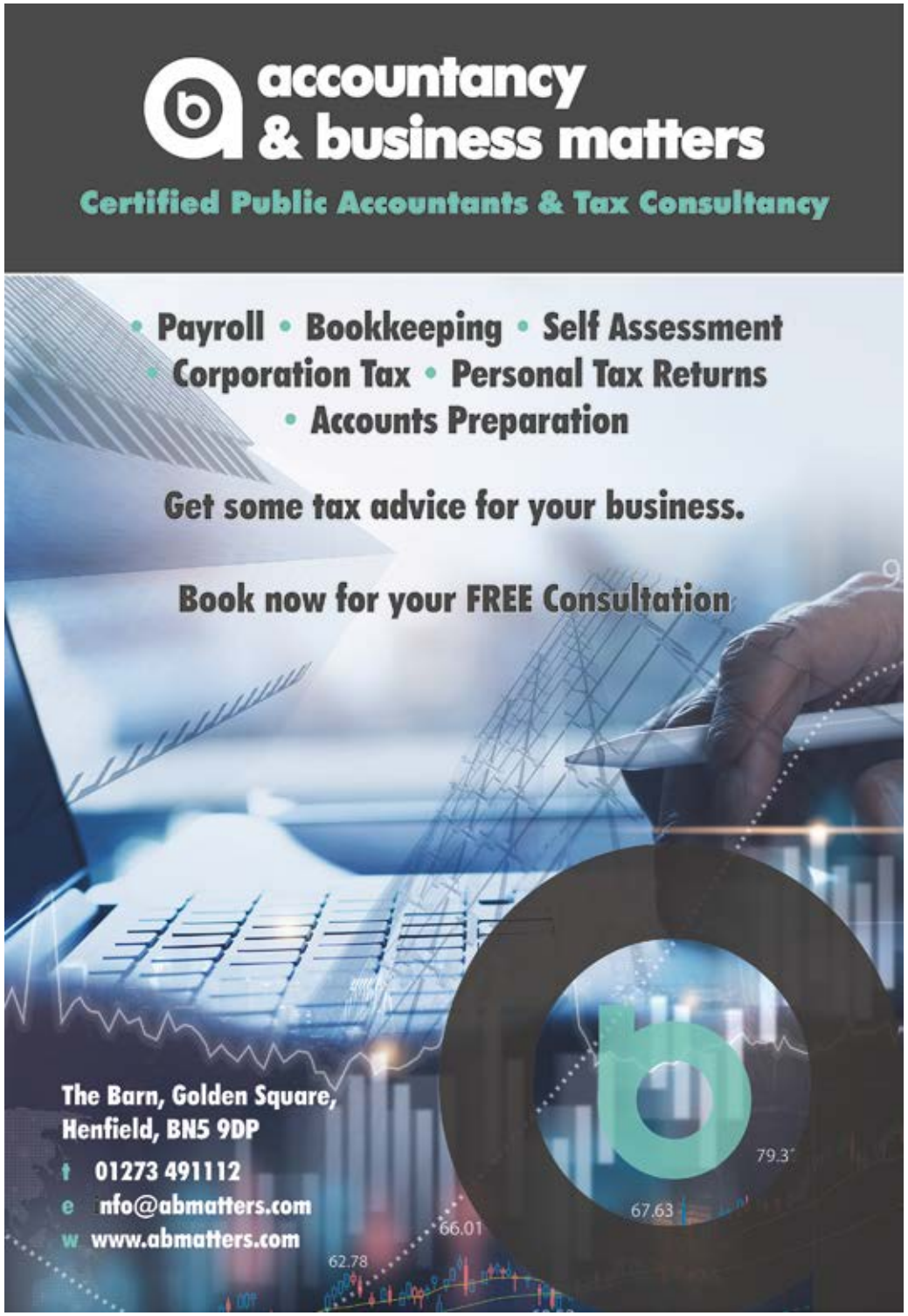
Your Mag

Steyning | Bramber | Upper Beeding

May 2026







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W: www.steyningpc.gov.uk
E: clerk@steyningpc.gov.uk

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Soundscapes of Hope: The Parish Church goes Wild!

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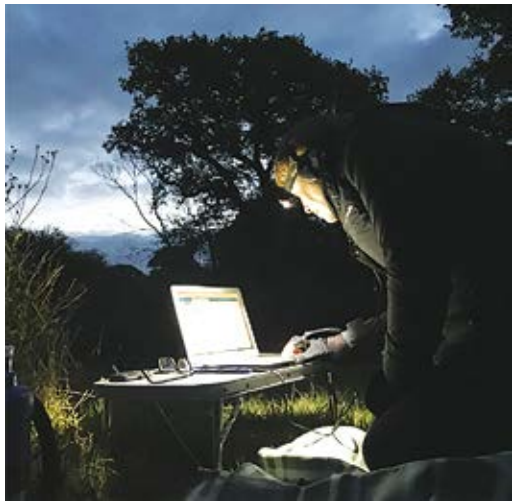
Among the many Steyning Festival highlights this year, here's a gem that nature lovers won't want to miss.

Step into the Parish Church and you will be magically transported into the heart of our countryside, on an effortless nature walk. Is that a nightingale I hear in the far corner? Can there really be turtledoves roosting in here? And what's that strange grunting noise coming from behind the big arch? Don't tell me some beavers have got loose.



Every morning during the main Festival week, Steyning Parish Church will undergo a transformation, choreographed by sound artist Hazel Reeves, using wildlife recordings, including from Wiston and Knepp Estates, played through speakers dotted around the church.

She is calling it *'Soundscapes of Hope'*, because the sounds you hear will be of nature returning to local habitats thanks to careful conservation and rewilding efforts. It will be calming, meditative and hopeful – an inspiring way to begin your Festival day!

This free event will be open from 09:00 to 12:30 most mornings from Monday to Saturday during the Festival - check the online programme for exact timings.

Special talk by Hazel Reeves:

To accompany the soundscape installation, Greening Steyning has invited Hazel to a talk at the church at 19:30 on Sunday 24th May. It's called *'Let Nature do the talking: Creating Soundscapes of Hope'*.

She'll be recounting the story of how, having been a well-known sculptor, during lockdown she began on a whole new creative adventure, recording the changing soundscape at the Knepp Estate as rewilding progresses there.

She will be sharing some of her favourite nature recordings and telling us the story of how she is now harnessing the sounds of nature to tell stories of hope. She will be chatting on-stage to Matt Phelps, Lead ecologist on the Knepp Estate about their favourite sounds of nature.

You can book tickets to Hazel's talk at: www.greeningsteyning.org/events

'Have your say' in a District-wide Community Governance Review

Horsham District Council is asking for your views on the boundaries and governance arrangements of parishes across the District.

A Community Governance Review provides an opportunity for residents and stakeholders to share their views on whether local parish arrangements continues to reflect the community identity, particularly where there has been population changes or local development.

Your involvement is crucial in shaping proposals for how your community is represented.

'HAVE YOUR SAY' from 9th May to 22nd June 2026 at: **www.horsham.gov.uk/consultations**

Paper copies of the survey are available at Horsham District Council, Albery House, Springfield Road, Horsham, RH12 2GB or by calling **01403 215100**.



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May 2026 Steyning Community Orchard:

Steyning Festival 'Children's Bug Hunt' – Wed 27th May, 2026 14:00-16:00. Downland Orchard on the Steyning Downland Scheme.

There is something about Bug Hunts, whether you are six or sixty years old.



You either love or hate the idea of grubbing around in the soil looking for slimy creatures or searching for insects which you can hear but not see in the long grass surrounding you, or chasing after butterflies as they flit from flower to flower never staying still long enough for you to identify them. As for moths; well, there are just so many of them and some of them are tiny.

If you love the idea of going on a Bug Hunt and enjoy that moment of anticipation as you get down on your knees beside a small person who equally wants to find something moving in the grass close by, then life is good as you share something special.



What makes children squeal with delight as they turn over a damp rotting log and see another world opening up in front of their eyes? Lurking in the layers of leaf mold and rich dark soil are woodlice, pill bugs, centipedes, millipedes, slimy creatures like slugs and snails and worms, some thin and branded, others fat and juicy! Maybe you have disturbed an ant's nest. Look carefully and you might see Springtails hopping around.

Turn the log back over and look around and you are surrounded by a world full of long grass and beetles, grasshoppers, and crickets. There are lady birds and their larva on trees. In hedges there are spiders, aphids, beetles galore, lacewings, midges, caterpillars and everywhere there are pollinators like bees, butterflies, wasps, hoverflies, and moths, essential for our survival because they fertilize the crops we live on.

