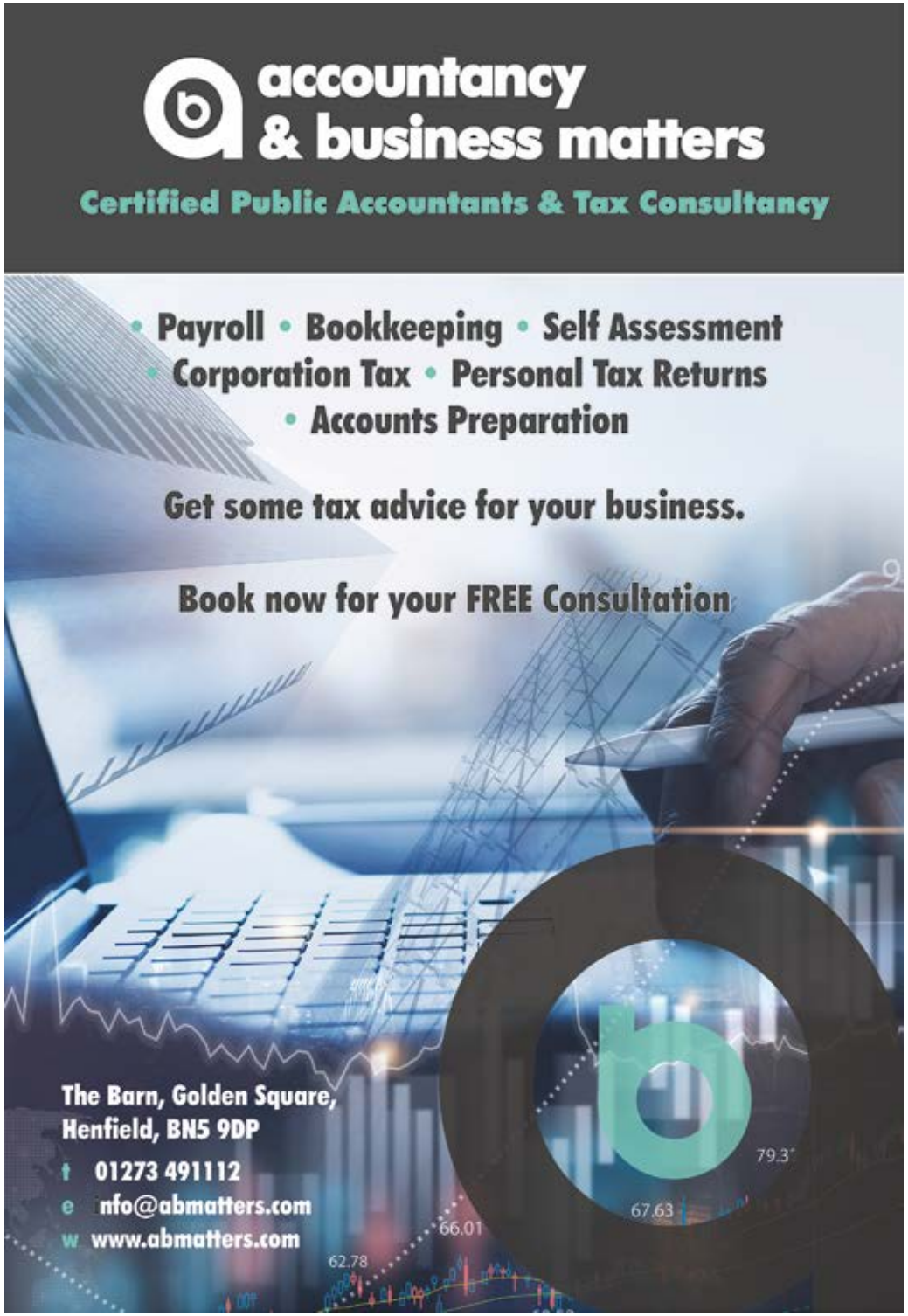
Your Mag

Steyning | Bramber | Upper Beeding

April 2026



yourmag.co.uk



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E: clerk@steyningpc.gov.uk

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Steyning & District Good Neighbours Association
T: 01903 816181
steyninggoodneighbours.co.uk

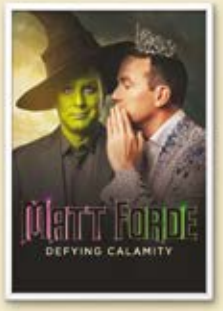
Front Cover: Neil Bulpitt

Essentially a wildlife artist and ornithologist with a background of commercial and technical illustration. Neil enjoys the freedom of painting, and illustrating a range of subjects in oils, acrylic, pencil and watercolour.

Each year Neil produces a unique Wildlife calendar. With the help of watercolour illustrations, each month explains what to look out for in and around the British countryside.

Calendars can be signed on request.
Contact: www.neil.bulpitt@googlemail.com





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Forget the sales talk: Be inspired by your neighbours

GREENING
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What if the best advice on making your home greener wasn't in a brochure or on a website - but just down the road? On Sunday 12th April four homeowners in Steyning and Beeding are throwing open their doors for an Eco Open House Day, giving you the chance to see for yourself the energy-saving improvements, renewable technologies and simple changes that are cutting their bills, reducing their carbon footprint, and making their gardens more wildlife friendly. No sales pitch, no jargon — just real homes, real people and honest answers to the questions you've always wanted to ask.

For this year's Eco Open House event Greening Steyning has teamed up with our friends at Transition Towns Worthing and Shoreham to create a 12 day Eco-Festival running from the 7th to the 19th of April. A total of 20 properties will be open to visitors across the three communities. And there will be 20 fringe events happening: a mix of workshops, talks and more. So there will be loads going on.



Come along to the launch event at the Repair Café on Saturday 11th, which is from 14:00-16:00 at Upper Beeding Village Hall. You'll be able to pick up a brochure and preview what's to see at each of the properties. Brochures will also be available at Steyning Bookshop, Library and Post Office.

And to build on this theme we have an expert speaker at Green Drinks in April. Paul Ciniglio is head of Whole Home Retrofit at the National Energy Foundation. He'll be discussing *'Retrofit in the Community'* and sharing case studies throwing light on how to make our homes cheaper to heat, and softer on the planet.

Learn more about the Eco Open House event at: www.greeningsteyning.org/EOH

The Green Drinks talk is at the Steyning Centre on Weds 29th April. Doors and bar open at 19:30. Tickets cost £5 (free for students). Book a spot at: www.greeningsteyning.org/events

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Steyning Community Orchard: Spring 'Blossail' event

STEYNING COMMUNITY ORCHARD

Following on from our hugely successful Wassail in January, we have an exciting new event to tell you about. So please put the date in your diaries.

Sunday 19th April 13:00-16:00 - Family Picnic and Blossail.
Community Orchard, Memorial Playing Field, Steyning.

Mythago Morris will visit us again on Sunday 19th April for what they are calling a Blossom or Bee Wassail. (or 'Blossail' for short!). It will the first time they will have performed this in public, so we are very honoured. Unlike our Wassail it will be held during the daytime, when the orchard trees will be in full blossom, and combine 2 old Sussex traditions of a Spring Wassail and the Wassailing of honeybees.



They will commence the Blossail around 14:00, but why not arrive at the orchard earlier and bring the family along for a picnic amongst the blossoming fruit trees? Expect to be entertained as usual by the boisterous dancing, songs and excellent musicianship, and yes you will be encouraged to join in. The slightly chaotic spiral dance that concluded our Winter Wassail will again conclude proceedings.

Let Mythago explain the backgound to the Blossail...

'In Sussex it was once customary to wassail the orchards in spring. This spring wassail was still being observed as late as the mid-1900's. At this time of year, the trees are in their blossoming season, for which reason we are calling the event a 'Blossail'.

