue Campbell
Lynn Ruddock	Janet Weaver

SUBMISSIONS Cobham and Luddesdowne News is a community magazine produced by and for the residents of Cobham, Sole Street and Luddesdowne. - Please note new email address.

Please send material for inclusion by the 15th of the month preceding publication to clnewseditorial@gmail.com

Cover photograph by Adrian Whiteing - New College Cobham during roof repairs.

Printed by Wested Logistics Limited 01474 361615
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August
2026

Let's not take our cathedrals for granted

*By the Revd Peter Crumpler, a Church of England priest in
St Albans, Herts, and a former communications director for the C of E.*

US Vice-President JD Vance may have criticised an art installation at Canterbury Cathedral – but a new report shows that the Church of England's cathedrals are its most popular places of worship. They are also vital centres of community, arts and music and are major tourist attractions. But the latest research shows that many of the historic buildings are facing major financial challenges.

Religion think-tank Theos has published a detailed report looking at the role of cathedrals in modern England. The report, 'Living Stones: English Cathedrals as Sacred Spaces in Changing Times,' revealed that more than three-quarters (77 per cent) of adults in England had visited a cathedral at least once in the past three years.

The research showed that "Cathedrals reach beyond regular churchgoers. A majority of those with no religious affiliation have visited a cathedral in the last three years, and many enjoy worship, music, prayer or stillness while doing so." Other research confirms that cathedrals have significant economic benefits, generating around £235 million of additional expenditure in their local communities a year, creating more than 6,000 jobs and mobilising 13,000 volunteers.

Yet the Theos research also points out that four out of five of the cathedrals operate 'in structural deficit' with no guaranteed national funding for their core functions.

In recent years, cathedrals have attracted criticism for activities aimed at drawing new visitors into their buildings. Last autumn, JD Vance criticised an art installation at Canterbury Cathedral, saying that the graffiti-style artworks had made "a beautiful historical building really ugly."

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Other cathedrals have prompted complaints after installing a temporary fairground 'helter-skelter' inside the building or hosting silent discos.

Research from the Bible Society has shown that one of the top three places for people with no religion, or non-practising Christians to encounter the Bible was while sightseeing in a cathedral or church.

But one of the Theos report's main findings highlights the growing gap "between the scale of public benefit cathedrals provide and the level of recognition, understanding and support they receive."

The report concludes that, to survive and thrive, cathedrals need sustainable investment from funders that recognise the cathedrals' public benefits. It also encourages visitors and local community members to consider joining a 'friends' scheme or making a regular donation.

Cobham Choir Summer Concert

Despite the extreme heat of Saturday 11th July, me and my mother-in-law made our way to Cobham Church, stopping only once as we scaled the incline up to the entrance. With our tickets in hand (purchased from Mary at Cobham stores a few days earlier) we entered the cool air of our beautiful Church of St Mary Magdalene. Full of anticipation for the songs of the sixties and seventies we positioned ourselves on the back pew, thankfully, complete with its long comfy cushion.

At 4pm the choir arranged themselves on the steps in front of us, the church was full, so a little shuffling was required by some of the audience to get a good view.

I often include adverts for Cobham Choir concerts in the magazine; however, this was my first time attending and I am sure it will not be my last. As the singing started the church was full of sweet harmonising voices accompanied by piano, sax and drums. As the choir got into full voice with their rendition of some of the last century's most memorable tunes, I could see many heads bobbing along in time with the song, I even had a little shoulder shimmy myself!

It was a lovely way to spend the afternoon; the organisation of the event was excellent with refreshments set up for the interval and an opportunity for people to catch up with neighbours and friends.

Thank you to Cobham Choir and team.

Tina



Our next event is the Autumn Show & Plant Sale which is to be held at The Meadow Rooms on Saturday 12th September 2026 from 2pm to 3.30pm. Members will exhibit their home-grown flowers, vegetables, and preserves. Non-members are welcome free of charge to view the exhibits between 2pm and 3.30pm. Plants plus tea, coffee and homemade cake will be on sale.