We are surrounded by an amazing array of small creatures we share our space with but never really think about. Which is why we are inviting children of all ages, from four to seventy-four (yes Grandparents can come too!) to join us for an afternoon at the Downland Orchard which lies at the bottom of the Rifle Range for our 'Children's Bug Hunt'.

We have sweep nets to catch bugs, magnifying pots to put mini beasts in to look at carefully, trays to collect things on. You can beat a hedge and find out what falls out of it onto a special sheet so you can see it. Sitting in the willow dome you can watch spiders spin their webs, or you can walk up the Rifle Range to see beautiful butterflies feeding on the plants there and bees buzzing around. There will also be lots of Identification sheets to help you decide what you have found because we want you to help us make a record of what we find in the orchard. Serious scientific stuff but lots of fun.

The equipment we will be using is on loan from the 'Weald to Waves Project'. Lots of fun, lots of grubby knees. Come and join us.

This is a free event, but please book tickets on the Steyning Festival website, so we have an idea of numbers. steyningfestival.co.uk/2026-events

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The Sussex Kelp Recovery Story

Five years ago, the Sussex Kelp Recovery Project was born. The story starts with seaweed.

Kelp; a large brown seaweed, used to be plentiful off the Sussex coast. Imagine this forest of the deep, creating a habitat for marine wildlife. Black Sea Bream would dig and spawn in gravel nests. Blue Mussels would provide a grounding for the kelp to attach to, and engineer further resources for others, like Starfish and Plaice.

The chalk reef outcrops would writhe with life; scuttling Spider Crabs, swaying ethereal-looking Piddocks and the occasional fin-flap of an Undulate Ray. Seals would benefit from these supreme hunting grounds. From above, Gannets would spear the surface to take their fill of the abundant beneath-the-waves buffet. And so, safely and sustainably, could we.

In the 1980s things changed. Storms, marine heatwaves and poor water quality had a negative effect, and persistent damage has been caused by intensive trawling for commercial fishing. This indiscriminate practice decimated the biodiversity of the seabed. By the end of the century, 96% of Sussex kelp was lost, and with it, a whole ecosystem wiped out, in repeated, traumatic acts of destruction. All happening under the waves; beneath our noses, yet out of sight.

But some people did notice. Sussex IFCA formed a case for a Nearshore Trawling Byelaw, and production company Big Wave created Help our Kelp, a film narrated by Sir David Attenborough. Other organisations joined the fight, and a campaign of the same name was launched.

It worked. In March 2021, trawling was prohibited from 304 square kilometres of the Sussex coast. The byelaw is one of the largest in the UK. The collective became the Sussex Kelp Recovery Project; twelve organisations*, co-ordinated by Sussex Wildlife Trust, who have continued to monitor and advocate for the recovery of our seabed.

Benefits are underway; Black Sea Bream and Blue Mussels are on the increase. But nature takes time to recover. These five years have been focused on laying the groundwork to enable the steady return of these great forests and their inhabitants. Rewilding our ocean, piece by piece. With patience and collaboration, the story of our Sussex shores gets wilder each year. Although it started it all, really, kelp is just the beginning.

*Sussex Wildlife Trust, Blue Marine Foundation, Zoological Society of London, Queen Mary University of London, University of Brighton, Adur & Worthing Councils, Sussex Underwater, Big Wave Productions, Sussex IFCA, University of Exeter, University of Sussex





By Kerry Williams:
Communications Officer - Conservation
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Spiny Starfish on kelp & Black Sea Bream Paul Naylor.





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Upper Beeding Parish Council News



Local Government Reorganisation:
You may have come across reports that local government is being reorganised in Sussex. We are one part of a cohort of counties nationally currently under reorganisation. Similar processes have already been completed elsewhere.

The changes will abolish district councils and create larger authorities taking on the current roles of county and district councils. In the current proposals there are also new positions for mayors with overall control.

The plans do not mention parish councils. However there will be a Community Governance Review which has been planned for some time -The CGR has been scheduled as Government guidance is that it is best practice that a CGR is undertaken every 10-15 years and the last review concluded in 2013, therefore it has been 13 years since the conclusion of the last review. There are reasonable concerns that the new unitary authority would not have capacity to undertake such a review for a significant number of years following its creation.

Upper Beeding PC is very concerned about what might happen to our tier of government. In areas where the changes have been completed it looks like costs to parishes have increased. There are also concerns that people will find it harder to talk to councillors.

We have no current plans for public meetings on this matter but if you are interested, please contact the Parish Clerk. clerk@upperbeeding-pc.gov.uk

https://www.upperbeeding-pc.gov.uk/do-you-know-about-the-local-government-reorganisation-and-devolution-or-do-you-even-care/

https://www.horsham.gov.uk/devolution-and-lgr/local-government-reorganisation

Annual Parish Meeting:
Each year the Parish Council must hold a meeting where the residents are invited to attend and find out more about the work done by the Council.
This year the meeting will be held on May 20th at 19:00 at the Beeding and Bramber Village Hall main room.

There will be a number of guest speakers. The Local Government Reorganisation is one topic it is also hoped that there will be some update on the Grammar School and the work of the Council.

On the night there will also be copies of the annual Newsletter
https://www.upperbeeding-pc.gov.uk/calendar/annual-parish-meeting-4/
If your charity or group has a project that we may be able to fund, please contact the Parish Clerk. clerk@upperbeeding-pc.gov.uk



Councillor Vacancy:
There are four vacancies in the Council.
If you would like to be involved on the Council and help your community, please contact the Parish Clerk. clerk@upperbeeding-pc.gov.uk

Database:
The Parish Council is very keen to be able to communicate with the residents. Due to GDPR we cannot use any of our databases for anything other than for the reason they were set up and therefore we need to ask for your e-mail address if you wish to be contacted by the Parish Council enabling us to send you the details of any planning applications, annual newsletter and details of meetings etc.

Just click the link and add a short message stating that you would like to be added to the data base.
https://www.upperbeeding-pc.gov.uk/contact-us/
or contact the Clerk: clerk@upperbeeding-pc.gov.uk

Volunteers:
The Youth Service are looking for volunteers to help grow the service and the clubs. If you would like to be involved, please contact the Parish Council

https://www.upperbeeding-pc.gov.uk/community/

Speedwatch:
Upper Beeding now has its own Community Speedwatch Team. The Team is made up of 6 volunteers from the village of Upper Beeding, two of which are members of the Parish Council.

Speedwatch is a National Scheme aimed at educating motorists to drive within the speed limit, identify those who do not and encourage them to do so.

Our Team were trained by the Sussex Police Community Speedwatch Team earlier this year and have been actively running sessions since June 2025.

We currently have registered sites on the High Street UB, the Henfield Road and Pound Lane. If you think you have motorists not keeping to the speed limit near you let us know and we can consider registering new sites.

Our aim is to try and do a session once a week but at least one a month but we are weather dependent due to safety reasons.

So far since starting we have monitored 2503 vehicles of which 278 were driving over the speed limit (this is calculated as 24 MPH or above in a 20 MPH speed limit and 35 MPH or above in a 30 MPH speed limit). This indicates 11.1% speeding.

If you would like more information or join the Team, contact sean.teatum@upperbeeding-pc.gov.uk . Or log onto the Community Speedwatch website:
https://www.communityspeedwatch.org/FORMS-Groups.php



Riverside Walk:
The Parish Council and the Steyning and District Community Partnership have completed the project to resurface the stretch of footpath from Kings Barn in Steyning to Dawn Crescent in Upper Beeding.
The next stage would be the continuation of the pathway from Dawn Crescent through to the footbridge on the South Downs Way.

https://www.upperbeeding-pc.gov.uk/riverside-pathway-upgrade/

Play Areas:
The Parish Council has won a grant for the improvement to the play areas.
This will be added to the funds already raised through budgeting and with a further addition of some CIL Funds there should be enough money to make a difference to the current play areas.
Upper Beeding will have some new items, but also some of the older items will be removed and replaced with some more modern play items.

Litter Team:
The Village Bin Brigade carry out monthly litter picking duties for an hour to keep our Village tidy.
They will attend those areas not covered by the Parish Litter Warden and the Litter patrols.
Anybody interested should contact the Clerk clerk@upperbeeding-pc.gov.uk with your details and will pass them onto the team.

Volunteers for Gardening: Fancy helping to keep our village flower beds looking in tip top condition. The Beeding In Bloom team need more members, they have carried out a range of activities and events in the area but there is a need for more members to carry on the legacy just click the link complete the contact form and add a message stating that you wish to be involved in the Beeding In Bloom group.
https://www.upperbeeding-pc.gov.uk/contact-us/
or contact the Clerk clerk@upperbeeding-pc.gov.uk

Green / Climate Change:
Here possible the Parish Council will endeavour to reduce their carbon footprint where practical.