Unlike the winter apple howling, which seeks to wake the dormant trees, the 'Blossail' marries the tradition of wassailing with the themes underpinning English maying customs.

It seeks to honour the active flowering phase of the trees (the blossom) and the arrival of pollinators (the bees). It also celebrates the interdependent relationship between pollinators and the blossom, the 'child' of their union being the fruit of the tree. For this reason, the Blossail acts as a 'Great Wedding' of nature, ensuring fertility and abundance for the coming year.

The importance of bees was once honoured in the uniquely Sussex custom of wassailing honey bees, which is remembered in a verse of the 'Sussex Sugar Wassail', which was collected by the Rev. John Broadwood in the 1840's.

In the mid 20th Century the vicar of Amberley also documented a 'wassail chant' used for this Twelfth Night rite, which is thought to partly date from the medieval period'



Mythago are writing music and songs especially for this event, so it will be a World Premiere ! Not to be missed.
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My laptop has been dying a slow death for about a year now – its battery lasts about 10 minutes and it can take 5 minutes to open a word document. I have been dreading getting a replacement due to the trauma of having to set the new thing up. However, with the death of the letter 'l' on the keyboard, my hand was forced – ' ... could only send so many emails without such an important letter'!

It turned out that, in the main, my fears were unfounded and things have progressed since I had last replaced my laptop – in about 1998! All my files and preferences were backed up via Windows and the whole thing was fairly seamless. That was until I turned to setting up remote access to our Practice Management Software. Contacting tech support advised that I had the dubious privilege of parting with £90 for them to do this and that I had to sign and return an agreement. Despite being a tech company, this agreement was sent as a PDF, which I had to print, sign, scan and return.

The print aspect of this turned out to be a stumbling block – no matter what I tried, I could not get the printer to connect. I downloaded apps and print drivers, uninstalled, reinstalled, tried WPS (whatever that stands for), and EVEN resorted to plugging it in directly to my laptop. The best I managed was an error page, which I considered sending to the tech company with the words *'why can't we use Docusign?'* written in crayon underneath. In the end, I booted up my old laptop, made a cup of tea, walked the dogs and, when it was ready, printed the agreement *'in the old way'*.

While there is no avoiding the fact that some things have to be physically printed this is becoming less and less common and there are clear advantages to having a digital version: you can't lose it, it can't be burned, faded or eaten by the dog and it can be shared with multiple individuals to name but a few.

There's also the obvious benefit to the environment with the reduction in the use of paper and ink. Finally, the hours saved when not having to try and get a wifi direct printer to connect via the HP smart app, when Windows 11 Copilot is arguing with Google Gemini, are priceless!

These are among the reasons that we have elected to go paperless at our practices. Now, all our consent forms, discharge instructions, hospital charts, anaesthetic charts and client information are digital. This means we can send documents direct to you digitally – either to be signed or for information – such as post



operatively, for example. Alternatively, forms can be signed on tablets in the practice. Digital hospital and anaesthetic charts allow far more flexibility for recording information than their paper counterparts as well as providing checklists, alerts and reminders for medications and checks. All pets get their picture taken so we can easily reference who is who – and of course images can be shared with owners as well.

Overall the result is a more efficient process which results in better care for the pets that we see, and hopefully you will see the benefits of this when you next visit the practice. However, if the thought of a digital document sends a shiver down your spine – don't worry, we can still print them out – *assuming we can connect the printer, of course!*

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Goshawk: Phantom of the Forest

For many of us, film and literature may be the closest we get to experiencing the sharp detail of certain charismatic wildlife goliaths; the breath of a Bengal Tiger, the splashing breach of a Humpback Whale or the down-the-barrel fire-eyed stare of a Goshawk. If you've watched this year's film adaptation of Helen Macdonald's bestseller, H is for Hawk, you'll have been treated to some beautiful close-ups of these impeccable birds. Cherish these shots – they're not common.



Nicknamed *'Phantom of the Forest'*, Goshawks are extremely secretive, flying under the radar and shrouded in mysterious woodland wonder. It's said their name was bestowed upon them by medieval falconers; Goose-hawk, for their apparent ability to take down geese. Anyone who's ever had a run in with a lairy farmyard goose will know they're quite a contender, and the name immediately conjures images of the Goshawk's mighty strength and hunting prowess.

Goshawks share a similar barred chest, yellow legs, and bright eyes with their cousin, the Sparrowhawk. But the similarity ends with size, and with a wingspan of up to five feet, a female Goshawk can easily weigh four times as much as a female Sparrowhawk.

Despite their impressive bulk, Goshawks are tricky to spot, and surprisingly agile. Preferring to nest and hunt in deep forest, they whip through thicket and glade at speeds of up to 38 miles per hour to silently dispatch unsuspecting birds and small mammals with spearing golden talons.

Like many awesome predators, these magnificent birds get a rough reputation. Historically persecuted, by the late 19th century Goshawks were all but extinct in the UK. Due to accidental escapees, and perhaps some deliberate releases, these birds have bounced back. Although, their trauma is not as much in the past as you would like to assume, with vilification and very real crimes against the species still happening.

Along with added threats of habitat loss and climate change, this serial oppression has slowed their steely return.

But return they do. Although populations are patchy across the UK, those that do persist are strong in number, including here in Sussex, with around 65 breeding pairs now thought to be resident. If you see one, you're ever so lucky. But if you miss out, don't despair. Lean into the mystery, the stuff of film, and tales of the forest.

You might not have seen them. But they've probably seen you.

By Kerry Williams:
Communications Officer - Conservation
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Goshawk on nest © Paul Marten





THE SUSSEX GUILD
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Contemporary
CRAFT SHOW
The Henfield Hall
18th & 19th APRIL 2026
10am — 5pm

Ceramics
Furniture
Glass
Jewellery
Leather
Metalwork
Textiles
Wood



Admission: £4 Adults. Students and Children Free

The Henfield Hall, Coopers Way, Henfield, West Sussex BN5 9DB
www.thesussexguild.co.uk
Reg Charity no: 292234

Contemporary Craft Show at Henfield Hall on Saturday 18th & Sunday 19th April, 10:00 – 17:00

The Sussex Guild is delighted to be exhibiting again in Henfield Hall on 18th and 19th April. Members will be showing wonderful examples of handmade ceramics, furniture, glass, jewellery, knitwear, silversmithing, textiles and woodwork. Work will be on display throughout the main hall, foyer & garden suite.



Our makers look forward to meeting you to discuss their design inspirations and craft techniques.

You'll have the opportunity to buy or commission bespoke pieces.

A café serving delicious, homemade refreshments will be open throughout the weekend, and there is also seating in the garden. The Henfield Museum, with various collections of local interest is situated in this building.

Henfield is a large village community with sites of historic interest including The Cat House, old inns, restaurants, a 13th century church and an attractive common.

Admission: £4 at the door (card payments accepted), students & children free.

Website: https://thesussexguild.co.uk/sussex-guild-events/henfield-contemporary-show/

Images:
Metal – flowers by Sam Wilson
Ceramics – Storybowl by Anna Barrell



Take your seat!

This Spring Bramber Parish Council (BPC) continues to keep an eye on community wellbeing by ensuring its Walks for All pathways are both safe and accessible to all residents.



Its latest improvement has been the make-over of one of the riverside benches which had broken and become dangerously rusty. Thanks to resident feedback, BPC was able to take prompt action and remove, repair and replace the unsafe bench, making it the perfect place to rest and take in the tranquil view or for a spot of birdwatching. Similarly, a hazardous bent and rusty cycling sign has now been removed.