This will be closely followed by our last talk for 2026 “Behind The Scenes At Kew Gardens” by Dr John Hughes on Wednesday 14th October at The Meadow Rooms 6.30pm for 7pm.

For further information email cobhamgs@hotmail.co.uk

In your own garden, the RHS recommended Top 10 jobs for

August are -

- 1 Prune Wisteria
- 2 Don't delay summer pruning restricted fruits
- 3 Deadhead flowering plants regularly
- 4 Watering! - particularly containers, and new plants, preferably with grey recycled water or stored rainwater
- 5 Collect seed from favourite plants
- 6 Harvest sweetcorn and other vegetables as they become ready
- 7 Continue cutting out old fruited canes on raspberries
- 8 Lift and pot up rooted strawberry runners
- 9 Keep ponds and water features topped up
- 10 Feed the soil with green manures

If you would like to become a member of Cobham Gardeners' Society, It's only a modest £10 for the year – money you get back from free entry into all Gardeners' expert speaker talks and massive savings of up to 50% on quality plants at local garden centres. For further details of all Gardeners' activities contact cobhamgs@hotmail.co.uk



Meetings & Shows at the Meadow Room in Dickensian Cobham, Kent
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Saturday 12th September 2026 - 2:00-3:30pm
Cobham Gardeners' Society

Autumn Show & Plant Sale

Gardening Tips * Adult & Junior Show Categories
Flowers, Vegetables, Preserves & Photographic
Tea, coffee & home made cake on sale

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Come and join us for a summer luncheon of assorted sandwiches, delicious cake and tea/coffee all for just £5 per person.

A warm welcome is awaiting you and we look forward to seeing you in St Mary's Church Room
On the 3rd Thursday of each month 12-2pm.



Local Funding Group '24



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THE TUESDAY POP IN

Meetings are held at the Leather Bottle on the second Tuesday of the month from 10.30 till 12 noon; all are welcome to join us for a relaxed chat and coffee.

Next pop-in 11th August

CONTACT: MARY PALMER—01474816788



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Thursday Fellowship.

In August we have our annual Garden Party. We will have a raffle and Bring and Buy Stall. Please do come along as this is our only fund-raising event in the year.

Some friends in the parish invite us to their garden in Harvel and it is on Thursday **20th August** at 2.30.p.m.

If you would like to join us, please contact me on 01474 812706, and we'll be sure to have Afternoon Tea for everyone.

Jennifer



MONDAY CLUB—Sole Street

The Monday Club meets every week at St Mary's Church Room, Manor Road, Sole Street, Cobham from 1.30pm to 3.30pm. It is a small club for the retired and semi- retired. We have a very varied programme of Speakers, Choirs etc with Social Afternoons – tea, biscuits games etc. We also arrange outings to places of interest and afternoon teas. New Members are made very welcome.

National Allotment Week – 10th to 16th August

If you like allotments, then this week is for you.

It raises awareness of the very practical good that renting an allotment can do, in both providing space to grow your own food, but also in encouraging more connectedness with your immediate community.

This year the theme is 'Grow to Learn – Lifelong Lessons from the Allotment'.

This highlights how time on the plot acts as a living classroom, teaching vital life skills such as resilience, patience, and creative problem-solving.

The National Allotment Society began in 1901, with the formation of the Agricultural Organisation Society. It grew rapidly, until by the time of WW2, from 1939 to 1945 there were 1.4 million plots supporting the 'Dig for Victory' campaign.

Nowadays there are about 330,000 allotment plots across the UK, managed by hundreds of different local councils and independent societies. The average rent is about £45 a year for a standard 5-pole plot (125 sq. metres).

If you want an allotment, you will have to wait. Demand for plots is currently at an all-time high, making the average wait 37 months. London is averaging 69 months, while in Islington, some people have been on the list for more than a decade.

The best crops for first-time allotmenteers? You might want to try potatoes, onions, garlic, runner beans, courgettes, carrots, salad leaves, beetroot or strawberries.