UBPC are part of HDC Climate Action Network and JPCAG and that we have a Climate Action Plan.
https://www.upperbeeding-pc.gov.uk/community/

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Running a business is hard enough without the headache of keeping your accounts in order. AG Bookkeeping Services is here to help - offering friendly, professional financial support to local sole traders, contractors and businesses across West Sussex.

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CALL TO ACTION: Give Annabel a call today - we'd love to help.
T: 01903 337974 E: annabel@agbookkeepingservices.co.uk
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Pop in and say hello! We're proud to be part of the Steyning community!
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44 High Street I Steyning I Telephone: 01903 879033
Opening Hours: Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm I Saturday 9am to 3pm I Sunday Closed.



Discover Storrington's Hidden Gem

Did you know there's a vibrant, welcoming tennis club right in the heart of Storrington? Established in 1938 and set in a stunning location just off Church Street, Storrington Tennis Club offers breathtaking views across to the south downs ridge, and an unbeatable place to play, socialise and unwind. Storrington Tennis Club is proud to be the leading tennis club in the area, providing high-quality tennis and social opportunities for players of all ages and abilities.

Why not come and give us a try. We have nine courts in total, 3 astro, 5 artificial clay, a mini court and seven are floodlit with the latest LED lighting. Booking couldn't be easier with our online booking court system and after your game, relax in our fully equipped clubhouse.

Whether you're picking up a racket for the first time, returning to the game, or looking for competitive match play, you will be assured a very warm welcome.

We have a strong junior section introducing children to the sport in a fun, supportive environment while developing skills, confidence and friendships.

The coaching team is led by LTA level 5 Master Club coach Nigel Matthews. Our performance coaching programme ranges from Mini tennis, (children aged 4 upwards), to juniors and adults of all levels. The programme also includes adult beginners, rusty rackets, improver groups, team coaching, along with one-to-one coaching.

Join us for our Open Day on Saturday 16th May - come and meet the team, hit some balls and try out our fantastic courts, and experience the club for yourself.

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Protecting and nurturing our natural environment - how you can make a difference

Horsham District Council

We are fortunate to live in a beautiful part of West Sussex, surrounded by the rolling South Downs and the High Weald, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. In Horsham District, we are lucky to have several partnership initiatives to protect biodiversity and our natural world, such as the Local Nature Recovery Strategy in West Sussex, Wilder Horsham District, Weald to Waves, and The Wildways Project.

Why biodiversity matters:

Biodiversity is the variety of life in our world, from plants and animals to fungi and microorganisms. Healthy habitats support a wide range of species, help to store carbon, and contribute to cleaner air and water. By improving our local habitats, we not only boost biodiversity but also help tackle climate change. Everyone can contribute to supporting a healthier environment and richer biodiversity. Whether you're planting wildflowers, joining a local group, or simply letting your garden grow wild, your actions matter.

Top tips to help support nature:

- Let your lawn grow: Join Plantlife's No Mow May Movement and let wildflowers like daisies, dandelions, and clovers flourish. This simple act isn't about never mowing – just finding the right time for it so that it can support bees, butterflies, and other pollinators.
- Plant native species: Choose plants that are native to Sussex to provide food and shelter for local wildlife.
- Create habitats: Build bug hotels and bird boxes, install a bird bath or pond, or leave a log pile in your garden to attract a variety of creatures.
- Reduce chemical use: Avoid pesticides and herbicides, which can harm beneficial insects and soil health.

Get involved in your local biodiversity groups:

Steyning:
Abbey Road Conservation Group
https://www.yourmag.co.uk/clubs-***AND***-groups/abbey-road-conservation-area-volunteers
Greening Steyning:
greeningsteyning.org/2030vision/biodiversity/
Steyning Community Orchard:
steyningcommunityorchard.org/
Steyning Downland Scheme:
steyningdownland.org/
Steyning for Trees:
steyningpc.gov.uk/community-services/steyning-for-trees/
Wilder Horsham District:
Working with the Sussex Wildlife Trust to provide landowner advice, and lead working parties for improving habitats. Funding available and volunteers welcome.
horsham.gov.uk/climate-and-environment/climate-action-across-the-district/wilder-horsham-district ***OR:***
sussexwildlifetrust.org.uk/wilderhorshamdistrict
Weald to Waves:
Register your garden on their Gardens and Greenspaces network to create vital stepping stones for wildlife.
wealdtowaves.co.uk/gardens-greenspaces/

NOTE: If you know of any other local groups not listed below, please let us know at climatechangeaction@horsham.gov.uk

Tuesday **26 May**

Art in the Park 11am to 4pm

Big Top and field, Steyning Centre

Don't miss this inspiring day for all ages and abilities. We've curated a fantastic selection of ticketed workshops and free events to get your creative juices flowing.

Kids will love meeting author **Chris Riddell** for some fantasy art fun. **Draw Brighton** will be on hand to help you get to grips with figure drawing. The café will keep you in drinks and cakes to fuel the imagination. And grown-ups can try their hand at a still life, as our Sip and Paint evening rounds off a truly expressive day.

All materials are provided for every event. Make sure you book ahead for the paid events – just turn up for the free ones. Things could get messy... so bring an apron/smock or wear old clothes! Under-11s must be accompanied by an adult.

Monday **25 May**

Festival Wellness

Throughout the festival we have a selection of wellness-boosting classes, talks and workshops. Whether you're a complete beginner or have some experience, come along and find out how to take good care of yourself. Our holistic programme is designed to calm your mind, treat your body to some mindful movement, and leave you with a greater sense of self-compassion. And if you like what you experience, all our practitioners can tell you about the services they offer in Steyning and beyond.

Eating & Drinking

Our new Bistro Bar and Café

Our festival bar and café is always a popular place to hang out, but this year it's had an upgrade! Set in a spacious and comfortable covered tent, the **Festival Bistro Bar and Café** will be bigger, better and tastier than ever.

Saturday **23 May**

Family Fun Day

22-31 MAY 2026

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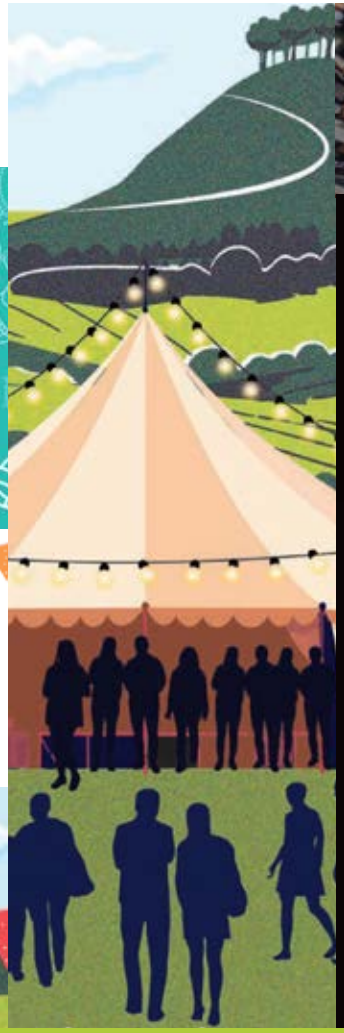

COMEDY

ROBIN INCE

A night of comedy, poetry and neurodiversity

8:30pm to 10:30pm, Big Top, £20

Robin Ince is a multi-award-winning comedian, author, broadcaster, bibliomaniac and populariser of scientific ideas. He is perhaps best known as the former co-host and co-creator of BBC Radio 4 series *The Infinite Monkey Cage*, with Professor Brian Cox. As a stand-up, he has toured the world and as an author he has written four acclaimed books. His new show mixes poetry and happy stories about the things that have made life delightful, from *Doctor Who* and horror movies, to the camaraderie of protest marches and his love of dishevelled cemeteries.

• **Humourous** • **Poetic** • **Quirky**

COMEDY

DEFYING CALAMITY

Matt Forde

7:30pm to 9:30pm, Big Top, £26.50

In his biggest live tour to date, leading political comedian **Matt Forde** finds positivity in life despite all evidence to the contrary – in politics and his own health. Matt's stellar credits include *Spitting Image*, *Have I Got News For You*, and he's co-host of the *British Scandal* podcast. *The Guardian* calls him, "A first class comic", while *The Telegraph* says he's, "The most topically incisive impersonator on the block".

