

Bexhill News

JUNE 2023 | ISSUE 12

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EDITOR'S WELCOME



MOST cities and towns in the United Kingdom have a dark underbelly, whether it be vandalism, violence, theft, drugs or, in some instances, racism.

Bexhill has largely survived with its reputation intact. Most of us who live here rub along just fine even if we don't necessarily agree with each other's opinions.

However, the graffiti attack on the sculpture of a black woman on the lawns behind the De La Warr Pavilion is both horrifying and difficult to comprehend.

Why on earth would anyone with a modicum of decency daub white paint on a sculpture of a black woman? Sadly, only the perpetrators, who should be thoroughly ashamed of themselves, can answer that one and of course they will remain in the shadows rather than identify themselves.

Fortunately, there is a plus side in the aftermath of this ghastly act of vandalism as hundreds of Bexhill residents rallied round for a day of action to remove the paint from the sculpture.

There is little doubt that it was an act of racism rather than wanton vandalism and it was hugely encouraging to see the number of local politicians turn up to support the clean-up regardless of which party they belong to.

All were absolutely outraged by the vandalism which has achieved precisely nothing. It is not often that politicians from different parties agree with each other but on this occasion, they were absolutely unanimous in their condemnation and quite right too.

The De La Warr has shown great commitment to the arts and they deserve plenty of praise for that. It helps to brighten up our town and the various installations should be welcomed because they are created for everyone to enjoy regardless of subject matter.

However, although there is no conclusive proof that the vandalism was primarily racist, it is pretty clear that it was.

Outrageous acts such as the attack on the sculpture brings our town into disrepute even when committed by a minority. One can only hope such disgraceful behaviour will never be repeated in Bexhill.

Kim Mayo, Editor

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BUSINESSMAN MAY STAND AS AN INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE IN GENERAL ELECTION

BY KIM MAYO

A LOCAL businessman has confirmed he is contemplating running as an independent candidate in next year's General Election as the debate over the choice of the former Northeye Prison site in Little Common being selected to house asylum seekers continues unabated.

Jeff Newnham, a farrier who has lived in Bexhill for more than 30 years, has also recently launched a legal challenge against the Government's decision to place asylum seekers at the proposed facility at Northeye.

Mr Newnham said he is still weighing up whether to stand against Huw Merriman, the Conservative MP for Bexhill and Battle in the General Election.

He said: "As far as I am concerned, Mr Merriman has been conspicuous by his absence since the Government announced its plans to place asylum seekers in Bexhill.

"He needs to stand up and be counted and face up to those who oppose it. I want to stress that I am not some 'Little Englander' who is opposed to immigration per se. There is good reason why asylum seekers view this country as a safe sanctuary, especially when they come from war-torn countries such as Syria and Sudan.

"But the concerns of local residents have to be taken into account too, especially when it has been reported that up to 1,200 young single men could be placed in Northeye.

"Also one imagines being housed in a former prison will not be the sort of place they would have envisaged before setting out on perilous journeys.

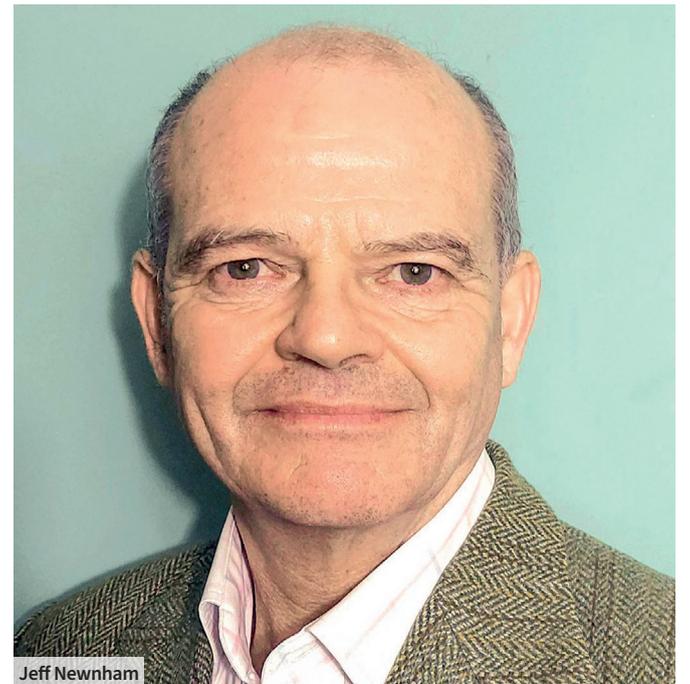
"Therefore, it is crucial that Mr Merriman takes those concerns into account. Thus far, he has not attended any of the meetings which have been held which really isn't good enough.

"The bottom line is the site is totally unsuitable and not fit for purpose. The residents of Little Common don't want it with it being so close to a residential area and in addition there are serious concerns over the potential presence of asbestos and the pollution of rivers and streams nearby. Everyone's welfare needs to be taken into account.

"Bear in mind that in 2018 a report by Rother District Council recommended that the site be levelled but here we are five years later and the Government presses ahead with this plan which is totally unsuited to our town.

"Even many of those who support genuine asylum seekers are outraged at the prospect of them being housed in former prison, especially as it can take up to 18 months for their applications to be processed."

Mr Newnham reiterated that he will not be rushed into a decision over whether to



Jeff Newnham

stand against Mr Merriman or any other candidates who may come forward in the interim.

He added: "If I do stand it will be as an independent candidate with no political affiliation. But as it stands I am just a concerned resident living in a town I absolutely love.

"People who live here are welcoming and it is therefore quite rightly seen as an attractive seaside resort with plenty to offer both residents and visitors.

"But now many are feeling disenfranchised and abandoned, to be perfectly honest.

"In my view Huw Merriman is toast in this town and has lost the confidence of many of the residents he represents as this town's MP. "I think he needs replacing."

Mr Newnham has also launched a crowdfunding page to finance the legal action and thus far it has raised more than £10,000.



Steve Hall is a local cartoonist drawing inspiration from Bexhill and the sea. His cards, books and other items can be found in local independents and the Bexhill museum shop. He can be contacted at steve54.hall@gmail.com.

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PROTESTERS MARCH THROUGH TOWN TO VOICE OPPOSITION TO IMMIGRATION CENTRE



BANNERS were in abundance and so were many sporting T-shirts stating “No to Northeye” as more than 100 protesters staged a march from the Little Common roundabout into Bexhill town centre on Saturday, May 20.

It is clear that feelings are running high with much of the vitriol being directed towards Bexhill and Battle Conservative MP Huw Merriman, whose continued absence from engagement with his constituents over such a contentious issue is causing tempers to flare.

“Where is he?” asked one of the marchers. “It is simply not good enough. We are angry and all we want is answers but no-one is listening to us.

“We are not going to go away. Does he think we are just going to take it and go away quietly? Well, I am going to make it patently clear. We will continue these protests until he is finally pressurised into facing up to us.”

As the protesters made their way through town, marching straight along Devonshire Road and through somewhat startled traders at the Anglo-French market in the street, the chants went up, some garnering applause while others booed and swore as the convoy headed for the De La Warr Pavilion.

One man supporting the asylum seekers yelled: “You racists; you should be ashamed of yourselves” but his words were quickly drowned out by a chorus of boos.

Then the chants started again. “Are you watching Merriman?” they said in unison. “What do we say to Northeye? No, no, no.

The protest petered out somewhat when those against Northeye congregated behind the De La

Warr but it is clear this is a conflict of interest which is clearly going to run and run. More protests are already being planned.

Earlier a significant number of protesters were out in force outside the De La Warr Pavilion on Thursday May 11 to vociferously make their feelings known over the proposed asylum seekers’ centre at the former Northeye Prison side in Little Common.

The BBC were in town to film their weekly political debate programme Question Time at the venue with a panel including East Sussex resident Richard Coles, the former pop star and vicar as well as respected journalist Nick Ferrari.

But there was one question on everyone’s lips gathered outside with the entrance to the event being guarded by security staff and police which was... “where the hell is our elected representative, Conservative MP Huw Merriman”?

Many amongst those gathered expressed their fury over Mr Merriman’s failure to attend any of the meetings held thus far to debate residents’ fears over the establishment of an asylum centre in the town.

Unlike in previous meetings staged in and around Bexhill there were no pro-immigration protesters in evidence on this occasion as many sporting “Say No to Northeye” T-shirts and brandishing posters made their feelings known.

What is patently clear is that feelings are running high and although many people who Bexhill News spoke to did not want to divulge their names, there were some who were prepared to speak out publicly.

Chants broke out of “Save our Town and “No Passport, No Entry” while several protesters

held banners proclaiming “Where is Merriman, Never Here, Looking After His Career, Not His Constituents.”