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Sole Street W.I

Our 'Cream Tea & Cakes Galore,' event on 20th June at St Mary's Church Room was a great success. It was lovely to see a steady stream of people from across the village coming together to support the event, enjoy delicious refreshments and reconnect with friends and neighbours.



We were especially delighted to welcome some of the new families who have recently moved to Sole Street, giving us the opportunity to introduce them to our community.

The glorious sunshine meant we were able to make full use of the outdoor seating area, which provided the perfect setting for a relaxing afternoon of tea, cake and conversation.

A heartfelt thank you to all who attended our event, baked, served & cleared up.



On 23rd June, we welcomed Jillian Eagleton for an inspiring talk, 'Follow Your Soul and Dress Yourself Happy.' Jillian introduced us to the fascinating world of fashion psychology, exploring how our clothing choices can influence our confidence and wellbeing. She explored how colour changes our mood & lifts our spirits, while sharing practical tips on seasonal colours and creating a capsule wardrobe. An uplifting evening that encouraged us all to embrace our own style and maybe look at our wardrobes when we are at home.

Diary dates:

28.7.26 ~ 7.30pm Top tips for Flower Arranging with Susan Shaw

25.8.26 ~ 1pm Garden Meeting in Kathy's Garden

For further information about our meetings, walking group or craft sessions, please email: solestreet@wkwfi.org.uk

Jayne Holden

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Cobham Church



Burial of ashes

Bernard William Albert GLENISTER died on the 15th July 2018 at the age of 83 years old. Bernard was cremated on the 31st July 2018 at Thames View Crematorium. Bernard's wife Pamela GLENISTER died on the 22nd October 2023 at the age of 86 years old. Pamela was cremated at Surrey and Sussex Crematorium.

On the 27th June 2026 Bernard and Pamela's ashes were buried in Cobham's Garden of Remembrance. Mrs Alison HARDING (Licensed Lay Minister from Ash and Ridley) conducted the service. Our condolences and prayers go to their daughters Karen, Michelle, Victoria and their families.

The funeral of Adrian Guy Chapman who was born on the 22nd November 1946 and died on the 18th May 2026 at the age of 79 years old. The service took place on the 23rd June 2026 at Thames View Crematorium. The service was conducted by Theresa Sheridan (Minister in training from Minster Road Baptist Church). Our condolences and prayers go to Adrian's wife Kathy, son Philip, daughter Joanna and their families.

Dates for your Diary

The dates for the Cobham Parish Council meetings are:

Tuesday 8th September St Mary's Church Room at 7.30pm

Tuesday 6th October Meadow Rooms at 7.30pm

Tuesday 3rd November St Mary's Church Room at 7.30pm

Tuesday 1st December Meadow Rooms at 7.30pm



The dates for the Luddesdown Parish Council meetings are:

Monday 21st September Luddesdown Village Hall

Monday 16th November Luddesdown Village Hall

All meetings start at 7.30pm

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BELL RINGING by Peter Hartley

On Trinity Sunday at Meopham Church along with Martin Davie and the Meopham band of ringers we ensured all 8 bells sounded to wish Alyson Davie a happy retirement as she took her last service at the conclusion of 38 years of ordained ministry.

On The King's Official Birthday the Rochester District of change ringers had arranged a ringing day mainly in Surrey. We began at Thames Ditton ringing their 6 bells which on 15th November 1948 had been rung by 3 men and 3 women in a full three hour peal to celebrate the birth of Prince Charles to Princess Elizabeth.

Amidst the swirling traffic of Kingston upon Thames it is hard to imagine seven Saxon Kings being crowned here. From the 12th century the large church has been constantly refashioned. The 12 bells were a confusing challenge for this "Bear of Very Little Brain". The cafe at the east end was appreciated while in the nave chairs were being set out for a concert of opera choruses. In the afternoon there were three 8 bell Victorian churches to ring in. The coming of the railways had brought the people into Surrey. On carnival day East Molesey in the church the chancel was a store room. The body of the church was full of tables and chairs for the popular café services and the youthful vicar was assembling a temporary pool for full immersion baptism. After a ring it was onwards past the large Queen Elizabeth II Reservoir to the 1887 church in Hersham with its 1901 bells.