Bollards in danger

A distinctive feature of Bramber's historic thoroughfare, The Street, is its traditional style black and gold cast-iron bollards marking out the central chicane. Sadly, they are proving vulnerable to reversing and turning vehicles, and over the past couple of years BPC has had to replace several broken bollards. The Council is keen to retain the character of its traditional bollards though repeated replacements are proving costly. It would like to urge drivers to take particular care when turning in or driving through The Street from neighbouring villages.



Let's keep in touch

BPC meets once a month throughout the year at the Upper Beeding and Bramber Village Hall and members of the public are welcome to attend and speak about items on the agenda.

There is time set aside for residents' questions at the beginning of each meeting. Please do come along and get involved.

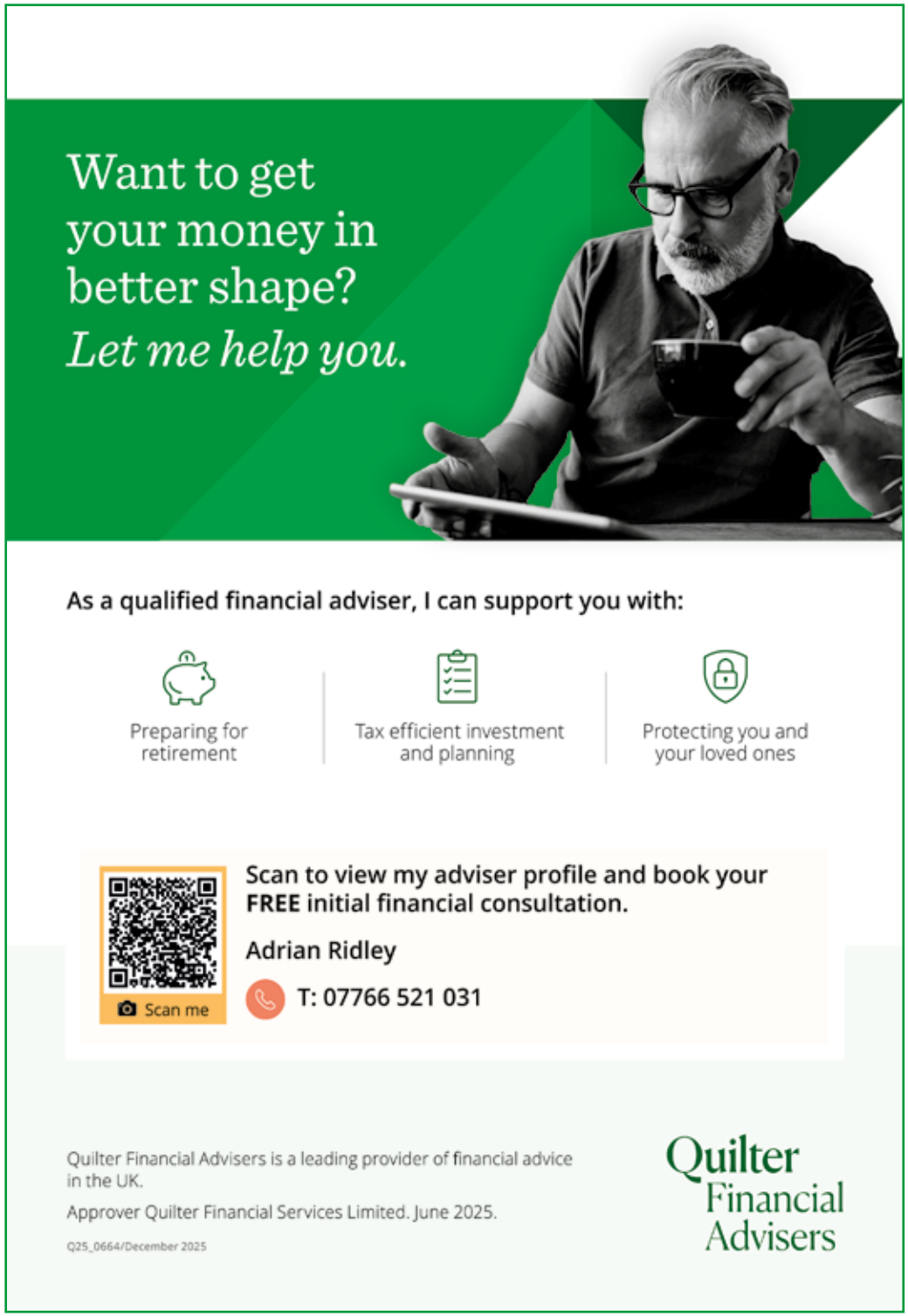
And on 6th May there will be an **Annual Parish Meeting** at which the Council will update residents on its work and achievements during the past year and look ahead to projects it is planning for the next twelve months.

It is the perfect opportunity for parishioners to come along, meet and put questions to their local Councillors.

This year's meeting schedule is available https://www.bramber.org.uk/council-details

To contact the BPC Office, email: clerk@bramber-pc.gov.uk

Tel: 07906 159754



Steyning In Bloom Open Gardens: Sunday 28th June 12:00 17:00

The Open Gardens is not only a fabulous afternoon spent looking, talking and being in lots of different local gardens, but is also our means of raising funds to plant and maintain tubs, planters and hanging baskets in the High Street.



Volunteers: - We need some additional help. We are looking for volunteers to support our existing team with planting in the High Street, this happens twice a year. We would also like help on the Open Gardens Day, serving teas and taking tickets.

Gardens: – We are always looking for new gardens to include in our Open Day, big, small, wild, formal, please get in touch for a chat.

Call Debra on 07969 311109 if you would like to be involved

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Contact Richard on 01273 284012; or richard.bates@cognitivelaw.co.uk

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Steyning Festival and Steyning Museum celebrate the rich history of Steyning High Street

22-31 MAY 2026 STEYNING FESTIVAL 20 YEARS

Plaques on High Street will create a new heritage trail

Where is the site of an *'old and drab house'* where 17th Century travellers could spend the night without being treated as vagrants? As long as they didn't go out after the lamp on the Chequer Inn sign was lit. Which High Street shop has a Green Man carved into a beam – said to represent spring and rebirth in medieval times? Find out by following the new High Street Heritage trail.

To mark the 20th anniversary of the Steyning Festival in 2026 and the 35 years since the Steyning Museum moved to its current location in Church Street, the two institutions are combining forces to sponsor a High Street heritage trail, in time for the 2026 Festival between 22nd - 31st May. This idea is based on the English Heritage programme of famous blue plaques that link people of the past with the buildings of the present.





The trail will consist of individually customized vinyl plaques placed in the windows of 20 contributing outlets in Steyning High Street, visible to visitors and passers-by. The plaques are being produced by Simon Warren of Here Before Us (www.herebeforeus.co.uk). A Folkestone - based historian, Simon has so far produced over 600 historical blue plaque window vinyls in shops and houses across the UK. The content for the Steyning plaques has been compiled by Museum researcher Lois Roemer from the impressive archives at Steyning Museum.