• **Political** • **Satirical** • **Hilarious**





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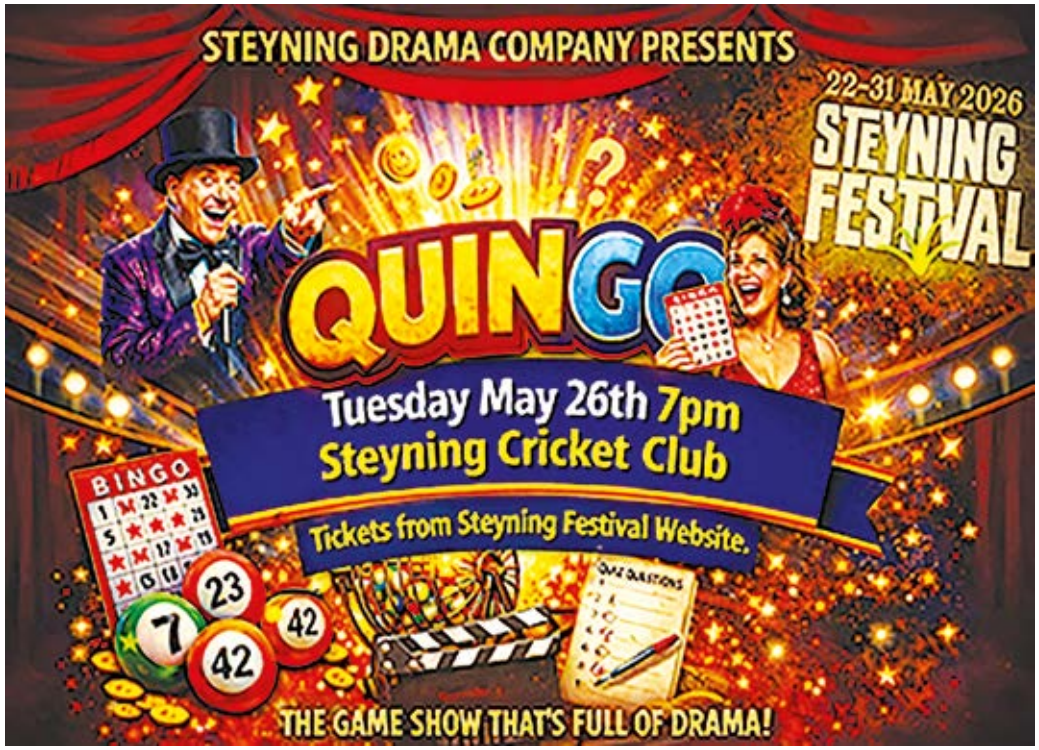

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Lucy - Upper Beeding

'I would highly recommend Tom. Two other decorators let us down and then Tom was recommended to us. His work is exceptional, he is polite, trustworthy and reasonably priced!
Becky - Steyning

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."

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- ✓ **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



Steyning Art Trail 2026

SteyningARTS
ART TRAILS : EVENTS : INSPIRATION

Steyning Art Trail 2026: 23rd, 24th, 25th May and 30th May and 31st May at 11:00 - 16:00 each day.

This year's trail is promising to be a fabulous day out. Come and explore beyond the streets of Medieval Steyning and visit some amazing venues which will be showcasing our talented Artists and Makers.

A short distance from the main streets, you will find Artists' own homes, studios, workshops and local businesses.

Showcasing work in ceramics, fine art, textiles, jewellery, furniture making, woodturning, photography and more. You will be able to meet the Artists as well as purchase unique pieces at affordable prices.

Two special additions to this year's trail will be the work of Steyning Grammar School Students, on display at the school, and the Artists from Making It Out, showing in the ancient barn they have carefully restored.

As in previous years there are refreshments available at some venues too. A perfect opportunity to spend time immersed in art with a cuppa and a slice of homemade cake.

Looking forward to a lovely Art Trail for visitors and artists alike.



What to see in May: Common Chiffchaff

Steyning Downland Scheme

Walk along Nightingale Lane and you're likely to hear a: *'chiff-chaff, chiff-chaff'*. That's the Common Chiffchaff, one of our earliest spring birdsongs.



ChiffChaff © SDS

Chiffchaffs winter in Iberia, but milder winters are seeing more stay in southern England all year round - with 1.2 million breeding territories - numbers have risen rapidly since 1970.

They like insect-rich cover, where small flies, aphids, caterpillars and spiders are pickable from leaves and twigs. You'll hear them chattering along woodland edges, willow and bramble scrub, thick hedgerows, damp copses and overgrown corners where they nest close to the ground.

Chiffchaffs love *'messy'* habitat management: varied hedgerows, light coppicing, wet ditches and a tolerance of bramble - all specialities of the Steyning Downland Scheme! Over-tidying, lots of spring cutting, and pesticides reduce nest sites and food. So if you're hoping to hear a *'chiff-chaff, chiff-chaff'* from your garden next spring, plant native shrubs, leave a wild patch, dig a pond, and skip insecticides, and wait!

Our Friends scheme plays an important role in caring for our unique downland reserve, and the rich wildlife it supports. From as little as £3 a month you'll be helping us to plan our conservation and educational work months ahead.

Friends enjoy exclusive events and this year our summer gathering is a tour of the gardens at Wiston House on Saturday 6th June. Join the Friends today to receive your invitation.

See more here:
www.steyningdownland.org/become-a-friend/
Follow us on socials:
@steyningdownland











May 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

Friday 1st May
Steyning Downland Scheme
07:00 - 09:00
SDS Gateway, behind Mouse Cottage, Mouse Lane, Steyning

Songs of the Dawn with al fresco breakfast! (Rifle Range)

April and May are the peak months for bird song, with the breeding season in full swing. Come for a short and gentle walk to find out what can be seen and heard at this important time of the year. Enjoy an al fresco breakfast at the end of your walk! Price: £14. Under 18s go free! Meeting Point: Contact: Matthew Thomas 01903 817996
E: office@steyningdownland.org

Friday 1st May
Vintage Years Club
14:00 - 16:00
Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

Bud Whiteman Singer/Guitarist

Doors open at 13.45. We welcome Bud Whiteman who will be entertaining us with songs both popular and country. Refreshments served from 15.15 We will celebrate May birthdays and draw the raffle. Entrance fee is £3 (£5 visitors). Annual membership fee is £10 (each April). Always contact Bev Francis-Hills before attending for the first time/returning after a long break, for transport needs or any other information. Contact: Bev 01273 493894 E: vintageyears2012@gmail.com

Saturday 2nd May
Steyning Methodist Church
10:00 - 16:00
18 High Street, Steyning

Flower Festival

Beautiful floral arrangements and displays of patchwork over the Bank Holiday weekend. Refreshments, cakes and lunches available.
NOTE: Open Sunday 3rd May from 12.30 - 16:.30 with refreshments and a Songs of Praise service at 15:00, followed by tea.
Open on Monday 4th May from 10:00 - 16:00p with refreshments, cakes and lunches available.
Contact: Liz Hall 01903815052 liz_hall@talktalk.net

Saturday 2nd May
Steyning Bowls Club
11:00 - 16:00
Memorial playing fields, Steyning

Open Day

Come and try bowls or petanque. You only need flat shoes or trainers as all equipment is provided. Free Taster sessions every Monday in May and June at 13:50. Contact: Mary 01273 887953

Sunday 3rd May
Steyning Vintage Revival 2026
11:00 – 04:00
Steyning High Street Car Park, Steyning

Steyning Vintage Revival 2026

Free access event. Sunday the 3rd of May 2026 running from 11:00 until 16:00. Look out for more on www.VisitSteyninh.co.uk Contact: Russell Barnes Steyninganddistrict@gmail.com

Wednesday 6th May
Wardens
09:30 – 11:00
Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

Wardens drop-in at Steyning Leisure Centre

Your Steyning, Bramber and Upper Beeding Neighbourhood Wardens are hosting a drop-in session at the Steyning Leisure Centre at 09:30-11:00 on 6th May. Please come and join us where we can answer any concerns you may have, E:G Anti Social Behaviour. We can also advise on any other issues that you may have. ContactAlison Page / John Sampson 07734387889 / 07734387888 E: sbub.wardens@horsham.gov.uk

Thursday 7th May
09:30 - 11:30
Penfold Hall, Church Street, Steyning

Little Stars Bumps Babies & Toddler Group

Toys, crafts, singing and lots more. Cake and coffee for parents, carers and grandparents. There are two sessions of Little Stars! each week: Mondays 13:00 - 14:45 and Thursdays 9:30 - 11:30. **Forthcoming dates:**
Mondays - 11th, 18th May
Thursdays - 7th, 14th, 21st, 28th May
Note: Little Stars! will not meet on 4th or 25th May.
Contact: Gary 01903813276
E: families@steyningparishchurch

Friday 8th May
Good Grief Cafe
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. Come to talk and share, or just listen. Contact: Judie 01903813276
E: care@steyningparishchurch.org