The former royal residence of Claremont House is in the parish of Esher. A donor for the building of the larger 1854 Esher parish church was Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg, first King of the Belgians, who lived at Claremont with his wife Princess Charlotte of Wales who died tragically in childbirth in 1817 along with their still-born son. Passing a fine memorial to Prince Leopold, a favourite uncle of Queen Victoria, it was then a climb up the narrow 56 spiral steps to the ringing room for a final ring of the day. A good day had been enjoyed ringing the bells in five parish churches.

The author Bijan Omrani, grandson of Yorkshire farmers, barrister, former Eton master, currently research fellow at Exeter University and a Devon churchwarden, in his book "God is an Englishman: Christianity and the Creation of England" touches on the significance of the mediaeval parish system, each with a priest, a clerk and a church.

Cont'd on page 16

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He also clearly and carefully reminds us of the treasured national heritage of our Christian legacy “in arts and music, learning and law, kindness and Kingliness, valour and values”.

In 2024 a Church of England Press Release reported Sunday church attendance had dropped from 1.2 million in 1987 to 685,000 in 2023. Between 2000 and 2024 641 churches were closed and between 2016 and 2021 278 parishes were amalgamated. What of the future of the faith and the Church and our national characteristics within our shared humanity?

For the moment we continue to ring our 400 year old Cobham bells in the full-circle English style of change ringing rejoicing in a unique and cherished legacy.

Meopham Library Writing Group

Meopham Library Writing Group meets again on Thursday 6th August 2026 at 10am. If you are interested in writing you are very welcome to join us at Meopham Library. Each month there is a different writing theme such as “Technology”, which can be used as a starting point for a short story, poem or an article. Creative writing is a very enjoyable activity which can also be used to record special family memories as well as being helpful for anyone facing difficult times.

Future meetings will be held on 3rd September, 1st October and 5th November. Please ring **01474 813379** for more information.

1st South Street Boys Brigade and Girls Association Company

The 1st South Street Boys Brigade and Girls Association Company meets every Friday evening from 6pm-7.30pm during term time, for boys and girls aged 5-18 years, at South Street Baptist Church, Wrotham Road, Meopham, DA13 0QJ (next to Hope Hill). There are no meetings in August, but new members will be very welcome to join us for games, craft and Bible stories in September.

Please ring 01474 815039 or 01474 813379 for more information or visit **www.southstreetbaptist.org.uk** and **www.BOYS-BRIGADE.org.uk**

SONG TIME will meet again on Monday 14th September 9.45am-11am for families with babies and toddlers. There are no meetings during August.

South Street Baptist Church services all begin at 10.45am. Everyone is welcome to join us for Cafe Church during August.

To a Fish of the Brook

Enjoy thy stream, O harmless fish;
And when an angler for his dish,
Through gluttony's vile sin,
Attempts, a wretch, to pull thee OUT
God give thee strength, O gentle trout,
To pull the rascal IN!

By John Wolcot (Peter Pindar) 1738 – 1839



“Quotes on Life in General”

Keeping up appearances is the most expensive thing in the world. - Anon

No army can withstand the strength of an idea whose time has come. - Victor Hugo

The only thing worse than an alarm clock that goes off is one that doesn't. - Anon

Luxury: something you don't really need and can't do without. - Anon

Creditors have better memories than debtors. - Anon

Grandparents are similar to a piece of string - handy to have around and easily wrapped around the fingers of their grandchildren. - Anon

Luddesdown & District Rights of Way Group.

We are a small friendly group that usually walks from The Cock Inn, Henley Street, Luddesdown, Gravesend DA13 0XB, at 11am on Wednesdays. We walk at a gentle pace for some 90 minutes in beautiful countryside. Occasionally we lead weekend walks.