Lois says, *'The Museum is so pleased to be in a position to sponsor this trail in conjunction with the Steyning Festival. There is hardly a location in Steyning High Street that doesn't have a fascinating history, and this gives us an opportunity to represent parts of the town's vibrant historical heritage in a way that promotes not just the Museum and the Festival, but the trading folk of Steyning too.'*

A map to help you follow the trail can be found at the Museum. More information on the fascinating buildings and history of Steyning can also be found at the Museum, open Wednesday-Sunday from 10:00 to 16:00 as well as Bank Holidays; admission is free. **(www.steyningmuseum.org.uk/wp)**

Tickets for the 2026 Steyning Festival are now available from the website (https://www.steyningfestival.co.uk) or The Steyning Bookshop in the High Street

CW

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Sunday	CLOSED

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April 2026: Diary Events

The following nonrecurring events are also in the What's On section on the Your Steyning, Bramber & Beeding website at: www.yourmag.co.uk

Wednesday 1st April
Steyning Parish Church
09:00 – 17:00
Vicarage Lane, Steyning

Lego Easter Story Trail

Children and young people invited to join us share the Good News of Easter. For details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/. Gary 01903813276
E: families@steyningparishchurch

Wednesday 1st April
Community Film Night
19:30 - 22:00
Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

Screening: The Life of Chuck

The Life of Chuck is a heart-felt, thought-provoking drama that tells the story of Charles "Chuck" Krantz. For details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/ Centre office. Tessa Eckert 01903812042
E: tessa.eckert@steyningpc.gov.uk

Thursday 2nd April
Steyning Parish Church,
19:00 – 20:00
Vicarage Lane, Steyning

Maundy Thursday Service

Join us to mark Jesus' last supper with his disciples and the watch in the Garden of Gethsemane with this service of sung Holy Communion followed by a vigil. Parish Office 01903813276

Friday 3rd April
Steyning Parish Church
12:00 - 13:00
Vicarage Lane, Steyning

Good Friday Service

Liturgy of the cross with Holy Communion. Contact Parish Office 01903813276
E: office@steyningparishchurch.org.uk

Friday 3rd April
St Andrew and St Cuthman
19:30 – 20:30
Vicarage Lane, Steyning

Sacred Concert

The choir of St Andrew and St Cuthman, together with friends from the Chanctonbury Chorus and other guest singers, perform Gabriel Faure's Requiem. Parish Office 01903813276

Saturday 4th April
Greening Steyning
09:00 – 12:00
High Street Carpark, Steyning

Create a Buzz - Big Seed Give Away

Farmers Market in April, Greening Steyning's Biodiversity Action Group. For details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/. Greening Steyning.

Saturday 4th April
Steyning Museum
10:30 – 12:00
Penfold Hall, Church Street, Steyning

Spring Coffee Morning

Coffee morning in aid of Steyning Museum. Entrance £2 (includes fresh coffee and biscuits) Homemade Cake Stall and Raffle. Lois Roemer 01903 813333 contact@steyningmuseum.org.uk

Saturday 4th April
Steyning Downland Scheme
13:00 – 15:30
The Rifle Range, Steyning Downland Scheme, Off Mouse Lane, Steyning

Easter Egg Rollathon

Back for 2026 - a fun afternoon for all the family, with prizes for the best decorated eggs and the eggs that roll the furthest! For details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/ Steyning Downland Scheme 01903 817 996 office@steyningdownland.org

Saturday 4th April
Steyning Town FBC
15:00 – 17:00
Peter Humphreys Memorial, Shooting Field, Steyning
Steyning Town v Bexhill United

Come and enjoy an afternoon watching

Find your path to wellbeing at SAKALA

A calm, welcoming space in the heart of Steyning is home to a team of skilled therapists dedicated to supporting your mind, body, and spirit.

"Each month we are going to feature a therapist."

- ✓ **Counselling & Coaching:** Gentle, supportive sessions for adults, children, and young people.
- ✓ **Reflexology:** Relaxing, therapeutic treatments to relieve stress and restore balance.
- ✓ **Foot Health:** Professional care to keep your feet healthy, comfortable, and pain-free.
- ✓ **Ecotherapy & Women's Circles:** Connect with nature and community for healing and growth.
- ✓ **Cranial Therapy & Head Massage:** Gentle touch therapies to ease stress, tension, and anxiety.

Whether you're seeking emotional support, physical wellbeing, or a moment of calm, you'll find compassionate care at SAKALA.

50 High Street, Steyning. Opening Times: Monday - Saturday: 10:00 - 16:30
To connect with a therapist, call: 01903 879032

Jane Colthup Therapy



As a massage therapist with over twenty years experience, Jane has joined the Sakala wellbeing team and available for treatments every Saturday. Jane will tailor the treatment to your needs, whether you suffer from muscular pain ,headaches and tension related issues or simply to deeply relax and elevate your mood.

The first session will begin with a short ,empathetic discussion about your reasons for seeking massage therapy and any relevant medical history. I can then establish which essential oils would be most beneficial before beginning your massage therapy treatment.

Massage therapy has been used for thousands of years as part of the therapeutic Ayervedic medical system from India, aiming to stimulate the bodies own healing mechanisms, both physically and mentally. The focus is to restore balance when the body is out of sync whether through illness, stress or injury. One way a tailored massage treatment promotes natural healing and well being is by stimulating blood supply to tight or painful areas, so restoring function to muscles and surrounding tissues. With this comes improved movement and flexibility which is such a beneficial outcome.

Her aim is for you to leave your treatment with a deep sense of calm and relaxation because massage therapy is an ancient wonder which still works brilliantly today.

Please contact Jane if you would like to book a treatment.

janecolthuptherapy@gmail.com

SCFL Premier Division football. For details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/ E: secretary.stcfc@gmail.com

Saturday 4th April
Steyning Parish Church
20:00 – 21:00
Vicarage Lane, Steyning

Easter Eve Service

A simple and joyful service with blessing of the Easter Garden followed by fizz and refreshments. Parish Office 01903813276

Sunday 5th April
Steyning Parish Church
09:30 – 10:30
Vicarage Lane, Steyning

Easter Day Service

Joyful choral Eucharist of Easter morning with Easter hymns and anthems. Parish Office 01903813276

Sunday 5th April
Greening Steyning
13:00 – 16:00
Beeding, Bramber and Steyning

Give Your Stuff Away Day

Your junk could be someone else's treasure! Find out details on our GYSAD webpage; https://greeningsteyning.org/project/gysad/ - Greening Steyning

Sunday 5th April
St Botolphs
18:00 – 18:45
St Botolphs Church, Botolphs, Annington Road, Steyning

Clipping Service

Join us at St Botolphs Easter Sunday 5th April for the Clipping Service at 18:00. Sandra 07920015254 E: sandramidd63@me.com

Tuesday 7th April
Steyning Downlands Scheme
10:30 – 11:30
Memorial Playing Field Steyning

Messy Church Activity Walk

Run in partnership with the Steyning Downlands Scheme. For details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/ Gary 01903813276
E: families@steyningparishchurch.org

Wednesday 8th April
Steyning History Society
19:30 – 21:00
Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

Royal Pavilion Military Hospital

A presentation by Louise Peskett on in the First World War. Pat 01903 629353
E: steyninghistorysociety@btinternet.com

Thursday 9th April
St Andrews and Saint Cuthmans
09:30 – 11:30
Penfold Hall, Church Street, Steyning

Little Stars Bumps Babies & Toddler Group

For details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/ Two sessions of Little Stars! each week: Mondays 13:00 - 14:45 and Thursdays 9:30 - 11:30. **Forthcoming dates:** Mondays - 13, 20, 27 April
Thursdays - 9, 16, 23, 30 April
Note: Little Stars not meeting on 2nd or 6th April. Gary 01903813276
E: families@steyningparishchurch.org

Friday 10th April
Steyning Downland Scheme
12:30 – 15:30
SDS Gateway Building, Behind Mouse Cottage, Off Mouse Lane, Steyning

Seasons Bushcraft: Spring

Join us for seasonal woodcraft, exploring nature and campfire cooking! For details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/ Steyning Downland Scheme 01903 817 966
E: office@steyningdownland.org

Friday 10th April
Vintage Years Club
14:00 – 16:00
Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

Popular quiz

This meeting is on the 2nd Friday of April (not Good Friday). Doors open 13:45. Welcome back Paul Maidment to entertain us. For more details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/ Bev Francis-Hills 01273 493894 E: vintageyears2012@gmail.com

Friday 10th April
Good Grief Cafe

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14:00 – 16:00
Penfold Hall, Church Street, Steyning