One of those prepared to speak out was Fi Douglas, who grew up in Little Common. She said: “This proposal is the most ludicrous thing I have ever heard of.

“The former prison site is totally unsuitable, everyone knows that. There are loads of families with young children and of course they are worried about hundreds of young men being housed here.

“Bexhill has always been a safe town but many people fear it will not remain so once this happens. We feel abandoned by Huw Merriman. He seems to have deserted this town and he should be ashamed.”

Another protester, Patrick Donovan, from Eastbourne, said: “We have seen what has happened in Eastbourne and we don’t want to see it replicated here.

“There are hotels in Eastbourne housing asylum seekers and it is not ideal with many people expressing fears about what is going to happen. The same applies to Bexhill if this is allowed to go ahead.

“People want reassurance but they are not getting it from Huw Merriman are they? He is showing a distinct lack of courage and has been conspicuous by his absence at any of the meetings so far. He should be addressing the issues raised by residents so far but no, nothing.

Why Bexhill? That is the big question. Most people here don’t want it. Bexhill is a small, lovely seaside town and we want it to remain that way.

“Those of us who want it to stay that way need

to stand together and present a united front. It is as simple as that and we are not going to go away.”

Later in the day *Question Time* on the BBC and hosted by Fiona Bruce at the De La Warr, developed into a slanging match, as it invariably does, between the panel consisting of Mr Coles, Mr Ferrari and the other panel members including Conservative MP Helen Whately, Labour’s Thangam Debnair, and journalist Ash Sarkar as they engaged with the audience.

Both those who support the asylum seekers and those against Northeye spoke eloquently but once again solutions were in short supply. It seems certain this is a debate which will run and run.

In response Mr Merriman released a statement which said: I’ve continued to hold meetings with residents and community leads to discuss the challenges of the proposed immigration centre.

“I will look to book a date and venue for my public meeting when, and if, the centre moves from proposal to firm plans.

“I’m currently awaiting detailed answers from Home Office officials on questions which I have asked, or have been asked of me.

“My current focus is on private discussions I am holding with the Immigration Minister as to high-level options. The result of these discussions will be available when progress can be reported.

“I remain of the view that working with my colleagues in Government is the most optimal way to deliver a solution to the challenges which constituents have raised with me.

“I am working hard to ensure that further news will be available in the next week or so.”

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COMMUNITY AND POLITICIANS UNITE TO CONDEMN VANDAL ATTACK ON SCULPTURE OF BLACK WOMAN

An army of volunteers were joined by politicians of all persuasions to remove graffiti from the the sculpture of a black woman situated on the lawns outside the De La Warr Pavilion.

The day of action took place on Sunday, May 21 when everyone united to voice their condemnation of the vandalism as white paint was daubed on the face, arms and legs of the sculpture.

Armed with buckets and detergent, more than a hundred local residents queued up to lend a hand in a remarkable show of solidarity.

East Sussex county councillor Ian Hollidge, a Conservative, said: "This attack is absolutely outrageous and is quite rightly being utterly condemned by our local politicians, many of whom have turned out to show their support.

"We don't want people who carry out this sort of attack on our town. I am absolutely delighted to see such a positive response from our local residents who have turned out in such force.

"My message to the vandals is simple. If you want to damage something then damage your own home. Don't launch attacks on works of art which are designed to brighten up Bexhill.

"Stay away. We don't want you here. You can see from the turnout here that there is a real feeling of disgust and quite right too."

Labour's district councillor Christine Bayliss echoed Mr Hollidge's sentiments. She added: I am delighted so many people have turned out to help.

"We all wanted to show solidarity in opposition to this kind of disgraceful behaviour.

"This sort of vandalism achieves nothing other

than to make people in our community angry and upset. I absolutely condemn the perpetrators of this outrageous act."

Outgoing mayor and Labour town councillor Paul Plim was equally outraged and saddened.

He said: "I am absolutely appalled that such bigotry can exist in Bexhill. It just shows the thin line there is between decent people and those who seem to revel in espousing bigotry and racism. We need to put the latter views to bed once and for all.

"The turnout here has nothing to do with politics. We all stand absolutely united and are determined to ensure this never happens again."

The towering three-metre high sculpture of a black woman was vandalised for a second time in a matter of weeks.

The impressive structure, the latest example of the venue's ongoing commitment to the arts, had white paint daubed all over it overnight between the evening of Sunday, May 14 and the early hours of the following day.

It was subsequently covered in a large green tarpaulin before the volunteers sprang into action with the queue to help remove the graffiti stretching for more than 100 metres.

Howard Martin, President of Bexhill Chamber of



Commerce and Tourism, was among those attending.

He said: "This sheer and wanton vandalism is atrocious.

"The area around the De La Warr Pavilion has become a magnet for vandals and little has been done to prevent it.

"Last year Bexhill Chamber of Commerce backed a shopwatch scheme that would have included CCTV coverage for the area but this was not supported by the local councils.

"Our own Coronation event had a trader vehicle vandalised overnight recently too.

"Our Chamber fully supports public art as an effective way of embracing civic pride and fostering a sense of place for our community.

"Our thoughts are with the De La Warr Pavilion team having to deal with this attack on our community.

"If this attack was in anyway politically motivated then those responsible should face the full force of the law and all politicians should utterly condemn this act."

The public sculpture is by American artist

Tschabalala Self and is entitled "Seated".

It is made from patinated bronze. Using an everyday object — a seat — it is described as an entry point for questions of permission and performance within public space.

According to the De La Warr, its subject — "poised, immaculately dressed, glancing to her left" — emboldens onlookers to sit with confidence and comfort.

The artist said: "Taking a seat is a universal act of leisure and calm.

"I wanted to create a monumental sculpture for the public that spoke to this simple joy.

"The woman is strong, beautiful and self-possessed.

"She represents all individuals, but women in particular, who understand the power and importance of simple gestures that assert their right to take up space".

The sculpture is due to be on the lawns until October 29.

Mr Martin added: "What is wrong with these people? Is nothing sacred any more? Many organisations are doing their best to make our town as attractive as possible and yet there are those who seem to take great delight in ruining that. It is both shocking and demoralising."

PEDAL POWER IS THE KEY TO A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE IN BEXHILL



Bexhill Cycle Clubs have been around for over 100 years



Bexhill Wheelers

AVID cyclist Ian Hollidge is urging people to get on their bikes this summer... but in a good way.

With early sunrises and long warm evenings now firmly on the agenda it is time to dust the cobwebs off your bicycles and get out there to enjoy pedal power which has many benefits, including a healthy lifestyle and mental well-being.

"I am a huge advocate of cycling," said Mr Hollidge who is rarely seen in town without his trusty bike.

"Cycling has exploded in popularity in recent years so whether you are an experienced cyclist or a relative novice the summer months are the ideal opportunity to enjoy its benefits."

The cycling group Bexhill Wheelers has enjoyed a surge of interest with plenty of opportunity to take part in its regular events.

The group offers the welcome opportunity to get out there in the fresh air, enjoy great company and travel wherever you like.

Bexhill Wheelers has teamed up with the Bicycle Ballet Co on a National Heritage Lottery-funded scheme exploring the impact of the bicycle on women and fashion from the 1890s to today.

In addition, Sussex Blazing Saddles will be presenting a programme



of talks. There will also be a performance on September 10 at the newly-refurbished bandstand on East Parade.

Bexhill has rightly earned a reputation for being bicycle friendly and anyone who takes a stroll to the seafront on any given day will no doubt note the plethora of cyclists who take up the opportunity to get out and about rather than resorting to cars.

This is a trend that Mr Hollidge thoroughly welcomes. He added.

"We all need to use our cars from time to time, but any opportunity not to do so must be both encouraged and welcomed.

"Bexhill seafront is predominately flat and therefore perfect for cycling, especially in the summer months.

"With concerns constantly being raised about climate change, cycling is the most efficient and environmentally-friendly way to travel, so I encourage all residents to join us."

In essence, cycling has remained fundamentally the same for the past 100 years or so. Admittedly, we no longer have the Penny Farthing in abundance and the days of getting dressed up in a flowing dress and bonnet for women and suits for men are long gone.

These days it is figure-hugging lycra which rules the roost with safety helmets being obligatory.

But the concept of freedom remains the same as does the associated benefits of pedal power. As Mr Hollidge stated: "Cycling is one of the most enjoyable leisure pursuits available and I encourage everyone to get out there and enjoy it."

For more details check out the website at www.bexhillwheelers.org.uk



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COUNCILLOR OLIVER WILL ONCE AGAIN LEAD ROTHER DISTRICT COUNCIL AFTER LOCAL ELECTION

BY KIM MAYO

After the elections for Rother District Council and Bexhill Town Council in early May the dust has now settled and the hard work begins.