Friday 8th May
The Steyning Downland Scheme
20:30 – 22:00
SDS Gateway Building, behind Mouse Cottage, Off Mouse Lane, Steyning

Batwatching for Beginners

Back by popular demand, we have three Bat watching for Beginners sessions this year! Join professional ecologists, Lucy Cressey and Caitlin Laver as they explain the basics of bat monitoring. You can book for just one session, or all three. All bat monitoring equipment provided. Please note, this is an adult nature connection event but under 18s are welcome, when accompanied by a parent or guardian. https://steyningdownland.org/sdsevents/ - Contact: The SDS 01903 817 996
E: office@steyningdownland.org

Saturday 9th May
The Steyning Downland Scheme
07:00 – 09:00
Corner of Mill Road,, outside tennis courts, Steyning

Songs of the Dawn

April and May are the peak months for bird song, with the breeding season in full swing. The Steyning Downland, with its mixture of habitats, supports an excellent variety of bird life. So join us bright and early to see or hear about 25 species on the day. For details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/events. Al fresco breakfast included! https://steyningdownland.org/sdsevents/ Contact: SDS 01903 817 996
E: office@steyningdownland.org

Saturday 9th May
The Steyning Downland Scheme
10:00 - 11:15
SDS Gateway Building, behind Mouse Cottage, Off Mouse Lane, Steyning

Children's Pond Dipping

A fun activity for young people aged 7-12. See how many different water creatures and creepy crawlies they can collect and identify! We will examine our finds and then return the creatures to the pond. For details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/events https://steyningdownland.org/sdsevents/ - SDS 01903 817 996 E: office@steyningdownland.org

Saturday 9th May
Greening Steyning
14:00 - 16:00
Beeding & Bramber Village Hall, High Street, Upper Beeding

Repair Cafe & Home Energy Helpdesk

Don't bin it - let us help you fix it! Bring along your items to repair, and anything you'd like sharpened. If you aren't sure whether we can help please E: Robin at repaircafe@greeningsteyning.org for advice. You can also speak to one of our Helpdesk volunteers about how to save energy at home. Contact: Greening Steyning

Monday 11th May
The Arts Society Steyning
09:45 – 12:00
Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

The Medici: Bankrolling The Renaissance

The Medici were a ruthless and ambitious banking dynasty, driven by profit and power, whilst ridden with vicious family conflict. This lecture looks at how their patronage enabled some of history's greatest art including Botticelli's Birth of Venus, Fra Angelico's frescoes, Donatello's David and Michelangelo's Medici chapel sculptures. Our lecturer is Douglas Skeggs, an expert and entertaining speaker about paintings and accredited by The Arts Society. Contact: Steph 01903 815577 E: tass.publicity@gmail.com

Monday 11th May
Steyning Gardening Club
19:30 – 21:00
Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

All About Acers

We are excited to host Miles Hayward from 'Miles Japanese Maples' in Storrington, who will share his knowledge and expertise on the amazing and varied Acer. With over 50 different cultivars, as Miles says 'you can always find a spot in the garden for just one more. Contact: Alison Hamer E: steyninggardeningclub@gmail.com

Tuesday 12th May
Board game Café
15:15 – 17:15
The Penfold Hall, 35 Church Street, Steyning

Board game Café
Come along on the 2nd Tuesday of each month to play some board games at the Penfold Hall. It is free to come along, we have lots of games to play or feel free to bring one along. Free drinks and snacks. All ages are welcome. Please contact the Neighbourhood Wardens or the Children's and

Families Worker for the Parish Church for more details. Contact: Alison Page / John Sampson 07734387889 / 07734387888 sbub.wardens@horsham.gov.uk

Wednesday 13th May
Steyning History Society
19:30 - 21:00
Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

Legacy of Empire

A short AGM followed by a presentation on a Legacy of Empire by Peter Crowhurst. Contact: Pat 01903 629353
E: steyninghistorysociety@btinter

Saturday 16th May
Steyning Gardening Club
10:00 – 12:00
Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

Plant Sale

Calling all Steyning gardeners! Planning your garden for next year? Take a few extra cuttings or sow a few extra seeds (perennials, biennials or annuals) and support our 2026 Plant Sale! Got spare seedlings next spring? Drop them off at a Gardening Club meeting or contact a committee member – we'll even collect! All funds support future club talks & activities. Contact: Gina at steyninggardeningclub@gmail.com

Saturday 16th May
'Christian Aid'
10:00 – 12:00
Penfold Hall, Church Street, Steyning

Coffee Morning

Entrance fee £5 to include a hot drink (or other soft drink) and a piece of cake. Raffle tickets, Plants and Hand crafted cards will also be on sale, so please bring plenty of cash. Hosted by Steyning and District Churches Together. Elizabeth Brown 01903813276 office@steyningparishchurch.org

Sunday 17th May
Arun Choral Society
19:00 – 21:45
Arundel Cathedral, London Road, Arundel

Mendelssohn's Elijah

Elijah is one of the greatest oratorios ever written, telling the dramatic story of the Old Testament prophet through powerful choruses, moving arias, and thrilling dramatic moments. From the opening proclamation of drought to the spectacular contest on Mount Carmel, this is music of extraordinary emotional range and power. Join us for an unforgettable evening of choral music as Arun Choral Society brings this masterpiece to life with professional soloists and orchestra. Contact: Richard Cooper.

Tuesday 19th May
Steyning Patient Participation Group
02:00 – 04:00
Steyning centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

Falls Prevention Advice

Steyning Patient Participation Group have invited the Worthing Falls Prevention Team to speak to us. Join us to learn from them the simple things which help us reduce the chance of falling either in our own homes, or when we are out and about, and what to do in the event of a fall. The team will be there to offer practical advice and answer any questions. Refreshments will be available for a donation. Lesley Humber Lvhumber@sky.com

Thursday 21st May
Upper Beeding
16:00 – 20:00
Churchside Cafe, Church Lane, Upper Beeding. West Sussex

Board Game Cafe

The Steyning, Bramber and Upper Beeding Neighbourhood Wardens and 3Bs Church invite you to our joint Board Games Cafe with the held at the Churchside Cafe, Church Lane, Upper Beeding, BN44 3ND The games start between 16:00-20:00 and will be running on the 3rd Thursday of the month. Games are provided or you can bring your own favourite game with you. All ages welcome! Please contact the Neighbourhood Wardens or the Churchside Cafe more details (office@3bschurch.org.uk). Contact Alison Page / John Sampson 07734387889 / 07734387888
E: sbub.wardens@horsham.gov.uk

Friday 22nd May
Steyning Festival 2026
10:00 – 22:00
Steyning Festival Big Top, Fletcher's Croft, Steyning, West Sussex

Steyning Festival

It's here! The 2026 Steyning Festival takes place between 22nd and 31st May in the Big Top at our Fletchers Croft site, as well as a host of smaller venues around Steyning and beyond. Tickets are on sale now for Festival Friends. They will be on sale for the general public on March 14th 2026 at 09:00. If you aren't yet a festival friend and want to get get early access to tickets please head to the Friends page and sign up to be a friend. The programme features a broad range of acts and

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performances from the worlds of comedy, theatre, literature and the visual arts, plus walks and tours, Downland, arts and science days and much more besides. There's plenty for all the family too. We have a popular bar, café and local street food outlets, plus happy hour music most days. We pride ourselves on being one of the largest - if not THE largest - festival in the UK run entirely by volunteers, with a small band of trustees overseeing the Festival as a whole. As always, we depend on our amazing volunteers who make everything work before, during and after the festival. It's never too early to sign up, so please head to the Volunteers page for more information. Contact Melanie E: melanie@barawood.co.uk

The National Garden Scheme
10:00 – 16:30
Wineham Lane, Wineham, Henfield, BN5 9AW.