Those who have experienced any sort of loss are welcome to join us for tea or coffee, biscuits and a listening ear on the second Friday of each month. Judie 01903813276 E: care@steyningparishchurch.org

Saturday 11th April
Greening Steyning
14:00 – 16:00
Bramber & Beeding Village Hall, High Street, Upper Beeding

Repair Cafe & Home Energy Helpdesk

Don't bin it - let us help you fix it! For details email Robin at repaircafe@greeningsteyning.org for advice or speak to one of our Helpdesk volunteers about how to save energy at home. Greening Steyning

Sunday 12th April
Greening Steyning
11:00 – 17:00
Upper Beeding, Steyning, BN44 3RZ

Eco Open House Day in Steyning & Beeding

This event showcases inspirational ideas and ways to save money. For more details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/ Pick up a brochure from Steyning Library or The Steyning Bookshop, or download a copy here; www.greeningsteyning.org/eoh Greening Steyning

Monday 13th April
The Arts Society Steyning
09:45 – 12:00
The Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

The Story of Turkey's Iznik Ceramics

This lecture introduces us to the rich history of Turkish ceramics in the 16th century. For more details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/ Stephanie 01903 815577 E: tass.publicity@gmail.com

Wednesday 15th April
Steyning Museum
16:15 – 18:00
Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

Teatime Talk - The story of the White Bridge

Talk starts 17:15 - Refreshments from 16:15.

For more details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/ Barbara 07984126221 E: bmoiraq@yahoo.co.uk

Wednesday 15th April
Steyning Gardening Club
19:30 – 21:00
Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

The Modern Kitchen Garden

Barry Newman, the renowned horticultural expert based in Sussex, will be sharing tips and insights. For more details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/ Alison E: steyninggardeningclub@gmail.com

Friday 17th April
The Steyning Society
19:00 – 21:00
Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

AGM and Bowl Awards

AGM and presentation of Steyning Bowl Awards. For more details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/ Julia 07876 231125 E: juliabonner@btinternet.com

Saturday 18th April
The Sussex Guild
10:00 – 17:00
The Henfield Hall, Coopers Way, Henfield

Contemporary Craft Show at Henfield Hall

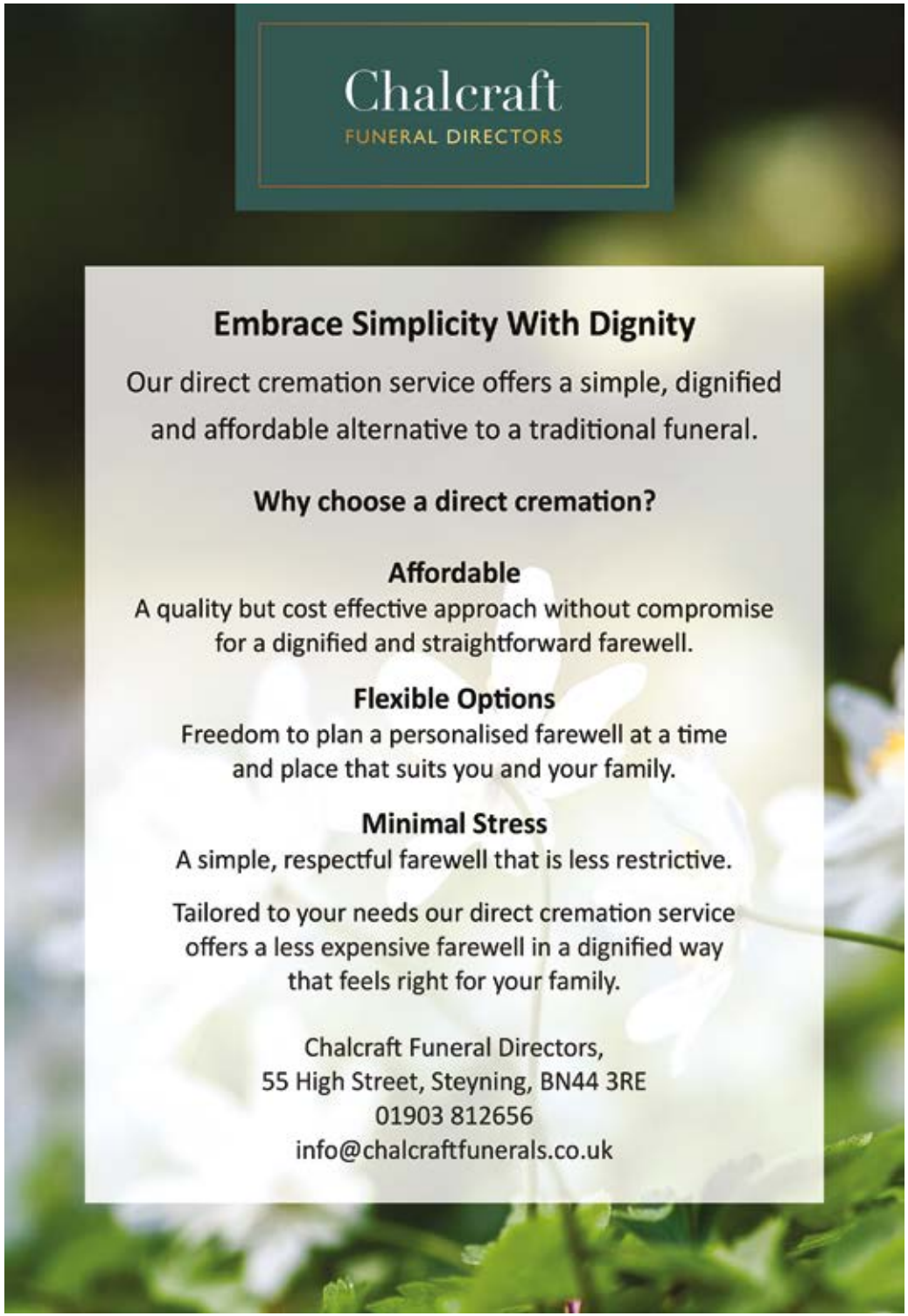
The Sussex Guild Show season starts at Henfield Hall. For more details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/Co Zoe 01273 479565 E: info@thesussexguild.co.uk

Saturday 18th April
Steyning Downland Scheme
10:00 – 11:45
Picnic Field,Community Orchard, Off Mouse Lane, Steyning

Reptile Walk (free)

An opportunity for a small group of young people aged 8-18 to join our reptile surveyors. For more details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/ Steyning Downland Scheme 01903 817 E: 996office@steyningdownland.org

Saturday 18th April
10:30 – 12:00
Penfold Hall, Church Street, Steyning



War and the Middle East Crisis

An information session about the war and the life of Christians in the Holy Land. For more details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/ Roger Williamson 01903 892989 E: rjlmwilliamson@gmail.com

Saturday 18th April
Conchord Big Band
20:00 – 22:30
Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

Dance Night

Returning by popular demand, the Conchord Big Band 17 piece dance orchestra and vocalists are back. For more details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/ John Forrester 07555 394076
E: conchordbigband@gmail.com

Sunday 19th April
Community Orchard,
13:00 – 16:00
Memorial Playing Field, Steyning

Family Picnic and Orchard Spring "Blossail"

Mythago Morris will visit us again for what they are calling a 'Bee Wassail'. (or 'Blossail' for short!). For more details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/
Roger 07795084546
E: browns.steyning@btinternet.com

Monday 20th April
Steyning Gardening Club
17:00 – 19:00
Daylands Farm, Honeybridge Lane, Ashurst West Sussex. BN44 3AW

Bluebells and Nightingales

We have arranged a return trip to the fascinating Daylands Farm. For more details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/ Alison
E: steyninggardeningclub@gmail.com

Saturday 25th April
Steyning Downland Scheme
07:00 – 09:00
SDS Gateway Building, behind Mouse Cottage, Off Mouse Lane, Steyning