At the Rother District Council meeting to confirm appointments to the council held at the town hall on May 24, proceedings started with Councillor Vikki Cook being proposed and seconded as chair of the council.

She then signed the declaration of acceptance to the role and said: "This is a great honour and I thank those who have backed me. I look forward very much to serving this office.

"Thanks for your support and your confidence in me. I never imagined I would be sitting in this chair."

Councillor Richard Thomas was then proposed and seconded as vice-chairman of the council. He said: "I am honoured to be appointed to this role. I promise that I will serve to the best of my ability. "This is certainly a very humbling experience but it is a challenge I will relish."

Councillor Doug Oliver was re-appointed as chairman of the council, a role he clearly relishes.

Mr Oliver said: "Firstly I welcome all of our new councillors who I am sure will contribute hugely to the council as we move forward.

"There is certainly plenty of work to be done across the Rother district but we are all committed to working towards resolving issues and launching initiatives which will benefit all in

our communities."

It was then confirmed that councillors Christine Bayliss and Susan Prochak would act as Mr Oliver's deputies and the rest of the cabinet was then formalised.

Councillor Bayliss told Bexhill News: "Of course I am delighted to have been elected once more and I am really looking forward to being one of the deputy leaders of the council.

It is both an honour and a privilege and I look forward to serving on the council once more"

The Bexhill Town Council elections also took place on the same day. There were nine wards each with two seats so 18 councillor positions were available.

Unfortunately, not enough candidates stood in six wards so the following councillors were elected "unopposed".

- Collington Ward: Alan Goss
- Kewhurst: Bryan Clasby
- Old Town: Memish Huseyin & Alan Godd
- Pebsham: Huseyin El
- St Stephens: Trudy Hampton Lynn Brailsford and Paul Wilson
- Kewhurst: Brian Drayson
- Pebsham: Charlie Rustem
- Sackville: Claire Baldry and Elly Gibson;
- Sidley: Tony Carroll and Julie Norris
- St Marks: Connor Winter and Nigel Jackson
- St Stephens: Alan Thomas

No candidates stood in Old Town but three candidates stood in Central and therefore there was an election. Paul Plim and Andrew Crotty



were duly elected.

The remaining five positions were filled at the annual general meeting. There were 13 candidates for the five positions, so therefore the council conducted a "strike out" vote for each vacancy.

The Mayor and Deputy are elected at the AGM each May and for this municipal year the Mayor is Lynn Brailsford and Deputy Mayor is Connor Winter.

These are ceremonial positions, so there is no

leader or anyone "in charge".

Town Council law doesn't permit councillors to be able to act alone — they have to do everything at a constituted meeting which is different to district councils.

The Mayor's role is to run the meetings while the deputy fills in when the Mayor is absent. They can go to functions on behalf of the council, but the only power they have is the casting vote at a meeting when they are chairing it.

NEW EYE HOSPITAL OPENS IN BEXHILL

A new state-of-the-art hospital offering NHS eye patient services has officially opened in Bexhill-on-Sea, following a fun-filled family launch event attended by the Town Mayor.

The SpaMedica site on Enterprise Business Park will provide cataract surgery and YAG laser capsulotomy to local NHS patients in East Sussex, helping to cut waiting times for those requiring treatment to improve their vision. The new hospital will offer appointments to patients in just two to four weeks, compared to a national target of 18 weeks.

The official opening of the new hospital was marked with a launch event — attended by Bexhill-on-Sea's Town Mayor, Councillor Paul Plim, as well as SpaMedica employees, friends and family. Community optometrists were also invited and had the opportunity to undertake a training module on preparing patients for cataract surgery. The hospital will host similar optometry training sessions on an ongoing basis.

Additionally, a competition was held by Bexhill Academy for pupils to create eye-themed artwork that will hang on the walls of the new hospital. The standard of entries was extremely high and winners were announced during the celebration and presented with their prizes by the Mayor.

Itai Mativirira (Y7) took first place in the painting category, Natalie Martin (Y10) won the drawing category, and Amalie Piper (Y10) was crowned the winner of the digital category. Runners-up included Erin McCarthy (Y8) and Airi Sato (Y10), with Jack Hawker (Y7) receiving a special commendation for his work 'Double Vision', which aimed to show his own experience of living with an eye condition.

SpaMedica is one of the country's leading providers of NHS eye patient services, with 48 hospitals across the UK. 29 of those hospitals have been inspected by industry regulator the Care Quality Commission, with 12 (41%) receiving an 'Outstanding' rating and 17 (59%) achieving a 'Good' rating. In January 2023, Catherine Campbell,



the CQC's head of hospital inspection, described SpaMedica's operating model as "an exemplar of best practice which others can, and should, learn from".

SpaMedica's hospitals have some of the lowest complication rates nationally, with procedures carried out by highly experienced consultant surgeons.

Hospital manager Johanna Munn said: "We're thrilled to open the hospital and offer greater choice to residents in East Sussex, working in partnership with the NHS to reduce local waiting lists and ensure patients get rapid access to high quality treatment.

"We're passionate about delivering the best possible care, ensuring patients receive a personalised service. We know what a difference the procedures can make to people's lives, giving them their

independence back and allowing them to get on with their favourite hobbies and activities."

Town Mayor of Bexhill-on-Sea, Councillor Paul Plim said: "I was very impressed with how SpaMedica reached out to our local secondary school and installed a variety of artwork created by their students. Such talent being nurtured by our local school is such a wonderful inspiration to others, I am sure.

"It is hoped that with the opening of this new hospital for cataract surgery and YAG eye treatments, SpaMedica will offer support where needed to those requiring treatment, in the local community."

NHS patients who have been diagnosed with cataracts or posterior capsule opacification can ask for a referral to SpaMedica Bexhill through their local optician or GP.



PROGRESSIVE FLAG FLIES ABOVE BEXHILL TOWN HALL

THE PROGRESSIVE Pride flag was flown over Bexhill Town Hall recently to mark International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT Day).

The iconic rainbow flag was raised last month in support of equality and diversity.

IDAHOBIT Day draws attention to the violence and discrimination experienced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex people and all other people with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities or expressions, and sex characteristics.

The Progressive Pride flag encompasses not only lesbian, gay and bisexual people but also trans, people of colour, intersex people and others.

Rother District Council officers and councillors were joined outside the town hall by staff from

Rother Voluntary Action as well as Hastings and Rother Rainbow Alliance members to show their support.

Lorna Ford, Deputy Chief Executive at Rother District Council, said: "Flying the flag is a very visible way of showing our continuing support for International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia as well as demonstrating our respect for the LGBT community and our commitment to equality."

"As well as celebrating diversity in our district, flying the Progressive Pride flag sends out a clear message that all forms of discrimination are unacceptable to Rother District Council."

To find out more about local support available, visit the Hastings and Rother Rainbow Alliance website at www.hrra.org.uk.

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EAST SUSSEX VISION SUPPORT BEXHILL SOCIAL GROUP

St Augustine's Church Hall, Bexhill. First Friday of the month
We provide a social atmosphere for blind and partially sighted people including the opportunity to meet and make new friends. We can provide transport to St Augustine's and the afternoon includes refreshments, entertainment and a raffle and we also arrange lunch outings. If you are interested in joining, please contact Christine on 01323 482407 or East Sussex Vision Support Head Office on 01323 832252.

GOLDEN ACTIVITIES - GENTLE CHAIR EXERCISES

The Bagnall Room, 25 Sackville Road, Bexhill, TN39 3JD
Every Monday Morning, 10.30am-11.30am

We are a friendly group and welcome everyone. £6 each (carers are free) includes refreshments. At The Bagnall Room (next to Bexhill Caring Community). For more information contact Anna 07961 349956

SIDLEY FRIENDSHIP CLUB

Freedom Church, Sidley Street entrance (behind Lidl)
Every third Monday of the month, 2pm-4pm

A social club for ladies and gents over 50 years old. Speakers, Games, Bingo, Coach Trips etc. No Annual fees, Just £2 each meeting which includes refreshments. New Members welcomed.

TEA AND TODDLERS

St Augustine's Church, Cooden Drive, Bexhill-on-Sea TN39 3AZ
Every Thursday, 9am-10.30am

Free friendly Toddler group. Come and join us for play, chat and refreshments. Donations are gratefully received. For more information contact Daisy at st.augustines288@outlook.com or 07544326059

BEXHILL TUESDAY FOR THE BLIND AND PARTIALLY SIGHTED

St Mark's Church, Little Common. Every Tuesday afternoon.