With four Socials a year in Luddesdown Village Hall and a twice yearly Newsletter, we would be delighted if you joined us for a walk or two. Becoming a member costs £7 per person a year. Please contact Walks Co-ordinator Janet Ferguson, preferably at janetferguson@hotmail.fr . Ian Sheridan, Acting Chairman, 07951 927 517

**St John's Meopham with St Mildred's Nurstead
Church Services August 2026.**



Sunday 2nd August

09.45am All Age Worship and Baptism at St John's

Sunday 9th August

09.45am Morning Worship at St John's

10.30am Mattins at St Mildred's

Sunday 16th August

09.45am Morning Worship at St John's

Sunday 23rd August

09.45am Holy Communion at St John's

11.30am Family Service at St Mildred's

Sunday 30th August

Morning Worship and Baptism at St John's
(for all four parishes)

Cobham, Luddesdowne and Sole Street

Church Services during August 2026



Sunday 2nd August

10:30am Holy Communion, Luddesdowne

Sunday 9th August

10:30am Holy Communion (BCP), Cobham

Sunday 16th August

10:30am Holy Communion, Luddesdowne

Sunday 23rd August

10:30am Holy Communion, Cobham

Sunday 30th August

**10:30am Morning Worship and Baptism, St John's
Meopham
(for all four parishes)**

Midweek services in Sole Street

St Mary's Church Room, Informal Morning Prayer

9:30am - 12th and 26th August



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SMILE LINES



Whispers

A young curate lost his voice at the local football match one Saturday and, being due to preach the next morning, he thought he should call in and consult his vicar. So he rang the vicarage bell, and the door was answered by a very attractive teenage daughter. "Is your dad here?" the curate managed to whisper.

"No," she whispered back, thinking she had got the message. "Come on in!"

Nearly omnipotent

The curate was giving his young daughter a cuddle before she went to bed. As he picked her up and hugged her tight, she said: "Daddy, you're so strong! I really think you'll be God one day!"

Slow

A curate consistently arrived late for work until his long-suffering vicar asked him what was wrong. "My problem," explained the curate, "is that I sleep very slowly."

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13th August - Octavia Hill, Social Reformer and co-founder of The National Trust

The urgent need for decent, affordable housing is a hot topic these days.

It was an even more urgent need in Victorian London, where the homes of the poor were tiny, cold, damp, and infested with lice and vermin. Water came from an outside pump, and filthy outside toilets were shared with several dozen neighbours. Stoves were rare; most people ate cold meals. Labourers lived 22 years on average; more than half of all babies died before their first birthday.

Into this festering mess of disease and misery came Octavia Hill in 1852. She was determined to make a difference, and she did.

Octavia was well qualified for the job: though her family in Wisbech, Cambridgeshire were comfortably off, they had a passionate interest in social change. Her grandfather, Thomas Southwood Smith, was a national authority on sanitation and housing. Her father, a corn merchant and banker, worked hard for prison reform. Her mother managed a Christian Socialist co-operative in London, where the young Octavia met John Ruskin, and other notable figures with a passion for social change.

Once in London, Octavia began her first job, that of teaching poor children to make toys. It gave her grim first-hand experience of the horrors of life of the very poor.

By 1856 Octavia was helping run classes for women at the Working Men's College in Great Ormond Street, and she and her sisters also started a school for very poor children.

But what really grabbed Octavia's compassionate heart was the housing crisis. By 1864, with the help and advice of John Ruskin, she had launched a business scheme for improving Victorian housing in London. Gradually her scheme and experience expanded, until a breakthrough came in 1884, when the Ecclesiastical Commissioners handed her a large part of their portfolio of properties to manage in Southwark. As the years went by, Octavia's help and advice were often sought in connection with promoting social reform by legislation, though her heart was always in the voluntary sector.

It has been said of Octavia that her Christian faith made her seek "to make life on earth as positive an experience as possible, particularly for the poor and disadvantaged."

But today Octavia is remembered most for something surprisingly different: her joint initiative with Canon H D Rawnsley and Sir Robert Hunter in founding the National Trust in 1895. It has become Britain's leading charitable organisation for preserving historical buildings and places of natural beauty.

Octavia's national fame never affected her – she lived quietly with her sisters in Marylebone Road until her death on 13th August 1912.