Songs of the Dawn on the Steyning Downland Scheme

April and May are the peak months for bird song. For more details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/ Steyning Downland Scheme 01903 817 996
E: office@steyningdownland.org

Saturday 25th April
Climate Cafe
10:30 - 12:00
The Castle Inn, The Street, bramber

A regular event on the 4th Saturday of every month except December. For more details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/ Greening Steyning

Monday 27th April
Board Game Cafe
18:00 – 21:00
Penfold Hall, Church Street, Steyning

Evening Edition

Join us for a once a month night filled with board games, card games and endless laughter. For more details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/ sGary 01903813276
E: families@steyningparishchurch.org

Wednesday 29th April
Green Drinks
19:30 – 21:00
Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

Retrofit in the Community

Essential information from an expert in the field. For more details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/ Tickets are £5 (free for students) and can be bought here; www.ticketsource.co.uk/greening-steyning Greening Steyning



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Every	Friday	9.00a.m	Steyning village	£3
1st / 15th Apr	Wednesday	9.00am	Holmbush	£4
1st / 8th Apr	Wednesday	1.00pm	Horsham	£5
02-Apr	Thursday	9.00am	Henfield	£4
02-Apr	Thursday	1.00pm	Horsham	£5
03-Apr	Friday	1.00pm	Vintage Years	£3
06-Apr	Monday	1.00pm	Holmbush	£4
09-Apr	Thursday	9.00am	Holmbush	£4
13-Apr	Monday	1.00pm	Amberly : Riverside Tea Rooms	£5
15-Apr	Wednesday	1.00pm	Worthing	£4
16-Apr	Thursday	9.00am	Henfield	£4
16-Apr	Thursday	1.00pm	Holmbush	£4
21-Apr	Tuesday	1.00pm	Horsham	£5
22-Apr	Wednesday	1.00pm	Worthing	£4
23-Apr	Thursday	9.00am	Holmbush	£4
27-Apr	Monday*	12 noon	Pulborough Garden Centre	£5
29-Apr	Wednesday	9.00am	Holmbush	£4
30-Apr	Thursday	9.00am	Henfield	£4

* Annual Membership of £12, or, Day Membership of £1

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Create A Buzz!

GREENING STEYNING · BRAMBER · BEEDING

If you visit the Farmer's Market in Steyning or go along to the Repair Café at Beeding and Bramber Village Hall at the beginning of April, you will find Greening Steyning's Biodiversity Action Group (BAG) giving out packets of Sunflower seeds to take away and sow.



This is the beginning of a new project that we want everyone to join in. Imagine lots of sunflowers on display around our three villages and lots of bees feeding from them!

Our aim is to raise people's awareness of the importance of pollinators; like bees, butterflies, moths, wasps, and hoverflies, which pollinate the plants on which we rely; without whom many species of plants and animals would not be able to survive. And without them our supermarket trolleys would be very empty.

The problem is that pollinators are in serious trouble; their numbers are declining dramatically. Urban development and intensive farming have destroyed their habitats. The loss of flower rich meadows and pesticide use have taken their toll and now pollinators are facing climate change. They need space to survive; gardens full of flowers they can feed from, wildflower rich areas to live in, a pesticide free environment. They need our help and support.

'Create a Buzz' is focusing on bees, but all pollinators are important.

Come along to one of our stalls to find out more about pollinators, their decline, our reliance on them and suggestions about how we, can help to reverse this situation. We also want to encourage groups and organisations to become involved with the sunflower planting - schools, youth groups, children's nurseries, allotment holders, the parish councils.

Come along, grab a packet of Sunflower seeds, and find out how you can make a difference.
SOW A SUNFLOWER SEED
Befriend a bee - CREATE A BUZZ

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What to see on the Downland in April:

Steyning Downland Scheme

Brimstone Butterfly

Spot a bright *'butter lemon'* butterfly drifting along a Steyning hedge on a mild April day and it might be a Brimstone (Gonepteryx rhamni). According to folklore, this might be the species that inspired the word *'butterfly.'*



Brimstone Butterfly © Vicci Johnson

The Brimstone is one of our longest-lived butterflies: adults sit dormant in ivy or evergreen cover through winter and reappear in spring, so the same adult butterfly may be on the wing for close to a year.

Brimstone caterpillars eat only two native shrubs; purging buckthorn (Rhamnus cathartica) which is found across the South Downs), and Alder Buckthorn, a plant of damp, acidic ground and wet woodland. Adults, meanwhile, sip nectar from a variety of spring flowers, helped by a long "straw" that reaches deep into blooms.



Pepperscoombe Panorama

In the UK Brimstone is doing quite well, with a good increase in sightings (about 47%) since the mid 1970s. Mild winters and warmer, sunnier spring weather, combined with the widespread planting of its food plants probably account for this. To help Brimstone along you can plant buckthorn shrubs against your garden fence this spring, leave some ivy to grow in a corner somewhere, and watch out for cheery yellow butterfly in your garden next spring!



Hedge Laying © Matthew J Thomas

If you'd like to get closer to nature, we run a series of events for all ages, or why not join our Downland conservation volunteer team, helping to create nature friendly spaces. You can also become a Friend of SDS and get exclusive access to our lovely events.

See more here:
www.steyningdownland.org

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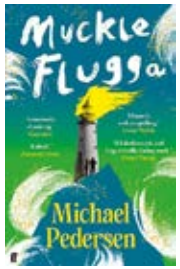
April 2026: Book Reviews

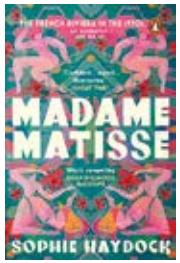
Adult Fiction



Muckleflugga by Michael Pederson
Faber paperback £9.99
Our bookseller Jim recommends this linguistically dazzling debut novel from Scottish poet Michael Pedersen. The rugged isle of Muckle Flugga at the remotest tip of Scotland is home to a lighthouse keeper, known as The Father, and his otherworldly teenage son, Ouse. When a chaotic writer from Edinburgh arrives to take up lodgings, the equilibrium is disturbed and a tug of war for the affections of Ouse ensues between the father and the lodger. As old and new ways collide, and life-changing decisions loom, what will the tides leave standing in their wake and how will this impact Ouse's future? **A playful, quirky, kaleidoscopic novel exploring themes of grief, joy and male friendship, imbued with folkloric, fairytale elements.**

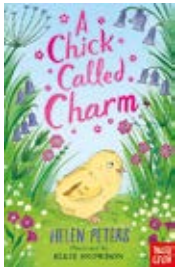


Seascraper by Benjamin Wood
Penguin paperback £9.99
Booksellers Gill and Gudrun both adored this poignant, poetic story set in the early 1960's in a Yorkshire coastal town. Thomas works his grandfather's trade as a shanker, rising at dawn to brave the treacherous tidal sands to scrape for shrimp with his horse and cart. He spends his afternoons selling his wares, housekeeping for his domineering mother, and rehearsing songs on his guitar - nurturing a secret dream of performing at the local folk club. When a charismatic American rolls into town, bringing Hollywood glamour, **Thomas is shaken from the drudgery of his days and glimpses the possibility of a different future. But how much of the American's story is true, and how far can his inspiration carry Thomas?**

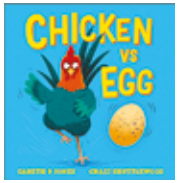


Madame Matisse by Sophie Haydock
Transworld paperback £9.99
Sophie Haydock's debut novel The Flames imagined the lives of the artist Egon Schiele's lovers and muses. Her new novel does the same for Matisse, and is a sun-soaked, paint-splashed story which sweeps you from Fin de Siecle Paris to the pre-War Riviera and the wartime resistance movement. Amelie is a headstrong young student when she meets Matisse, an enigmatic and talented young artist. Soon they are married, with a daughter, Marguerite, and 20 years later Amelie realises that she has sacrificed everything to support her husband's career. When Matisse introduces his new muse, Lydia, an ambitious Russian emigre, emotions run high and an ultimatum is issued which will change everything.
The novel cleverly interweaves the stories of Amelie, Lydia and Marguerite, three remarkable, resilient women, living through tumultuous times, and is a vivid, immersive read.