Are you feeling isolated and want to make new friends? Then come and join in with lunches, cream teas, quizzes and entertainment. We can even pick you up and take you home. Call Jane on 01424 729323.

THE BEXHILL & DISTRICT VETERANS ASSOCIATION

The Town Square Social Club, London Road, Bexhill
Every First Thursday of the month, 1pm - Meeting
Second Thursday of every month - Lunch, various locations

We are an Association for Navy, Army and Airforce Veterans and their wives and partners. On the 2nd Thursday of each month we go for a lunch at various restaurants in the town and sometimes just outside. We support a number of our local Charities including Sidley Food Bank (The Market Place) plus Veterans Growth, British Legion Home and the British Legion Poppy Appeal. We do Honour Guards for Veterans funerals. We also have day trips out by coach. Any ex-service personnel that would like to find out more, either attend one of our meetings or contact the Chairman, John Collins on 07922 529904 or johncollins4664@aol.com.

THE CHRISTCHURCH SINGERS

Christchurch Methodist Church, Springfield Road, Bexhill TN40 2BX (close to Bexhill Hospital)
Saturday June 10th at 7pm

Christchurch Singers present 'Concert for a King!' A varied programme of music old and new as part of the Bexhill Festival of Music. No entry or booking just come. Collection for 'Warming up the Homeless' (There will even be a 'Round the British Isles Singalong!') All are most welcome. www.christchurchmethodist.org

COFFEE MORNING

St Barnabas Church, on the corner of Sea Road and Cantelupe Road, Bexhill

Saturday 24th June 2023, from 11am.

Coffee, tea, choices of cake, a welcome and a chat.

BEXHILL DOWN LADIES GROUP

St Augustine's Church Hall, Cooden Drive, Bexhill on Sea TN393AZ

Every 2nd Wednesday afternoon 2-4pm

A friendly social club for ladies 50+ years old with speakers, entertainment, cream teas, fun and chat. Just turn up, we look forward to seeing you.

CHOIR CONCERT

St. John's Centre, Victoria Road Bexhill TN39 3BD. (Town Hall Square)

Saturday 24th June at 7.30pm

The Crescendo choir will be holding a concert singing a variety of songs. We also have performances by Radiant Brass and guest soprano soloist Rachel Taylor. Admission is free but donations would be gratefully received, as our chosen charity is the Bexhill Food bank

CRAFT FAIR

St. Stephens Church Hall, Downs Road, Bexhill. TN39 4HD.
Saturday 3rd June 10am-2pm.

Come and visit our craft fair at We have a lovely selection of local crafters selling their beautiful handmade items. Homemade cakes and snacks, tea & coffee also available. Free parking available. If you would like anymore information please contact us via our Facebook group 'The crafty collective' or email us on thecraftycollective3@yahoo.com

ADVENT FAIR AND TABLE SALE

St Peter's Community Centre, Church Street, Bexhill, TN40 2HE.
Saturday December 3rd from 10 as -2pm.

Crafts, raffle, refreshments and children's activities. To book a table, please call 07801 440850. Tables are £15 each.

FREE GIVEAWAY TO SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY.

Living Word Church, side entrance, Eastwood Rd TN39 3PS.
On Saturday 17th June 9am-12. (Held every 3rd Saturday of each month).

Clothes, food, baby milk, toys & other items given free of charge. Contact LWC Admin on 07368665204 or 07950190648 for further details.

BEXHILL STAMP & POSTCARD CLUB

St Augustine's Church, Cooden Drive, Bexhill, TN39 3AZ
Wednesday 28th June, 7.30pm

We extend a warm welcome to anyone to come and spend a friendly sociable evening with us. We have talks, displays, competitions, sales and auctions. The sessions are always entertaining and we have refreshments and a prize raffle. You see stamps daily but come and find out more about them, the postmarks, labels and slogans that accompany them.



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Wednesday Jam Session - 14th & 28th June from 7:30 pm
LIVE MUSIC:
Ritchie Lee (Rock n Roll show) - Fri 2nd from 8:00 pm
The Diamond Brothers (Ska, Reggae, Soul) - Sat 10th from 8:00pm
The Other Band (folk, in the garden + BBQ) - Sun 25th from 5:00pm
Ritchie Lee (Country Greats show) - Fri 30th from 8:00 pm

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GIANT MURAL PAYS TRIBUTE TO SIR DAVID ATTENBOROUGH

A HUGE mural has been unveiled on the side of a building to mark broadcaster David Attenborough's 97th birthday.

Sir David celebrated his latest birthday on May 8 and is one of the best-known faces on British television.

His "Life" series of documentaries has won plaudits across the globe and now his achievements have been marked with the giant mural created by the artist Abraham.

The broadcaster and environmentalist has enjoyed a long and illustrious career, having been controllers of the fledgling BBC2 channel back in the Sixties. He also served as director of programming for the broadcaster.

But it is for his wildlife documentaries spanning seven decades that he is best known. They include Natural World, Wildlife on One, the Planet Earth series, and Blue Planet which explored the marine life below our oceans.

Sir David, brother of renowned film director Sir Richard, is frequently described as a "national

treasure" although he admitted it is a term he dislikes.

The photograph of the mural, taken by local resident Chris Ludlow, shows the mural off in all its glory. It is on the side of a building which is currently being restored and is best viewed from Bulverhythe Road.

Carol Cook, a spokeswoman for W.Ave Arts, which commissioned the mural said: "We have created this magnificent mural honouring the incomparable Sir David Attenborough; an extraordinary man who has captured the hearts of millions worldwide.

"The mural celebrates his recent birthday and extends our heartfelt gratitude for his unwavering passion.

"Sir David, your boundless love for the natural world has touched the lives of countless individuals and we all aspire to walk in your footsteps.

"We extend our gratitude to the incredibly talented artist Abraham for bringing our vision to life. In our town, we are blessed to have such an incredible artist who has not only captured the essence of Sir David but gifted our community with a masterpiece that will inspire for generations to come."

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READERS' LETTERS

Write to the editor: Letters@Bexhill.News

HODGE PODGE OF CLICHÉS

Dear Editor, I came rather late to reading the Opinion piece by Kim Mayo and I have to say I expected better from someone that has spent so long in the media than this, a piece which was, in my opinion of course, a lazy hodge podge of clichés.

Has social media changed the landscape? Of course, it has. Is it all for the better? Probably not but what it has done is remove the role of the likes of Editors to be gatekeepers. I am sorry if that has affected their "snowflake" sensibilities but there we are.

"Snowflake" being a pejorative for someone who expresses an opinion you don't like is hardly breaking down the barriers to engagement and debate is it?

It's just, again in my opinion, a lazy cliché, a modern rehash of "politically correct", whatever the hell that was and does nothing to open up conversations on what is and isn't an acceptable way to behave toward people of any political stripe.

Then we have the claim of individuals being "cancelled".

I'm sorry, I seem to have completely misunderstood the situation the two named individuals have found themselves in, I thought they both had access to the media to present their views, having television programmes, and interviews in the media as well as all social media platforms.

That was my mistake and I apologise for it; little did I know that they had been reduced to sitting mumbling in the local pub writing letters to the papers in the desperate hope of being heard.

I might also ask why it is Kim seems to believe it is ok for someone to say something publicly but it isn't ok for anyone to challenge that position?

Is free speech limited only to those that make the

original statement?

Kim, in my view, has made the same mistake as many, many others in that they have confused the right to free speech and the obligation of others to have to listen to it, and the belief that our views, having been shared, have no right to be challenged, that free speech goes only one way and the publishers are obliged to share them.

Every time one of us has a view should all media be required to carry it?

Do I have to listen to you?

Do the owners of private platforms not have the right, within the law, to decide who or what they publish?

Did GB News have the right to suspend Guto Harri in response to the viewers displeasure at him taking the knee? Or is that form of cancelling, ok?

What about the current Bud Lite situation, is that ok?

My god, some of the right-wing press and columnists' reaction to any centre or centre-left politicians is incredible and like it or not they are exercising what you consider to be freedom of the press.

Morgan has his TV show, Clarkson could get a job on either The Times or GBNews at the drop of a hat and it would be a commercial decision for both parties.

It is money talking, a particular platform or channel in the commercial world might feel that the words or behaviour of a contributor doesn't fit with their image or the ideals of the reader, and as a consequence could affect their bottom line.

Equally, they might feel that attracting certain presenters or writers will improve it.

Kim knows all about readership analysis, which demographic you are trying to reach and its

importance in making or breaking a platform.

By the by, did either of them have a previously unblemished record or is it a pattern of behaviour?

Finally, the notion that IPSO is somehow the Bastian of taste and mores is frankly ridiculous, they are a group of people with opinions like any other.