Grovelands Wineham

Opens Sat 23, Sun 24 May (10-4.30). Adm £8, chd free. Tea, coffee & cake. A South Downs view welcomes you to this rural garden set in over an acre in the hamlet of Wineham. Created and developed by local landscape designer Sue McLaughlin and the owners, it is designed to delight throughout the seasons. Features include mixed borders, mature shrubs and orchard. A vegetable garden with a greenhouse and a pond hides behind a tall, clipped hornbeam hedge. Occasionally garden openings need to be cancelled please always check on the NGS website ngs.org.uk

Saturday 23rd May
Greening Steyning
10:30 – 12:00
The Castle Inn, The Street, Bramber

Climate Cafe

A regular event on the 4th Saturday of every month except December, the Climate Cafe at the Castle offers a warm and inclusive space, to share friendship and mutual support for those holding questions and worries about the climate crisis and how it will affect us all. Whether you are feeling helpless and fearful about the future, or feeling positive and motivated to bring about change – you are not alone. So why not join us at 10:30 for a chat over coffee. Contact: Greening Steyning

Saturday 23rd May
Steyning Arts
11:00 - 04:00
The Museum, Church Street, Steyning

Art Trail 2025

Steyning Arts Artists and Makers would like to welcome you to our 2026 Steyning Arts Art Trail. With Paintings, Ceramics, Jewellery, Wood and resin turning, photography, textile art, leather work and much more to explore in 18 venues, it really is a great day out. Come say hi, and have a chat, many venues will be offering refreshments and it is a great opportunity to buy direct from the Artist/maker. We look forward to welcoming you. Contact: Pip steyningarts@gmail.com

Saturday 23rd May
Greening Steyning
10:30 – 12:00
The Castle Inn, The Street, Bramber

Climate Cafe

A regular event on the 4th Saturday of every month except December, the Climate Cafe at the Castle offers a warm and inclusive space, to share friendship and mutual support for those holding questions and worries about the climate crisis and how it will affect us all. Whether you are feeling helpless and fearful about the future, or feeling positive and motivated to bring about change – you are not alone. So why not join us at 10:30 for a chat over coffee. Contact: Greening Steyning

Sunday 24th May
Greening Steyning
19:30 – 21:00
Steyning Parish Church, Vicarage Lane, Steyning

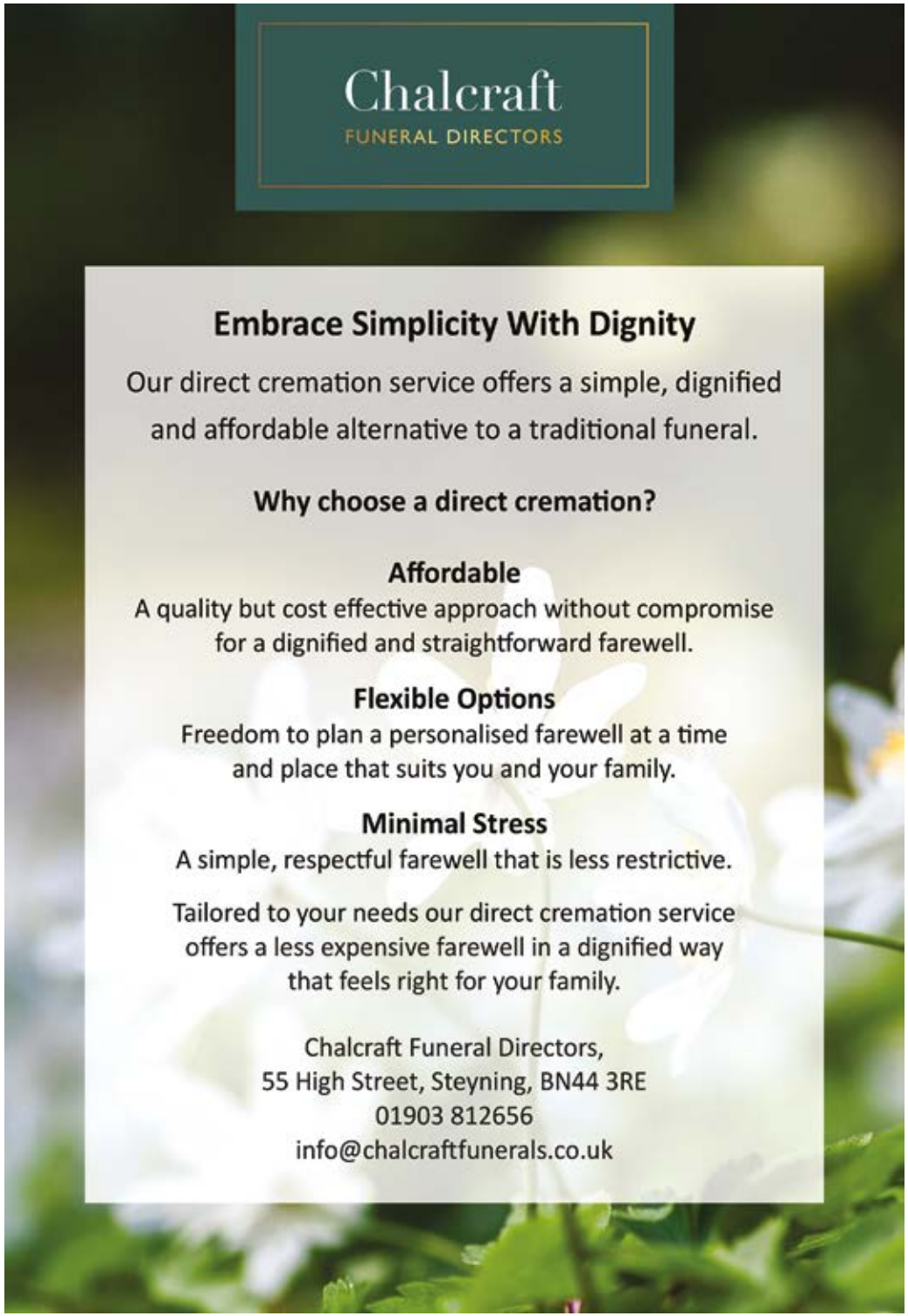
Soundscapes of Hope: The Parish Church goes Wild

To accompany the soundscape installation, 'Soundscapes of Hope', which is taking place at Steyning Parish Church during the Festival, Greening Steyning has invited the artist Hazel Reeves to a talk at the church. She'll be recounting the story of how, having been a well-known sculptor, she began on a new creative adventure, recording the changing soundscape at the Knepp Estate as rewilding progresses there. She will be chatting on-stage to Matt Phelps, Lead ecologist on the Knepp Estate about their favourite sounds of nature. You can book tickets to Hazel's talk at: www.greeningsteyning.org/events
Contact: Greening Steyning

Wednesday 27th May
Steyning Festival event
14:00 - 16:00
Meet at Steyning Downland Orchard, along the track behind Mouse Cottage, off Mouse Lane towards the Rifle Range

Children's Bug Hunt

Bring your children for a free afternoon's bug hunt to discover and identify the bugs, butterflies



and other insects that we can find around the Downland Orchard and surrounding fields. We are borrowing a BioBox from The Knepp Wilding Foundation, full of equipment to help you catch and collect the bugs. Experts will be on hand to help identify your finds. Suitable for ages 4+. Children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. This is a Steyning Festival event. Please book a free ticket through their website so that we know how many to expect. Steyningfestival.co.uk
Contact: Roger Brown 07795084546
E: steyningorchard@gmail.com

Wednesday 27th May
Steyning & District Flower Club
19:30 – 21:30
Steyning Centre, Fletchers Croft, Steyning

'Floral Cocktails'

This month's demonstration will be giving us a 'taste' of summer when we welcome Sue Tausig, who is an enthusiastic and experienced florist and tutor, for an inspirational evening. Do come along and join us for this fun and informative occasion. Refreshments are provided and there is always the chance to win one of Sue's beautiful creations in the evening raffle. Members are free and non-members £7.00 on the door. Contact: Valerie Hodges 07870 982699 val.hodges@yahoo.co.uk

Saturday 30th May
Steyning Downland Scheme
07:00 – 09:00
SDS Gateway Builing, behind Mouse Cottage, Off Mouse Lane, Steyning

Songs of the Dawn

April and May are the peak months for bird song, with the breeding season in full swing. The Steyning Downland Scheme, with its mixture of habitats, supports an excellent variety of bird life. For details visit our website: https://www.yourmag.co.uk/events Al fresco breakfast included! https://steyningdownland.org/sdsevents/
Contact: SDS 01903 817 996
E: office@steyningdownland.org

Saturday 6th June
Chanctonbury Chorus Concert
19:30 – 21:45
St Andrew and St Cuthman, Parish Church, Steyning, West Sussex

'Together We Sing!'

Saturday 6th June in St Andrew and St Cuthman, Steyning at 19:30 Chanctonbury Chorus perform their first concert under inspirational new conductor, Liz Kirkland, featuring music from Academy Award winner, Rachel Portman, Gabriel Faure, Morten Lauridsen and others. More details on www.chanctonburychorus.org
Contact: Nigel Hartley.







May 2026: Steyning for Trees: Support the Festival



WINNER CPRE Sussex Countryside Awards 2020

Steyning for Trees are so glad to be supporting this great COMMUNITY EVENT in our lovely town where we are all so fortunate to live. We have organised some interesting talks reflecting the best of environmental influencers and our own wonderful group of people with a bit, or sometimes, a lot of land who are doing so much for biodiversity and nature here.

We appreciate very much their contribution and hard work along with our community volunteers with all getting their spades in the ground, not just talking about and gives credit where credit is due, as they have been doing this for 7 years now.