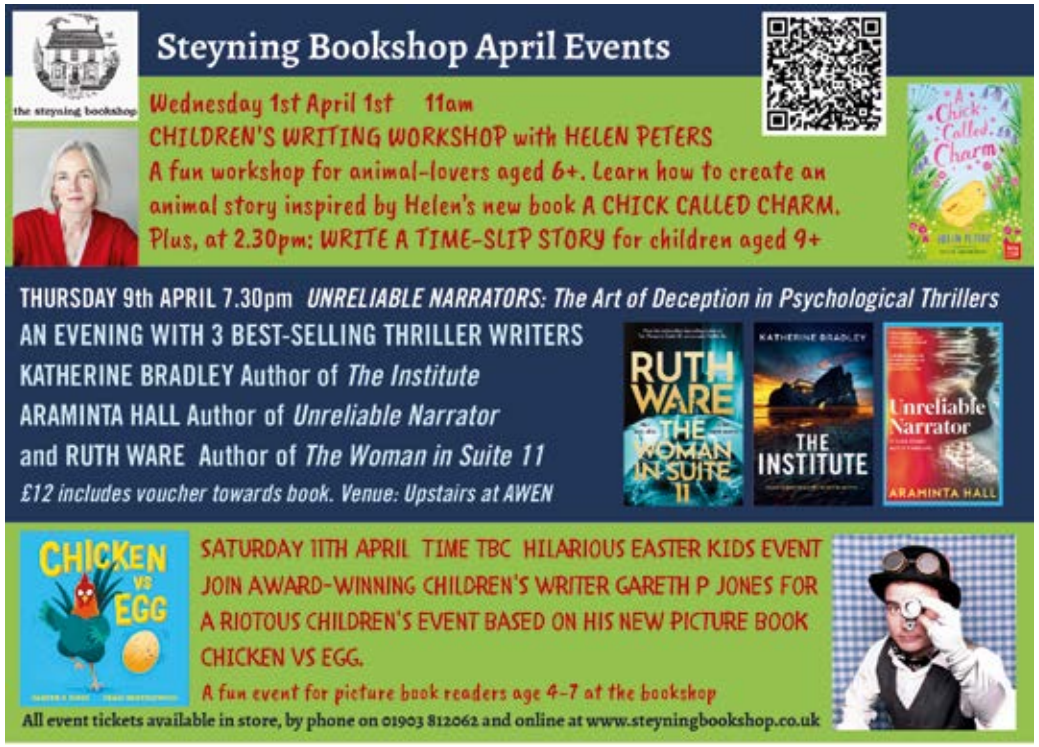
Children's Books



A Chick Called Charm by Helen Peters
Nosy Crow £7.99 paperback
We love the Jasmine Green series, they are well-written children's animal rescue stories which manage to be fresh, not formulaic, and this cute story is a perfect Easter gift for 6+ animal-loving readers!
After a farmyard accident, a little chick is abandoned by her mother and left for dead. Of course, Jasmine rescues the tiny bird and nurses her back to health, but Jasmine is distraught when once again, the chick is rejected by the other hens. An old cockerel takes the little chick under his wing, saving her from a buzzard attack and showing that friendship can be found in the most unlikely of places.
Helen Peters will be at the bookshop on Weds 1st April for 2 children's creative writing workshops.



Chicken vs Egg by Gareth P Jones
Andersen Pres £7.99 paperback
A hilarious Easter-y picture book which promises to answer the age-old philosophical question "Which came first, the chicken or the egg?"
Welcome to the ultimate showdown as the chicken and the egg line up at the starting blocks for a wacky race! Chicken has an obvious advantage, but Egg has a surprise up their sleeve, and then there's a pesky fox with his own agenda in the mix, too! It's anyone's guess who will cross the line first! A laugh-out-loud action-packed riot of a picture book!
Gareth P Jones will join us for a riotous children's event with story-telling, songs and more on Saturday 11th April at 11:00.





When Muscles Lock: Understanding Cramps and How to Help Them



A muscle cramp is that sudden, sharp 'locking' feeling when a muscle tightens up and will not relax. Underneath, it usually comes from over-excited nerves and overworked, tense muscles.

What is happening in a cramp?
Your nerves and muscles normally work in a smooth on–off pattern. Nerves send signals to tell the muscle to contract, and built-in sensors send messages back to keep things under control.

When you cramp:
• The nerves become overactive and fire too many "contract" signals.
• The muscle fibres are already tired, tight, or slightly short of oxygen.
• The muscle's chemistry (including salts like sodium, potassium, magnesium, and calcium) may be a bit out of balance.

Inside the muscle cell, a contraction happens when calcium is released and the tiny muscle proteins slide over each other. To relax, the body has to pull the calcium back into storage and let those proteins release, which costs energy. In a cramp, the nerve keeps shouting *'contract'*, calcium keeps flooding in, and the tired muscle does not have enough energy to switch off. The result is a hard, painful knot.

Why cramps often happen:
• Muscle fatigue or overuse (new or intense exercise, long days on your feet).
• Dehydration or sweating without replacing fluids and salts.
• Staying in one position for too long, leading to poor circulation.
• Muscles that are constantly tight or shortened because of posture or stiff joints.
• Underlying health issues, medications, or nerve irritation.

Why stretching often stops a cramp:
Stretching a cramped muscle does more than just *'pull it out'*:
• It activates the tendon's protective sensors, which send strong "switch off" messages back to the spinal cord.
• This increased inhibitory input helps calm the overactive motor neurons.
• As the contraction eases, blood flow improves, waste products clear more easily, and the muscle can restore its calcium and energy balance, allowing normal relaxation.

Role of electrolytes, circulation, and posture:
Cramps also have important *'supporting actors'*:
• Electrolytes (like sodium, potassium, magnesium, and calcium) help set the electrical stability of nerve and muscle membranes. When levels are off, nerves and muscles are easier to trigger and more likely to misfire.
• Poor circulation or compression of nerves and blood vessels (for example, sitting in one position too long, or pressure around the spine or limbs) can irritate nerves and reduce oxygen and nutrient delivery to the muscle. This makes both nerves and muscle fibres more irritable.
• Shortened, tight muscles and joints that do not move well change the resting length of the muscle. A muscle that is habitually shortened is closer to its *'cramping'* range and more prone to sudden, painful contraction, especially when stretched abruptly.

In practice, cramps often arise from several of these factors layered together: a tired, slightly dehydrated muscle, working around stiff joints and irritated nerves.

How chiropractic can help:
Chiropractic care does not replace your GP or hospital care where that is needed, but it can target some of the mechanical and nerve-related causes of cramps:
• Improving joint motion: Gentle adjustments to the spine and other joints can help muscles work through a healthier range, instead of living in a shortened, high-tension position.
• Easing nerve irritation: If joints or soft tissues are compressing or irritating nerves, this can make muscles more jumpy and prone to cramp. Improving alignment and movement may help calm this down.
• Supporting circulation and muscle balance: Hands-on treatment of tight muscles, plus specific stretches and exercises, can improve blood flow and reduce areas of overload.
•Practical advice: Your chiropractor can also advise on work set-up, sleep positions, hydration, and activity levels to reduce everyday triggers.