Comments within the law will be made or published by all manner of platforms whether they be to the right or the left and suggesting otherwise is disingenuous at best.

This piece came across as bemoaning the fact that "right-wing/right of centre" believers are more prone to having people try and shut them down, which in my view, is a gross misrepresentation of the actuality.

The vast majority of newspapers in this country are to the right and they constantly attempt to demean and dismiss voices from the "left", so show consistency if you want support, caveating "snowflakes" with "so-called" fools no one.

It seems to me that Kim came across as another "snowflake", not accepting the changing dynamics of the modern world and someone still believing that the press knows best.

I am someone that believes in a "free press" for reporting purposes but don't believe that covers freedom to be obnoxious and abusive without being accountable, if only by the marketplace.

Ps "Remember snowflakes melt away", oh for goodness' sake, that's one of those sign-offs that might look good at the time but is meaningless, I mean, what does it actually mean?

Kim isn't trying to persuade anyone and frankly whilst the lofty view atop his equine might feel disappointing, if no one else experiences it then it has no value.

See, another meaningless sign-off that seems all pithy and wonderous but says very little. Sorry, an unnecessary dig there, just expressing an opinion.

But guess what, people are free to moan, whether they be columnists or your average person in the street and they are free to moan about the moaning opinions of others.

Gary McCabe

A FOUL PROBLEM

Dear Editor, Thank you for highlighting the dog problem in Bexhill.

I have, on occasion, reported dogs fouling on the beach while owners turn their backs on them and ignore the mess. I have reported dogs being walked on the promenade with no lead. When I reminded a dog owner about the lead rule, they told me that they were allowed to let them off the lead. The dog had jumped up to my husband's back, nearly knocking him over. I have reported dogs on the 'No dogs beach', sending photographs of five of them on one occasion when I had taken my granddaughter there to avoid the nuisance of dogs doing what dogs do.

The answer that I have been given is that the dog warden can't be everywhere.

Your article has drawn attention to problems arising from the current fashion for having dogs. Recreation grounds and beaches have become unpleasant places as a result of this trend.

It would be appropriate to ban dogs on the whole of Bexhill beach during spring and summer as is the case in most coastal towns. At present, only the small area in front of the De La Warr pavilion is designated for humans only and this is abused by irresponsible dog owners.

Best Regards, Jennifer Miller

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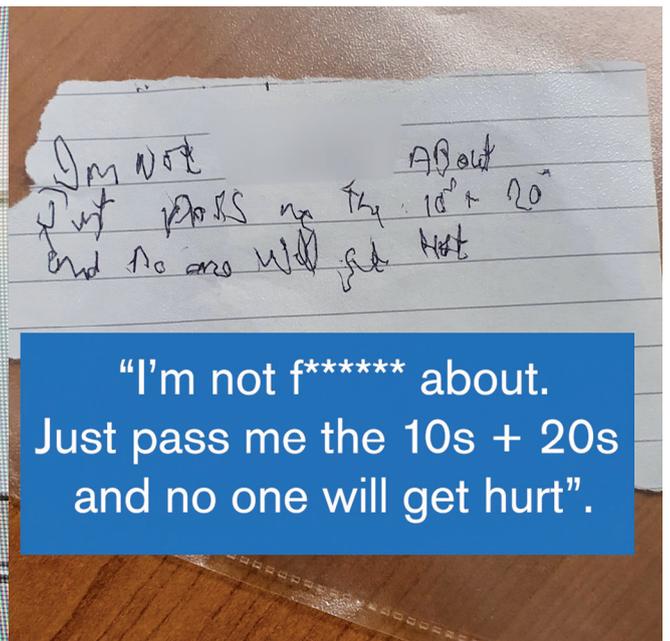
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MAN JAILED AFTER ATTEMPTING TO ROB THREE BANKS



Alan Slattery



"I'm not f*** about. Just pass me the 10s + 20s and no one will get hurt".**

A 69-year-old bungling pensioner who attempted to rob three banks in Bexhill and St Leonards has been jailed.

Alan Slattery, of Hoad's Wood Road, Hastings, passed a note over to staff at the National Building Society in St Leonards and in Bexhill as well as at Natwest in Bexhill demanding they give him money from the till.

The note read: "I'm not f***** about. Just pass

me The £10s and £20s no and no-one will get hurt."

Slattery's shameless request was refused by staff and he left on foot without obtaining any money and leaving the note at all three branches.

Following CCTV enquiries, Slattery was swiftly arrested and charged with three counts of attempted robbery following the incidents on Friday 10 February.

He appeared before Lewes Crown Court on Wednesday 5 April and was sentenced to 32 months imprisonment.

Inspector Olivia Carroll, of the Hastings and Rother Neighbourhood Policing Team, said: "Slattery is well-known for his previous offences in the area and could therefore be easily identified by staff who reported the incidents to us.

"This led to him being quickly arrested by

officers and charged within just 12 hours.

"He was also remanded in custody to prevent him from re-offending and causing further harm to our communities.

"I welcome this custodial sentence, which shows Sussex Police will not tolerate business crime, and we will continue to work alongside the business community to protect them from harm and bring perpetrators to justice."



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Victorian Heyday Events

St Barnabas Church, Bexhill has planned a programme of fun and entertainment — come and join them in celebrating their rich Victorian Heritage.

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE 10AM — 3.30 PM
Craft Fair with a Victorian flavour and traditional crafts demonstrations.

SATURDAY 10TH JUNE 7PM
Trinity College of London Harp Students. The students harpists, including two from Ukraine, will be performing a showcase of repertoire both old and new. Admission: retiring collection.

FRIDAY 16TH JUNE 11AM
Sussex Day Charter read by Paul Lendon, Sussex Day Lead.
Music and refreshments and fun!
Admission free — donations welcomed.

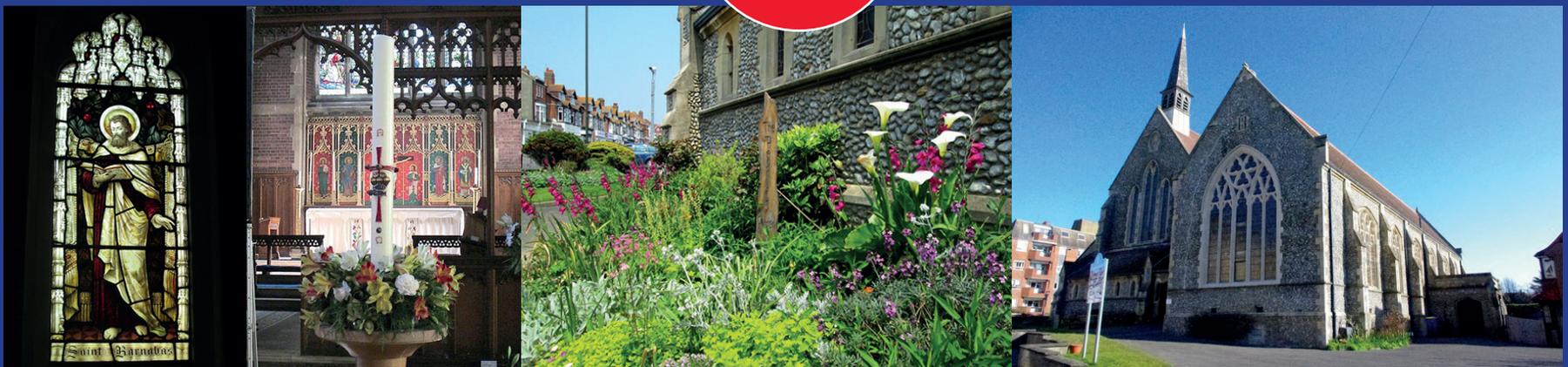
SATURDAY 17TH JUNE 7.30PM
'Piano in the Parlour' — Kenneth Roberts
Come and enjoy an evening of music and talk in the Victorian Parlour.
Admission: Ticket £12 from Second Spin (cash), Bexhill Choral Society or on the door.

SATURDAY 24TH JUNE 8 PM
Music from the West End Shows —
Lizzii Hills

Lizzii is well known for her part as the Witch in the Palladium show Wizard of Oz. Also for her generous gift of entertaining Bexhill residents throughout the pandemic. Admission: retiring collection.

WEDNESDAY 28TH JUNE 10AM
A Living Museum — St Peter and St Paul Primary School. Come and talk to famous Victorian characters. The children in Year 4 will be presenting their 'Victorian Living Museum' where they will be making famous historical figures from the Victorian Period 'come alive'. Admission free — donation welcomed.

ST BARNABAS PARISH CHURCH
Cantelupe Road (corner with Sea Road),
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DOWNPOUR FAILS TO PUT DAMPENER ON CORONATION CELEBRATIONS



PHOTOS JTP53 PHOTOGRAPHY

THE people of Bexhill came out in surprisingly high numbers to celebrate the Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla on May 6.