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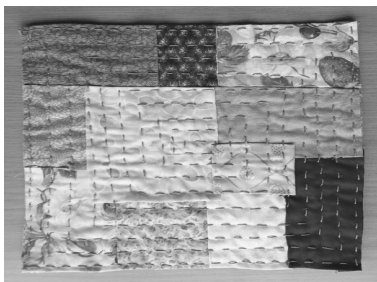
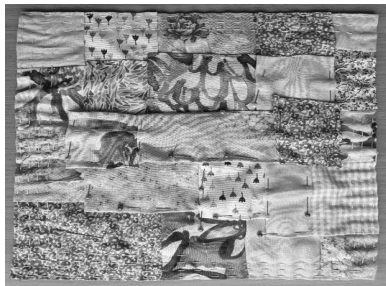
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North Kent Embroiderers



Recently we had another of our all day workshops for members to take part in. This time it was led by Lynne, one of our own members and was based on the technique of Kawandi quilting. This is a method that originated in India. As you can see the quilt is made from irregular sized pieces. It is unusual in that it is constructed from the outside edge working towards the centre, stitching through all the layers in a square spiral. A piece of batting or wadding is placed on top of the backing fabric and the edges of the backing are folded over the batting to form a self binding base onto which the small pieces are stitched. Traditionally the batting was made by reusing layers of old cotton fabric or saris so making this a very economical technique. The trick is to be able to sew in a straight line using a simple running stitch. Depending on the fabrics used, this can be very hard on the fingers as some of our members found out! Lynne had advised us to bring a thimble.

The small pieces used to form the top layer are called 'Tikeli' – the word tiklis means 'patches'. The process is ongoing as the raw edges of the tikeli are folded under and sewn as the quilt progresses. Those who wished could decorate the corners of their quilt with 'phula' – meaning flowers- little folded pieces of fabric. Some chose to embellish their pieces with embroidery, lace, buttons etc.

Lynne had provided a range of fabrics for us to work with along the theme of 'A Summer Garden' but this is an excellent way of using up scraps from your 'stash'.

If you or someone you know would maybe like to start a new hobby and to join our group or would just like to find out a bit more about us then please pay us a visit - look at our website: <https://northkentembroiderers.co.uk/> or email us at: info@northkentembroiderers.co.uk or contact our Chairman, Eileen on 01474 324734
Happy stitching, Karen *All photos with permission.*



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COBHAM & LUDDSDOWN W.I.

We launched our new 2026/27 programme on July 1st with one of our favourite events – our annual Strawberry Tea, which is one of the two events each year hosted by our committee members. Delicious English strawberries and cream were served with some langues de chat (French biscuits), Jean Horgan's famous fresh cream meringues and home-made scones with jam and cream.

Jill Beety produced a strawberry quiz, which invited us all to come up with as many words as possible of five letters and no plurals, from the word 'strawberries'. It is surprising just how many there are.

There is no meeting in August, although our 'groups' will continue to meet at various venues. Our next monthly meeting will be on Wednesday 2nd September when Derek March will be coming along to talk to us about 'The Story of English Cheeses' (with samples!).

We welcome visitors to our meetings, for which there is a charge of £3, which includes refreshments, so if there are any ladies out there who want to join our very friendly group, we are sure you will have a great time. Who knows, perhaps after one or two visits you might even want to join us permanently and have a chance to join one of our groups (art, craft, 'Knit and Natter', 'Read and Rabbit', Needlework, Crochet and Lunch Club) as well. For further information contact our secretary, Jenny Brooker – mobile 07860 545326 or email: cobhamluddesdown@wkwfi.org.uk

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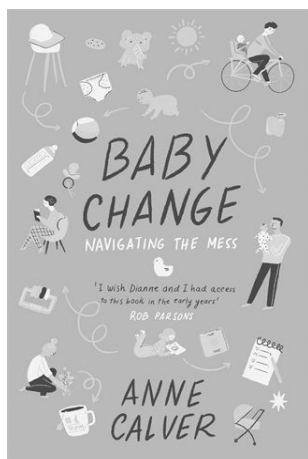