An amazing 11,000 tree saplings, 24 hedges planted by SFT community volunteers, on land provided by these landowners'. Come and support them and the Festival on our TEA AND TREE TOUR 30th May. Buy your leaflet guide, this is also your ticket, via the Festival website, or from the The Steyning Bookshop. Visit to see these lovely hidden gems, hosting wildlife.

Take your binoculars and cameras. Talk to the enthusiastic owners who are doing so much for nature here. Afterwards relax in Mouse Cottage's wilded garden, the thatched house in Mouse Lane, or at the Bowls Club for Tea and Cake. You will be helping to directly support biodiversity. A hedge/ wildlife corridor does so much and it will be here for life not just a season, feeding, and sheltering our precious wildlife and nature.

Enormous thanks to MAYO, WYNNE, BAXTER the family Solicitors, for printing our leaflets. They support so many causes throughout Sussex including Crawley Football Club, home of Brighton and Hove Seagulls, WOMEN.



'SFT invited Dame EJ Milner-Gulland, Prof. of Biodiversity at Oxford Univ., and former pupil of SGS, to give a talk on Saturday 23rd May at Penfold Hall on How Local People Should Have Their Say.'

Rev, PETER OWEN-JONES, who writes in Sussex Life, is here on Tuesday evening 26th May at the Penfold Hall. He will be screening his wonderful film made on the South Downs National Park for the BBC and answering questions. This beautiful film shows so many places, we all know and love, on our doorstep. He talks to people we all know and work with. What a treat.

The Economist's Article, Saving the Planet, one Hedge at a Time. Thanks to all who have noted this full page praise of hedges/wildlife corridors that. all heard about 7 years ago from SFT.

Stop Birds Injuring Themselves on Large Windows. Buy black images of raptors to stick on large expanses of windows. This deters birds from flying into them. We wish we had done this a few years back, returning home to find an injured sparrowhawk. It had flown into our conservatory window. We took it to the vet, it had a broken leg and had to be put down.

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Have you visited the Pavilion Restaurant at Singing Hills?

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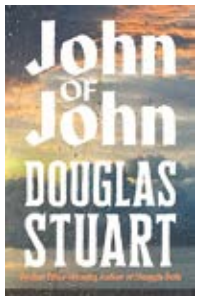
May 2026: Book Reviews

Adult Fiction



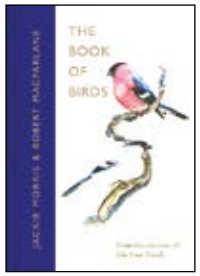
JOHN OF JOHN by Douglas Stuart

Macmillan Books
hardback £20

A profound, tender portrait of a father and son, and the struggles of life in a remote, religious island community.

John-Calum MacLeod (Cal) is a long-haired, gay 22-year-old, fresh out of art school with high hopes but no money and no job. When his father summons him back to the family croft on the Isle of Harris, ostensibly because his grandmother Ella is ailing, it feels like a step backwards. Back to being trapped between his dour, Calvinist father – a Harris Tweed weaver and sheep farmer, and his feisty Glaswegian grandmother Ella. As the seasons pass, family tensions fray as Cal struggles to reconcile his hopes and his (hidden) sexuality with the realities and hardships of life in this conservative, fervently Presbyterian community, while his father deals with his own secrets.

The evocative, lush descriptions of the bleak landscape and its humble, dilapidated crofts are earthed by authentic – frequently funny - dialogue, and vivid, vulnerable characters.



The Book of Birds by Robert Macfarlane and Jackie Morris

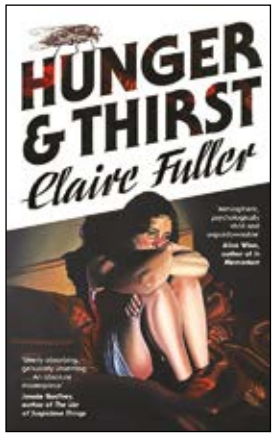
Hamish Hamilton £35
hardback

This gorgeous new book by the author/illustrator team behind the bestselling phenomenon the Lost Words is a hymn to the wonders and mysteries of birdlife, and a clarion call to halt the loss of birds from land, sea and sky.

The Book of Birds is a beautifully illustrated compendium of forty-nine bird species, from Avocet to Yellowhammer, all of which are declining or endangered in Britain. Every page is brought to vivid life with Jackie Morris's dreamy artwork, painted in watercolour and gold with an extraordinary attention to detail.

Each bird's habits and habitats are playfully and lyrically evoked — their patterns of flight and song, how they hunt, feed, and nest, the stories and myths that weave around them, and the threats which shadow them. It's a field guide with a difference, which does not merely help identify the bird, but rather helps the reader identify WITH the bird!

A treasure of a book which will please bird lovers of all ages, and is sure to become an instant classic.



Hunger and Thirst by Claire Fuller

Penguin Fig Tree
£18.99 hardback

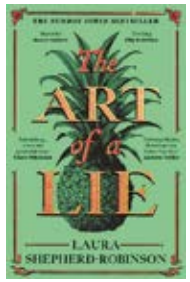
Claire Fuller is a literary novelist who consistently surprises and confounds expectations, and this – her sixth novel – sees her jump sideways into a full-on haunted house horror story, which is intense, eerie and unsettling. I LOVED it!

The story switches between two timelines: the present, in which Uschi, a reclusive fifty-something sculptor, is pestered by a documentary film-maker digging for dirt on the mysterious disappearance of a teenager in 1987, and Uschi's recollections of that year. 1987: Ursula, a troubled, artistic 16-year-old, has spent most of her life shuffling between foster homes but has her first taste of adult freedom when she gets a job at the local art school and is invited by her new friends Sue and Vince to join them squatting The Underwood, an abandoned house with a tragic backstory. But the heady summer of sex, spliffs, speed and cider slowly begins to morph into something more disturbing as Sue, an aspiring horror-movie director, pushes the boundaries and something malignant begins to stir....

As Uschi confronts the demons of that terrible summer, is her past catching up with her? A compelling, chilling story which jumps off the page and lodges in your subconscious!

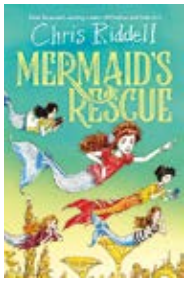


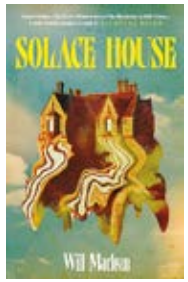




Summer on the way?

Beat the heat and relax in the shade with a book!





Chiropractic Awareness Week 26: A Gentle Reminder to Look After You



Chiropractic Awareness Week 26 is a lovely opportunity to pause and think about how much our bodies do for us every day. At Well Adjusted Health, we see so many people who are simply trying to get through busy lives while dealing with aches, stiffness, tension, or discomfort that has slowly crept in over time.

It is easy to ignore those little niggles at first. A sore back after work, a stiff neck in the morning, headaches that keep returning, or feeling tight and restricted when you move. But when these problems start affecting your day-to-day life, it can make everything feel harder than it should. That is where chiropractic care can help.

Chiropractic is not just about treating pain. It is about understanding how your body moves, what might be contributing to the problem, and how to help you feel better in a way that suits your life. For some people, that means getting relief from discomfort. For others, it is about moving more freely, improving positioning, or simply feeling more comfortable and confident in their body again.

At Well Adjusted Health, we believe care should always feel personal. Everyone is different, and every body has its own story. That is why treatment is tailored to you, your symptoms, your lifestyle, and your goals. Whether you are a busy parent, someone spending long hours at a desk, or just feeling worn down by everyday strain, the aim is to help you feel more at ease and supported.

We also believe there is real value in prevention. Looking after your spine, staying mobile, and addressing issues early can help prevent bigger problems later on. Sometimes small changes can make a big difference, especially when they are combined with the right care and advice.

So if you have been putting up with discomfort for a while, Chiropractic Awareness Week is a good reminder that you do not have to just live with it.

Taking that first step can be the start of feeling better, moving more easily, and getting back to doing the things you enjoy.

At Well Adjusted Health, we are here to help you feel looked after, listened to, and supported every step of the way.

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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May 2026: Gardening Journal

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

Signs of spring are still all around in May, with trees still in blossom and fresh green leaves untouched by the summer sun. It's a beautiful time to enjoy the garden, but don't get too complacent. Chilly days - and even a late frost or two - can still appear. Hold off on planting out tender seedlings until they've been properly hardened off. Giving them time to acclimatise will reward you with stronger growth and more abundant flowers than if they were left to face the open garden too soon.