Despite atrocious weather throughout the day, heavy rain lashing down both in Bexhill and London, more than 300 people turned up on the seafront lawns with their rain capes, umbrellas and picnic chairs to make the most of the day by watching the event on the Bexhill Chamber of Commerce big screen.

Bexhill Chamber of Commerce President Howard Martin said; "This is the strength of our community spirit in Bexhill that so many people still turned out despite the weather."

Buenos Aires guest house owner Rachel Keevil, who was a patron of the event, said: "We were all soaking wet but with big smiles on our faces as we at least had an opportunity to come together and celebrate the Coronation.

"We will never forget where we were the day the King was crowned."

The event was sponsored and supported by Bexhill Chamber of Commerce and their business members.

Greg Rose of Maybugs gifts, who were the big screen designated sponsor, said: "We are very pleased to be able to support events in Bexhill as whatever the weather they bring our community together and that is more important than anything."

The only disappointment on the day was that due to safety concerns around the atrocious weather the planned open air evening concert of live music from Rother Community Choir, Lea Goddard, the Sound Syndicate and the Rockitmen could not go ahead.

However, the choir did give everyone a great Last Night of the Proms singalong in the De La Warr Pavilion foyer area.

Mr Martin said: "The Coronation Concert has not been cancelled, we won't let the weather beat us. We have merely postponed it until we can get into the De La Warr auditorium to give Bexhill a second chance to celebrate this fantastic occasion."





BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL UPDATE



CORONATION BANDSTAND CELEBRATION AND BEXHILL SHOWCASE EXTRAVAGANZA!

The Town Council was pleased to support the organisation of the Bexhill Showcase on 20th May 2023. The event was the idea of Bexhill resident Geoff Thompkins, and it was all about showing off our lovely volunteer organisations and promoting the “best of Bexhill”. Here is just a snapshot of the day for you to enjoy!

At the Bandstand we enjoyed so much great local entertainment, including Kevin Terrell raising money for Macmillan Cancer with his Busking initiative and a another stunning parade by the Little Common Royal British Legion Branch, that joined the RBL Band in a great start to the day. Thanks to everyone involved, we hope you enjoyed the day as much as we did.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer for this unique project, please contact town.clerk@bexhilltowncouncil.gov.uk to express an interest.



UPCOMING MEETINGS
 Full Council Wednesday 7th June 2023 6.30pm. Please check our website for the agenda as venues and times can be subject to change.

BEXHILL-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL
 35 Western Road, Bexhill-on-Sea TN40 1DU
 Open: Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 10am-12pm, and 12:30pm-2:30pm
 Contact: town.clerk@bexhilltowncouncil.gov.uk • www.bexhilltowncouncil.gov.uk



KNOW YOUR GARDEN

By Emma Reece, Head Gardener at Bates Green Garden

Bates Green Garden, an RHS Partner Garden, is open every Wednesday until 25th October 2023. For details please go to the website www.batesgreengarden.co.uk and follow the garden on Instagram @batesgreengarden



June is the glorious month of the Summer Solstice. This means that, here in the Northern Hemisphere, our part of the planet is tilted towards the sun resulting in increased sunlight and warmer temperatures.

If the last few years have been anything to go by, June also heralds dry weather conditions and we, as gardeners, have a responsibility to use water wisely. Water is a limited and valuable resource that we must not waste.

Let us start with our soil. This is the most important aspect of gardening for me, if we can get our growing media right the plants will respond well. We are always told to 'add organic matter' but why should we do this?

It is all about humus-not the chickpea delight we enjoy eating but the result of decomposition by soil microorganisms of leaves, stems and other plant material. Organic matter such as homemade compost and mushroom compost contain this magical dark material called humus, and the more of it we can incorporate into our garden plots and borders the better. Humus dramatically increases the water holding capacity of your soil as well as improving soil fertility so, when you are planting out your summer bedding, herbaceous perennials, vegetable plants or shrubs, water them in really well and then apply a thick layer of organic mulch around your new plants. Make sure the organic material doesn't touch the stems of your plants and then you can relax and let the worms do their job by dragging the material through the soil for you. No need to dig. Over time, if you continue to do this, your soil will hold onto the water it receives in the wet months and make it available to your plants over the summer.

The second aspect of watering wisely is to collect and store as much rainwater as you possibly can. Every roof can fill a water butt, houses, sheds, greenhouses, garages can all provide water if they have gutters and a down pipe. Rainwater is better for your plants anyway, especially ericaceous plants such as azaleas and blueberries. Local councils are



keen for us to save water and will often sell water butts in bulk at a reduced cost so get together with your friends and neighbours and write to your local councillor!

Let us now consider how we water our plants. Here at Bates Green Garden, we target the following plants and soak them thoroughly every few days rather than little and often. Direct the flow of water to the roots of the plant in question, the foliage doesn't need a shower, you want all the moisture to get to the root ball.

If watering is on the agenda at Bates Green Garden, we will aim to get it all completed as the very first job of the day. This way, the plants can make the most of any available sunshine and warm temperatures without being held back by lack of water. We find that if we water in the evening, this encourages slugs and snails to predate. We focus on the following types of plants.

Annuals — I recommend that you sow these directly into the ground where they are to flower-pick varieties that can tolerate dry summers such as poppies, nigella and larkspur. Try to sow them when there is rain forecast, you can sow a few every week in order to have colour in your borders for a longer period of time. Keep the seedbed moist until you can see they have germinated and then soak them once a week

until they are growing away strongly. The same principle can be applied to vegetables: carrots, lettuce and herbs like coriander and basil.

Newly planted hedges, trees and shrubs — Woody material like this needs to be established well in order to thrive and give you many years of joy. Trees in particular benefit from being planted with a piece of perforated pipe protruding out of the surface of the soil so that you can direct the water where it is needed, which is the root area of the plant. Mulching really helps here too, once the ground around your plants has been soaked, apply a thick layer of organic matter to improve the soil structure and to prevent evaporation.

Herbaceous perennials — If we follow the wise premise of 'right plant right place', once we have got our border plants established in their allotted spaces, they should not require a great deal of watering as they should be chosen to suit that particular soil type and their ability to withstand sun or shade.

Fruit and vegetables-these generally require a great deal of water, and this is where your water butts or home designed storage facilities will come into their own. Water them well when they first go in and at key points in their growth cycle such as flowering and fruiting times.

Containers — This type of gardening is very versatile and also great fun as you can change the display, move pots around and grow species that wouldn't necessarily survive in the ground. However, it is important to remember that their roots are artificially restricted and cannot travel down to find the water table. Containerised plants are therefore totally reliant on their gardener to supply them with all the water and nutrients they require. You cannot even rely on rainfall as this will often drip off any dense foliage and onto the ground below totally avoiding the roots.

Here endeth the lesson for June. Enjoy your watering, it gives you the opportunity to admire your precious plants close up, to check their growth and to look out for any early signs of infestation or disease.

You can also smell the roses.

Saturday June 24th, 12-4pm

LITTLE COMMON SCHOOL FETE

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OPINION

WHY BEING BORING IS NOW CONSIDERED TO BE THE SAFEST OPTION

BY KIM MAYO

I have set myself the task of writing the most boring newspaper column ever, steering well clear of any controversy so feel free to stifle a yawn.

Everyone it seems these days is offended by something — so when you find yourself in a social situation, it is best to stay mute if a controversial topic crops up

Say, for instance, you are in the pub and someone slags off the King and Queen's Coronation. What do I think? Nothing. It is not worth the hassle.

The same applies to politics. Now we are in minefield territory. Say anything negative about Rishi Sunak and the Tories will be up in arms. The same applies to Sir Keir Starmer with Labour supporters reacting in horror at any negativity. Therefore it is paramount to remain firmly divorced from any heated debate.

Many books are now being "reimagined" for modern audiences in order to ensure that no-one can possibly be offended.

What do I think? Again, nothing. Although I did once have rather a soft spot for Ronald Dahl's children's books when I was a kid. However, he has been cancelled, so I take that back. I now have no opinion on *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* whatsoever.

The future of the planet? Don't even go there. The ongoing debate between motorists and cyclists over who is right when it comes to the rules of the road. I'm avoiding that one as well.

If James May wants to drive a Ferrari then so be it. Jeremy Vine likes pedalling through central London with a camera strapped to his head? Well if it makes him happy then so be it.

Religion is off-topic. Any discussion always ends badly and is best avoided at all costs if you take my advice.

Then there is the matter of sexuality and pronouns. I have no views on the subject. Identify as whatever you like and enjoy life but don't attempt to draw me into the conversation. It is simply not worth it.