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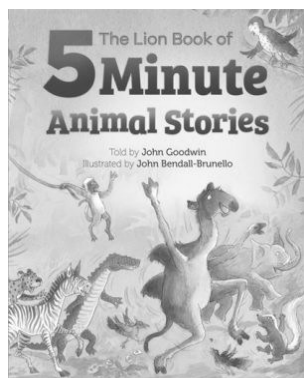
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Baby Change - Navigating the Mess! **By Anne Calver, SPCK £11.99**

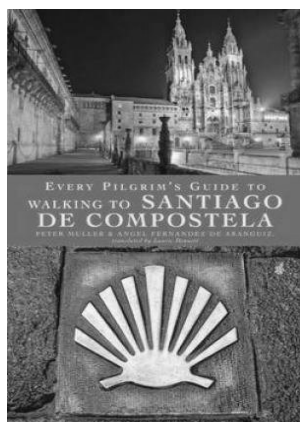
This book is about navigating (with Jesus) the changes that hit you when you bring a child into the western world. - I thought having a baby would complete me. I was wrong. I believed I'd be a great parent and a natural 'mum'. I wasn't. I thought I'd know what to do. I didn't.

This book helps you make wise decisions over your children. It addresses the challenges of parenthood – for instance, should you return to work? Anne uses examples from her own struggle, together with biblical insights and other people's experiences, to help you know you are not alone.



The Lion Book of Five-Minute Animal Stories **By John Goodwin, SPCK, £9.99**

The best lessons come wrapped in the best stories. And The Lion Book of Five-Minute Animal Stories brings ten timeless tales from around the world to life with humour, heart, and unforgettable animal characters children will adore. Each story teaches valuable lessons about friendship, kindness, courage, honesty, and discovering your unique talents. All delivered with the perfect dose of fun!



Every Pilgrim's Guide to Walking to Santiago de Compostela

By Peter Muller, Angel Fernandez de Aranguiz & Laurie Dennett, Canterbury Press, £12.99

Every year, some 200,000 people set out on the world's most famous pilgrimage route - 'the Camino', designated a World Heritage Site in 1993. Actually it is a network of paths, with numerous starting places in France and throughout Europe, and all routes converge to lead along Spain's northern coast to Santiago de Compostela. Here the shrine of St James, the patron saint of pilgrimage, was discovered in the 9th century.

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Wednesday 14th October 2026 - 7pm Behind The Scenes At Kew Gardens By Dr John Hughes

As a member of the RHS Tender Ornamental Plant Group, our Speaker John Hughes has had access to areas not normally visited by the general public. Amongst other things, he has promised to show us the work going on behind the scenes to keep the Davies Alpine House looking presentable throughout the year and the work involved in restoring the Temperate Glasshouse, including photos taken by a Kew staff member specially for the talk. He also promises to show some of the wonderful plants grown in the nursery areas which are not open to the public

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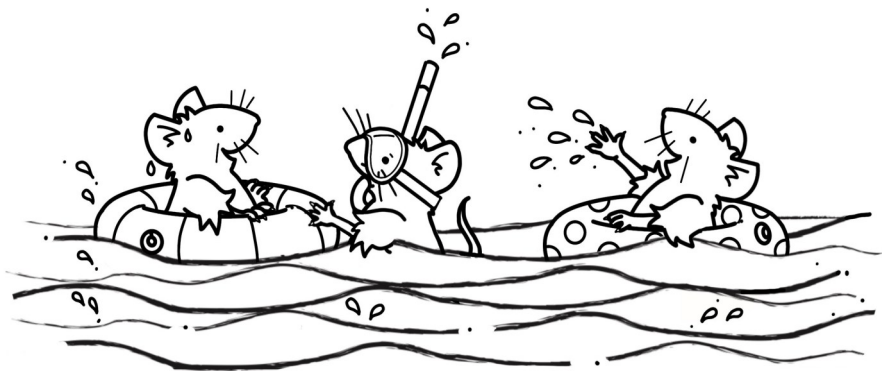