Plant of the Month – Wisteria

Few plants capture the imagination quite like Wisteria. With its cascading racemes of fragrant flowers, it's an iconic climber that instantly adds drama and charm to any garden. Blooming in late spring, the flowers range from pale lilac to deep violet, and the heady scent alone is enough to draw you outdoors. Though it's often associated with large pergolas and walls, there are varieties suitable for smaller gardens too, making it a versatile choice for all types of outdoor spaces.

Wisteria thrives in a sunny position. Full sun encourages the best flower production, while a lightly sheltered spot protects the delicate blooms from harsh winds. The plant prefers fertile, well-drained soil. It's tolerant of most soil types, from clay to loam, provided there's good drainage. Regular watering during the first few years is crucial to establish strong roots, after which the plant is remarkably drought hardy. A balanced fertiliser in early spring can help maintain vigorous growth, but avoid high-nitrogen feeds as these encourage leaf growth over flowers.

When it comes to planting, consider the structure you want Wisteria to climb. Arbours, pergolas, walls, and trellises all work beautifully, and its twisting stems add architectural interest even when not in bloom. Wisteria pairs wonderfully with a wide range of companion plants. Low-growing perennials such as Geranium, Hosta, or Nepeta provide a soft, contrasting base beneath the bold climber. Spring bulbs like daffodils and tulips can also complement its early floral display, creating layered interest in both colour and seasonality.

For smaller gardens, compact species or cultivars are ideal. Wisteria floribunda 'Blue Moon', a Japanese variety, is slow-growing and manageable, while Wisteria sinensis 'Amethyst Falls' offers a spectacular floral display without sprawling too widely. These smaller forms can be trained up a stout post, a narrow pergola, or even as a feature in a container garden, making them perfect for patios or courtyards.

With patience and proper pruning, Wisteria can be both manageable and breathtaking. It's a plant that rewards care with stunning, fragrant blooms and architectural foliage, and when combined thoughtfully with suitable companions, it can elevate any garden - large or small - into a space of true springtime enchantment.

Jobs to be doing this month include:
Ornamental Garden:

- This month is a fast period of growth. Late frosts may catch early blooms and soft growth – remove any damaged growth.
- Spray roses with rose clear or similar.
- Weed
- Continue to remove spent flowers of spring bulbs but not the foliage until it has withered and yellowed.
- Chelsea-chop time – If the Nepeta and Sedums are looking leggy then cutback by a third to encourage compact growth that will not collapse later in the season. This can be applied to the lavender, echinops, Echinacea, aster, helenium and salvia too if felt necessary.
- Trim Rosemary, Thyme and Sage if not done in April.
- Cutback withered daffodil or tulip stems once they have turned yellow.
- Trim grass edges of borders regularly to keep neat and tidy.
- Prune spring flowering clematis
- Stake and support herbaceous perennials if necessary
- If daffs gave a poor show lift and divide bulbs and replant.
- Continue deadheading spring bulbs.
- Start hardening off tender plants for planting out.

Vegetable Garden:

- Harvest Asparagus
- Direct sow french beans and sweet corn if weather is warm enough
- Start earthing up potatoes
- Harvest early crops such as radish / lettuce etc.
- Refrain from planting tomatoes too early as they suffer if exposed to temperatures below 12 degrees.
- Sow pumpkins, cucumbers, courgettes, squashes under cover now and outdoors towards the end of the month.







Article by: Rachael Rainbow - Steyning Museum.

May 2026: An Ancient Crossing Reconnected

The footbridge known as the White Bridge crosses the River Adur near Kings Barn Lane, marking a crossing point that has been used for many centuries. It is thought that from the early medieval period, a route ran here linking Steyning and Upper Beeding, allowing people, animals and goods to move between settlements on either side of the river.

When Bramber was founded by the Normans in the 11th century, a new causeway and bridge shifted long-distance traffic further south. Even so, this quieter crossing continued to play an important role in local journeys. By the 18th and early 19th centuries, records refer to a *'New Bridge'* at this site, built in 1724 and possibly replacing earlier wooden structures.



Old timber bridge believed to be the *'New Bridge'*, 1902

Stories, Legends and River Life:
This stretch of river has a long history of different crossing points. Historic maps show that a wagon ford once existed further upstream, allowing carts to cross when water levels were low. There are also suggestions that a small ferry may have operated in medieval times between Kings Barn and St Peter's in Upper Beeding.

The River Adur itself was once a busy working river. Bargemen and traders used it to move goods between inland settlements and the coast, while local tales hint at quieter, less official activity, including smuggling. St Peter's Church in Upper Beeding had connections with the people who lived and worked along the river's edge.

The origin of the name *'White Bridge'* remains uncertain. The metal bridge installed in 1903 was not white, but it may once have been painted to make it more visible to bargemen. Another possibility is that the name relates to nearby landowners. A local legend even tells of a mysterious white lady seen in the area.

The Bridge in Living Memory:
The bridge installed in 1903 served the community for well over a century. For many residents, it was a familiar and well-used route, linking neighbouring villages on foot. Over time, however, the effects of weather and water caused significant deterioration.



New White Bridge being craned in place October 2025

In 2023, a structural report identified severe internal corrosion and advised that the bridge should be closed to pedestrians. Its sudden loss highlighted how important this modest crossing had become in everyday life.

A Project with Challenges:
Plans to improve walking routes between Steyning, Bramber and Upper Beeding were already underway when the bridge's condition became clear. The closure brought progress to a halt and required a rethink of the project. What had seemed close to completion became a more complex task, involving redesign, new funding and careful coordination.

Despite these challenges, work moved forward. On 2nd October 2025, local residents gathered to watch as the replacement bridge was carefully craned into place - a moment that marked the return of this important link across the river.

The White Bridge Link Today:
Today, the White Bridge Link provides a safer and more accessible route between Steyning, Bramber and Upper Beeding. Although these communities lie close together, walking between them was not always straightforward, particularly in winter. The improved route makes short local journeys easier and more reliable.

A key focus has been school travel. The route offers a quieter, traffic-free option for pupils, families and staff moving between campuses, reducing reliance on cars and encouraging healthier habits. It has been designed to accommodate mobility scooters and prams, ensuring it can be used by as many people as possible. While cycling is not currently permitted, West Sussex County Council is in discussion with local landowners about potential future access.

The story of the White Bridge is one of continuity and adaptation. While the structure itself has changed over time, the importance of this crossing point has remained constant. Those interested in learning more about the area's past, and the stories behind places like this, are warmly invited to visit Steyning Museum.

We currently have a display about recent changes to the White Bridge and to Bramber Brooks. From June we will be displaying a more in-depth exhibition about the River Adur and its importance to our local area.

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





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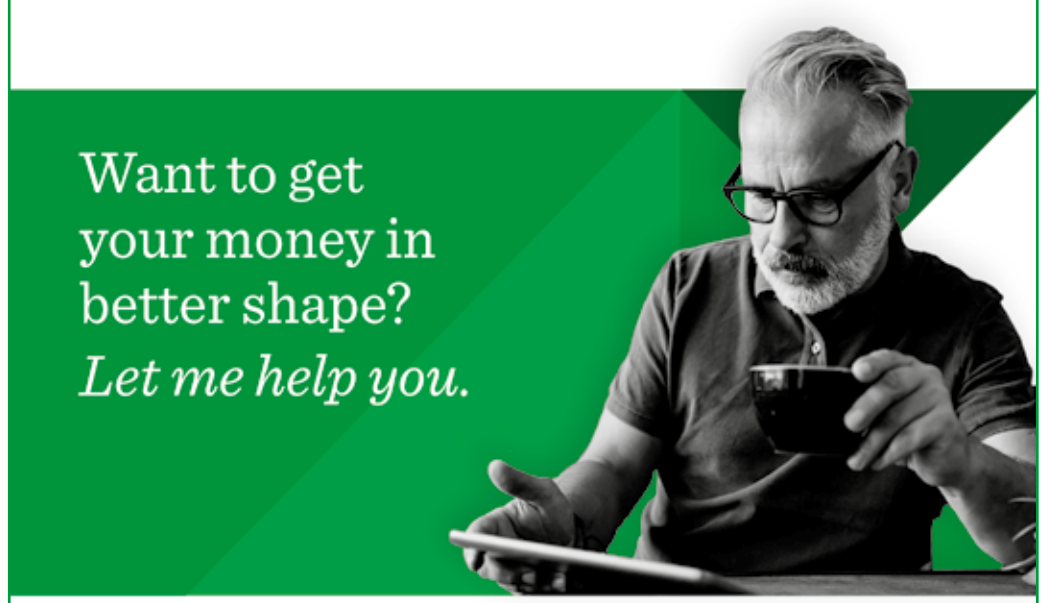

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