If you experience frequent or severe cramps, especially with weakness, numbness, or other health changes, you should speak to your GP to rule out underlying causes.
If you are struggling with cramps and suspect joints, or muscles might be part of the problem, you do not have to put up with it. You can book an assessment to find out what is driving your symptoms and discuss a tailored plan to help your muscles move more freely and comfortably.

If you have a specific question regarding any pain or problem areas, or would like to book a free 15-minute consultation for you or your family, please call Well Adjusted Health on 01903 892171.

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MARK JONES MCHIRO, DC

April 2026: Gardening Journal

Article by Alex Bell
T: 01903 815065
M: 07866 747849

April is when the garden truly comes back to life. On a sunny spring day, the fresh green growth, opening buds and hum of bees make it feel full of energy and promise. It's a busy month, perfect for planting and tackling garden jobs — weeds included! But don't get so caught up in the to-do list that you forget to pause and enjoy the blossom and new growth. For many gardeners, April is simply the best time of year.

Plant of the month: Ajuga Caitlins Giant

If you're after a groundcover that really earns its keep, Ajuga 'Caitlin's Giant' is hard to beat. A larger-leaved selection of Ajuga reptans, this cultivar has become a firm favourite in UK gardens thanks to its lush foliage and vibrant spring flowers. It was selected for its particularly big, glossy leaves and robust habit, and it has since gained the prestigious Royal Horticultural Society Award of Garden Merit — always a reassuring sign that a plant performs reliably in British conditions.

What makes 'Caitlin's Giant' stand out from other bugleweeds is scale. The leaves are noticeably larger, often flushed with bronze in spring, forming a dense, weed-suppressing carpet. Then in April and May, upright spikes of rich violet-blue flowers rise above the foliage. They're loved by bees and bring a welcome splash of colour just as the garden is hitting its stride.

In terms of growing conditions, this is a plant that's wonderfully unfussy. It prefers moist, well-drained soil and is especially happy in partial shade, making it ideal for those slightly tricky spots under trees or along the front of a shrub border. That said, it will cope with more sun provided the soil doesn't dry out completely. Like many low-growing perennials, it dislikes sitting in waterlogged ground over winter, so decent drainage is important. Once established, it spreads steadily by runners, knitting together into a handsome mat.

When it comes to planting partners, 'Caitlin's Giant' is incredibly versatile. It looks fantastic woven around the base of hostas, where the contrast between bold hosta leaves and ajuga's glossy carpet feels lush and layered. Ferns make another natural companion, especially in a woodland-style scheme.

For spring sparkle, try threading it between early bulbs — miniature daffodils or crocus will pop up through the foliage before the ajuga flowers take over. It also pairs beautifully with heucheras, whose colourful leaves echo and enhance the bronze tones. Relaxed, reliable and quietly dramatic, Ajuga 'Caitlin's Giant' is one of those plants that fills gaps, softens edges and makes the whole garden feel more cohesive — all with very little fuss.

Jobs to be done in April:
Ornamental Garden:

- Continue to remove faded flowers on spring bulbs but not the foliage until it has withered.
- Keep borders weed free.
- Mulch borders if not completed last month.
- If the weather is mild, then trim weak or straggly growth of sage and rosemary.
- Penstemons – Cutback last year's stems down to the new growth – if the weather is very cold and frosty delay until end of the month.
- Check evergreens for any frost damage – lightly prune if necessary.
- If not already done so start sowing and start mowing.

In the vegetable garden:

- Plant second-early and main crop potatoes.
- Pinch out the tips of broad beans if they're covered in aphids, or spray shoots with soap-based solution.
- Sow outdoor varieties of tomatoes, chillies and courgettes in pots, so they're ready to plant out in late May or June.
- Divide clumps of hardy herbs, such as lemon balm and chives, then replant in pots, borders or a dedicated herb bed
- Sow small batches of rocket and other easy salad leaves.
- Sow flowering companions in the vegetable plot, such as pot marigolds and borage.
- Continue planting batches of garlic, shallots and onions every few weeks to extend the cropping period.
- Sow herbs such as parsley, coriander, dill and chamomile in a sunny bed or container.
- Protect emerging seedlings from slugs and snails.
- Sow fast-growing crops, such as radishes, to make the most of any temporary gaps.









Article by: Rachael Rainbow - Steyning Museum.

Sussex's Secret Resistance

In the summer of 1940, as invasion seemed not just possible but likely, Britain prepared in ways few people realised. Alongside the Home Guard and coastal defences, a far more secret organisation was created: the Auxiliary Units. These were small groups of civilian volunteers, trained to stay behind if German forces occupied the country and to wage a ruthless campaign of sabotage from the shadows.

Recruited largely from farmers, gamekeepers and others in reserved occupations, they were men who knew every hedgerow, copse and farm track. They could move unseen across familiar ground. Sworn to secrecy under the Official Secrets Act, they told no one – not even their families – about their role. If activated, their expected survival time was just 12 to 14 days.

Here in our own area, units operated around Wiston and Small Dole. Their hidden underground Operational Bases, built by the Royal Engineers, were masterpieces of concealment. The Wiston Group's bunker lay about a mile north of Wiston House, disguised so effectively that a Canadian unit searching a square mile failed to find it. Its entrance was hidden as a weathered tree stump. Below ground was a 12-foot square chamber with bunks, supplies for two weeks, an escape tunnel and even a telephone outpost.

The men trained hard. Under the leadership of Colonel Colin Gubbins, and often at Coleshill House in Wiltshire, more than 3,500 recruits learned sabotage, silent movement, demolition and unarmed combat. Some, including Wiston farmer Lieutenant Harold 'Jack' Webley, received specialist training in Scotland. They had no uniform and no public status, but they were heavily armed and highly skilled.

Tottington Manor near Small Dole served as the Sussex headquarters from 1940 to 1944.



Former bunker at Wiston

Beneath it lay another underground hideout, complete with living quarters, explosives store and an escape tunnel. The manor itself was rigged with booby traps, while observation posts watched from the Downs.

The Wiston Patrol included local names that will still resonate: farmers, gamekeepers, a chauffeur, a draper, and John Scragg, then an assistant teacher at Steyning Grammar School and later its headmaster. They practised night raids and mock attacks, including one on Shoreham Airfield where, according to one account, seven planes were *'destroyed'* undetected. During an exercise at Wiston House, Jack Webley's wife - visiting with the Women's Institute - quietly cut the electricity to assist the raiders.

Their preparations were deadly serious. Oil drums filled with inflammable mixture were buried beside the Steyning road, ready to be detonated under enemy convoys. A forward store near a chalk pit by the River Adur held food, ammunition and explosives. In one alarming incident, two Steyning Grammar schoolboys discovered bottles concealed near Wiston Pond. Mistaking them for ginger beer, they smashed one – only to be met with flames. The bottles were phosphorus bombs, hidden and forgotten.

Alongside the fighting patrols was the Special Duties Branch, another secret civilian network. Its members – often clergy, teachers and shopkeepers – were trained to gather intelligence after invasion, acting as couriers, passing messages by ingenious means: hidden in everyday objects or disguised in plain sight. These eventually reached radio operators, often young women (nicknamed the *'Secret Sweeties')* who passed on the coded messages using concealed radios.

For decades, these stories remained untold. Many of the men and women involved carried their secret to the grave. Only with the release of official records and family recollections has their quiet courage come into focus.

This remarkable chapter of our local history forms part of the Museum's current **'Bunker' Exhibition,** exploring the secret structures beneath the surface of Steyning and the surrounding area. It runs until the end of April and offers a rare chance to discover what lay hidden in our fields and woodlands – and to reflect on the ordinary local people who stood ready to do extraordinary things.

Steyning Museum is free to visit and is open 10:00 - 16:00 Wednesday to Sunday.

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