You see, it is possible to be completely neutral and revel in being the most boring person on Earth from the moment you step outside of your front door. This is the new me and so far it is working an absolute treat.

There are exceptions of course, but they are few and far between. My girlfriend will discuss practically anything and doesn't take offence if I disagree with her point of view. Hence the reason she is my partner.

But in the wider world having an opinion which might be at odds with others can land you in hot water.

As I have stated previously, I avoid social media like the plague. Seriously, why do people post opinions on the likes of Facebook and Twitter? You are just asking for trouble.

So, if you see a man in a hat sitting alone in your local pub nursing a glass of wine and listening attentively to nearby conversations then that is me.

But don't attempt to engage me in any debate because I don't do that any more!

Don't read a book in public because someone will take offence at what you have chosen. Do I prefer Billy Joel to Harry Styles? I have no opinion.

This is the new world order and I am rather enjoying it. What do I think about any given subject? I will keep any thoughts to myself thanks very much.

I am now the most boring person in Britain, a title I have bestowed upon myself. And you know what? That is absolutely fine and dandy.

By writing this I have cured my own insomnia so thank you and goodnight.



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A MATTER OF TASTE

We send anonymous members of the team to check out local pubs, cafes and restaurants to give you an honest review. These visits are not pre-arranged, and the venues do not know they are reviewing the food and drink!

BENTLEY'S SMOKEHOUSE

Are you ready to delve into the delicious world of **A Matter of Taste** once again? Thanks for joining us on our latest culinary adventure!

Bentley's Smokehouse is the second establishment in Bexhill from the Bentley's family, the first being Bentley's Steakhouse on Western Road, whilst Bentley's Smokehouse is situated on Devonshire Road.

So we're off to Devonshire Road's Bentley's Smokehouse today...

From the moment we entered, we were welcomed warmly by the friendly and approachable staff, whose only dress code is a Texan checkered shirt, jeans and a broad smile. The attention to detail, service and timely manner is effortless as we were shown to

a seat within seconds with an extensive menu to look over. Although we've been here before we had no idea just how big the place was as we were shown to a seat around the corner. A little booth in a hideaway under a corrugated tin roof and oodles of rustic charm. Such fun! I personally love all the character of the place, which ensures you get an individual experience here.

Our son decided to chow down on the half rack of St Louis Pork Ribs from the children's menu, with sides of fries and corn on the cob. Whilst us adults tucked into the Bentley's Sharing Platter which consisted of Ribs, Wings, Hot Links, Pulled Pork & Sourdough Bread with Beef Dripping Butter, BBQ Sauce and Bentley's Bourbon Glaze — an incredible assortment of food and flavours to share. There's plenty to eat and it's extremely filling.

Presented on sleek tin platters lined with branded non-stick parchment which provides the perfect blend of attractive aesthetics and is beautifully presented at the same time. They say you eat with your eyes, which is why how it's presented to you is so important.

It was all a taste sensation for the truly hungry. However, one of the things I loved about this particular meal that I've never had anywhere else was the sourdough bread with the beef dripping butter. It was so tasty, although I would've liked a slightly bigger helping of the beef dripping! The hot links were also a standout item and a rare treat, something you don't get anywhere else.

Hot link sausage is a delicious Southern speciality that's short, fat, and bright red in colour. Often made with a blend of pork and beef, this sausage gets its signature spicy kick from red pepper flakes and cayenne pepper, as well as other aromatic spices. If you haven't tried it yet I would highly recommend it.

The staff are always happy to help with dietary restrictions, taste preferences or questions about the menu.

At Bentley's, dining is more than a meal — it's an experience! The team is dedicated to ensuring that all guests leave happy and satisfied with their meal. I'm aware of a situation where a customer visited with a severe airborne nut allergy, and they went the extra mile to ensure that the day's



The generous Children Ribs and Corn



A sharing platter with sweet potato fries

menu was nut-free to make them feel welcome. That's what you call going above and beyond what's expected but nothing is too much trouble for the team at Bentley's.

If you're not talking about the food the next best conversation is the cool wall décor? Together with the character and charm of the place, their collection of posters featuring iconic American outlaws, wanted dead or alive, is a winner amongst the guests as everyone loves the aesthetic appeal and interesting historical trivia.

You only need to visit their Facebook page to see the hundreds of customers who can attest to the exceptional service and delicious food they provide.

We've been given the heads up that big sister Bentley's Steakhouse is to undergo a refurbishment. Having been open for 10 years now, it's obviously wanting to update its image and get refreshed for the summer. Don't worry, we'll let you know when it's back up and running!

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ACCLAIMED ACTOR PUTS ON STUNNING ONE-MAN SHOW AT DE LA WARR

BY KIM MAYO

SOME actors are fortunate enough to bag one era-defining role and that certainly proved to be the case for Richard E Grant.

THE Swaziland-born star of *Withnail and I* entertained a packed out auditorium at the De LA Warr in a two-hour plus show packed with anecdotes about his childhood, the death of his beloved wife and how he established his career in Britain after a somewhat rocky start.

Grant had arrived in Britain with little more than a suitcase and dreams of making it in the notoriously tough film business.

He scratched a living initially while living in West London before the opportunity of a lifetime cropped up as he auditioned for the title role in notoriously difficult writer-director Bruce-Robinson's semi-autobiographical film *Withnail and I*.

The film, which has become a cult classic over the years certainly evokes fond memories for those of a certain age with Grant playing the alcoholic, chain-smoking title character.

It was a role made for him, even though in real life the affable Grant neither drinks alcohol nor smokes.

"I am allergic to alcohol," he quipped. "It makes me violently ill so I don't drink. I have no enzymes in my blood to metabolise it."

When quizzed by a member of the audience about the character's overwhelming desire to drink whatever alcohol he could get his hands on, including "the finest wines known to humanity" the star revealed that in fact all the cast were swigging was Ribena.

He added that the scene when the scene involving he and Paul McGann played out the scene with Uncle Monty, superbly portrayed by Richard Griffiths, there were so many re-shoots of the scene where they all tucked in to roast lamb that Grant had to have a bucket out of sight next to him so he could throw up. "I have



Richard E Grant signs copies of his new book for fans at the De La Warr

never eaten lamb since," he said.

Although the show was awash with humour, it also brought a lump to the throat when he discussed the death of his beloved wife, the voice coach Joan Washington, who died of stage four lung cancer in September 2021.

They had been married since 1986 and her death, Grant admitted, has left a huge void in his life. His description of the last few hours he spent with her before she died were absolutely heartbreaking.

He had met her when attending her classes even though as a struggling actor he could barely afford them but she took pity on

him, cooked him dinner, he stayed the night and a true love story was born.

In addition, he recounted tales of his extremely turbulent childhood, which included a thoroughly miserable time at boarding school before returning to the family home where matters became even worse.

"My mum had an affair with my dad's best friend at that time," he recounted. "They were both keen golfers but mum embarked on an affair with the friend. He basically scored a hole in one."

Unsurprisingly in the aftermath his dad turned to drink which culminated in the then teenage Grant pouring almost his entire stash of whisky down the sink.

He said: "I had managed to pour about 11-and-a-half of 12 bottles away when he caught me in the act."

"We had a huge row which culminated in the garden. He was drunk and held a loaded pistol to my temple.

'Go on then, pull the trigger'. As the young Richard threw himself to the floor his dad did just that, the bullet missing him by a whisker. Had his dad succeeded, it could have been a very different story as there would have been no *Withnail* nor the Oscar nomination for *Can You Ever Forgive Me*, the wonderful 2018 film he made with Melissa McCarthy.

After the interval, Grant then took questions from the audience with his usual self-deprecating wit and considerable candour.

One questioner asked whether he was dating again. "No, I am not ready for that yet," he replied with a wry smile. "It has only been 18 months since my wife died."

It was the perfect end to a wonderful evening, although the actor was further detained afterwards in the foyer as he signed copies of his latest autobiography entitled *A Pocketful of Happiness*.

"Everyone should try and have a pocketful of happiness each day," he said. How true and how apt.



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BUILDING A BETTER BEXHILL?

Regeneration is a word politicians use to justify how much they spend on consultants or to claim credit for a new shop opening on the high street. While nearly all business investment is welcome, regeneration has to be more than just a buzzword if it is to be effective in shifting the economic hierarchy of a town like Bexhill.

Regeneration has to be driven by a long-term vision that transcends administrations and political whims. There has to be a consistency that gives businesses and communities a sense of ownership in the places where they live and work. Real regeneration isn't just about money being thrown at an area by Government, it is about a fundamental change in the culture of a place that allows it to properly grow and develop alongside shifts in population demographics and changes in expectations and aspirations. A real regeneration plan needs to be adhered

to for at least twenty years and not be merely a throwaway political slogan.