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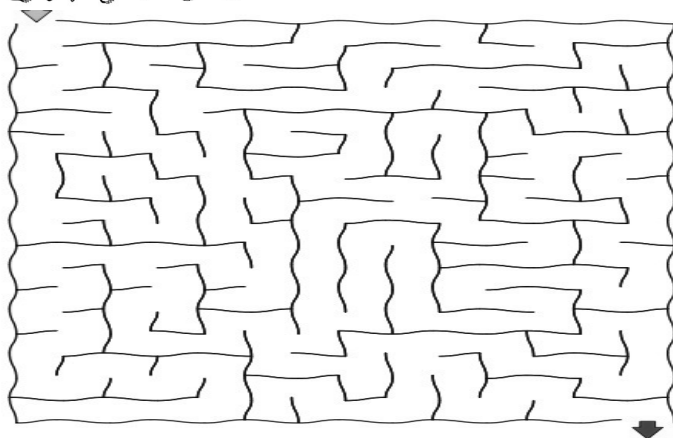
I hope you are looking forward to the summer holidays and spending time with your friends and family. As the long days and sunny weather continue it is so much fun to visit the lovely seaside and countryside. I enjoy trips out in the car to different places, sometimes I even take my little tent with me so I can keep cool and have a little snooze in its shade!

Have a lovely, safe summer.

Love and Licks Paddy



Can the mice find their way to the Seaside?



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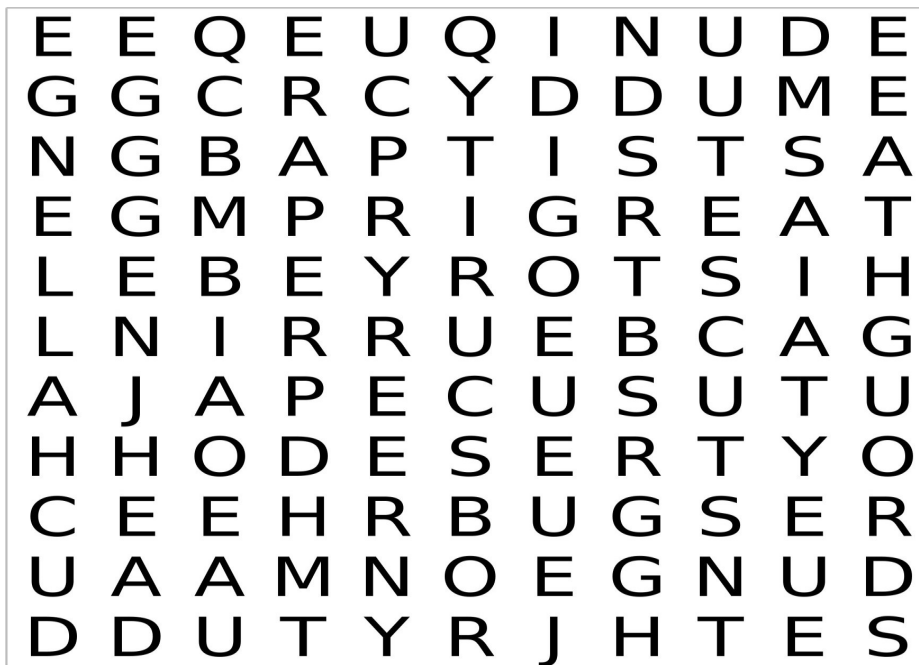
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John the Baptist

We remember John the Baptist. By all accounts, he had a rough life. He grew up in obscurity, lived in the desert on a diet of bugs. He wore itchy camel hair. He worked in the heat of the sun, constantly challenging people, and wading in and out of muddy Jordan waters to baptise many. Then he was arrested and kept in a reeking, infested dungeon until one day they cut his head off. Not much comfort in that life. Yet the Bible tells us that of all the people in history, no one has even been born who was as great as him. Why? Because of the unique calling God gave him, which was to prepare the way for the coming ministry of his Son, Jesus. Jesus did not have an easy life, either.

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