Unfortunately, we have been trapped in the past by politicians lazily labelling us as a retirement town instead of embracing the challenges of how to build on the vision of Bexhill as the sophisticated, discerning resort it was originally planned to be.

This has created a deeply embedded culture of silo thinking and blinkered policies that actively deter investment by technology companies, hotels, leisure providers, hospitality businesses and international-level multiples.

The consequences of this are economic stagnation, the deprivation of our town centre and the almost complete lack of investment in sustainable business development. This has to end if we are to build a better Bexhill. The swathes of new homes across the area are bringing fresh millennial blood to town on the



De La Warr Pavilion received a £25m refurbishment

back of homebuyer schemes and changed post covid work patterns.

Bexhill is getting younger and the aspirations of the residents are now driven by a clamour for leisure lifestyles rather than palliative care for a dying town. Bexhill Chamber are on the frontline of the battle for growth as a point of contact for businesses looking to invest, but there is a perception that Bexhill is closed for business because we are fighting against an institutionalised culture that defaults to planning refusals, no grant funding and no incentives compared to our neighbours.

With a £25m refurbishment of the De La Warr Pavilion promised and an additional £20m in

“levelling up” funding coming down the pipeline alongside a potential Northeye Dividend of millions per year. Bexhill can no longer plead poverty and blame yesterday for our failings tomorrow. For over a decade, plans have existed for real long-term regeneration based on sustainable high-speed transport links, attracting leisure, hotel and hospitality developments, expanding technology-based employment and developing an arts and culture-led business model. We don't need to be wasting more time and money on consultants, we need immediate action, we need strong leadership who will work with us all to deliver a better Bexhill for everyone.

STARK WARNING ISSUED BY COUNCIL OVER CRUMBLING CLIFFS

WITH summer on its way East Sussex County Council is reminding people of the risks the county's spectacular cliffs can pose.

Each year thousands of tonnes of chalk fall from the cliffs, which stretch from Eastbourne to Seaford Head without warning, posing a danger to those on the cliff top and those walking or sitting on the beach below.

Despite the dangers, visitors regularly stand too close to the edge of the cliffs for a photo opportunity or sit at the base of the cliff, beneath the unstable chalk.

East Sussex County Council has again this year teamed up with organisations along the coast to urge people to take care.

The joint campaign is being promoted by The National Trust, South Downs National Park Authority, Sussex Wildlife Trust, Seaford Town Council, Wealden District Council, Eastbourne Borough Council, Lewes District Council and Rother District Council.

Councillor Claire Dowling, the county council's lead member for transport and environment, said: “We are incredibly lucky to have such a beautiful coastline in East Sussex, which attracts visitors from far and wide.

“But the cliffs are extremely unstable and prone to regular chalk falls, putting visitors at risk if they don't take care when on top of the cliffs or on the beach below.

“We want people to be able to come to East



Sussex and enjoy the beautiful surroundings, but to do so safely.”

People are also being urged to be aware of tide times to avoid becoming cut off by the incoming tide or being forced to walk too close to the base of the cliffs to avoid the rising sea water.

Incidents of walkers being stranded on the beach after being cut off by the tide happen frequently. Visitors can check www.tidetimes.org.uk for tide times.

If visitors see anyone in danger or witness someone who has fallen, they are urged to call 999 immediately and ask for the Coastguard and not attempt to rescue them.

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NINETIES BRIT POP LEGENDS BLUR LIGHT UP EASTBOURNE WINTER GARDENS



FOR many of us in our forties, our musical influences are still as popular these days — Oasis, Pulp, Suede and such like are still very much played on major UK radio stations.

Hailsham News Editor Paul Gibson was invited to witness one of the largest groups from the nineties, Blur, playing live in Eastbourne...

“Being the age I am, the nineties were a huge part of my life, it was the era where I was out discovering who I was, meeting new people, partners, living alone for the first time — we’ve all been there and probably remember the biggest chart-toppers of that time in our lives.

So, you can imagine my excitement when I learned Brit Pop legends, Blur, were heading to Eastbourne just days after announcing a new album and warming up for two almost sell-out performances at Wembley.

I first saw Blur in concert in 1995, when the album *Parklife* was in its prime — I can almost ‘sing’ every word of that album and I almost wore off the shiny bits of the CD nearly 30 years ago in my bedroom.

As a guest, I was honoured to get into the Winter Gardens ahead of the queues, but then, I was faced with a very tricky decision. As a ‘ahem’ man in his late forties, do I head to the front row, or do I engage Mr Sensible and keep a distance to allow for visits to the bar and toilet? I then had flashbacks from 1995, and decided to keep a distance and enjoy the gig from a grown man’s perspective.

The 1,000-strong, higher than average age range crowd, gathered in anticipation of how Blur would perform after being out of the major touring scene for eight years. It was obvious from the outset there were many hardcore Blur fans in the house with some pretty retro haircuts and more double-denim than a Levi’s factory.

Lead singer Damon Albarn, now in his mid-fifties, was welcomed by Eastbourne with huge roars and kicked the night off with ‘St. Charles Square’, and a song, from their first album in 1991, ‘There’s no other way’, and within three songs throwing a variety of drinks over the crowd — obviously enjoying the huge welcome return.

The Eastbourne gig was the second of a series of ‘warm up’ gigs in preparation for two dates in July at Wembley, supported by Paul Weller. They kicked off in their hometown of Colchester and will see them go to Wolverhampton and Newcastle before heading out to Europe in June. The tour will end in Colombia in November.

For fans like me, who haven’t followed the band in detail since the *Parklife* days, were kept waiting an hour until the songs we knew came out, kicking off with *End of a Century*, *To The End*, followed by a huge surprise as Actor Phil Daniels, star of the film *Quadrophenia*, strolled on stage to perform the classic *Parklife*.

There was a moment which showed how important warm-up gigs are when Damon called off a song halfway through stating: “My timing was ****”, forcing the band to start the song from



afresh — all in the name of getting it perfect for the rest of the tour, I suppose.

Their new album, the first in eight years, is called *The Ballad of Darren* and comprises of ten new tracks and lands in July.

Damon said: “This is an aftershock record, reflection and comment on where we find ourselves now.”

A lengthy five-song encore concluded the evening ending with the stunning track from their 1995 album *The Universal*.

It was obvious Damon hasn’t relaxed with age and continues to give everything possible to give the crowds what they want. If you’re of a certain age, then a ticket for their European and Wembley dates is highly recommended.



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RIVALS FORCED TO BOW TO EAGLETON IN CORONATION RACES

Richard Eagleton was crowned in Bexhill Sailing Club's Coronation Races during May. National pride was enforced by four Europes competing in the slow fleet with doyen of the National Championships Eagleton being followed home by Richard Bratton, Lee Roberts and Arne Lovius.

The cadets had a real ding-dong with Eve Fifield pipping Logan Adams into second, although that was reversed in race two. The fast fleet were still recovering from the excesses of the weekend for the second race, but it was Tony Witham (Supernova) leading the chase all afternoon but beaten on handicap in race one by the Laser Radial of Andy Bullen, followed by Colin Coard (Laser) and Bob Palmer (Radial).

The races kept to time after a delayed start as the support boats got confused in laying the "Crown shaped" course at race officer Rob Harrison's request. A hearty buffet celebration with prize giving then followed for 50 members, prior to raising a toast to King Charles III.

Where was the wind? That was the question the following weekend (May 13-14).

On Saturday, with the tides, it was an early evening race and unexciting conditions stirred a small flotilla to the water.

Tony Lane and Hanna Boston's Dart 16A led Ben Cole's Sprint in the Catamarans. Malcolm Brookes (Comet) led home Richard Bratton (Europe) in the slow fleet while Bob Palmer held off Zac Horsley in Laser Radials in the fast fleet. Eve Fifield (Laser 4.7) represented the cadets.

On Sunday, the tides dictated an 8.30am start for the Early Worm series but there was even less wind. The Laser Radials of Bob Palmer, Eve Fifield and Rick Palmer crossed the line in that order.

Well, it looked idyllic but for the Bexhill winds — North, North-Easterley, 4/5 gusting 6 for the penultimate weekend of May.

Flat sea and sunshine weren't enough this week. Saturday was a "no" and Sunday morning had six boats signed on, four taking to the water and three finishing.

Bob Palmer (Laser Radial) came first, followed by Richard Bratton (Europe) and cadet Eve Fifield (Topper) in third. All fought



the heavy gusts effectively with little assistance from the support boats.

In the May short series openers (April 29-May 1), clement weather and morning high tides over the weekend enabled four races to be completed.

Race 1 saw just Richard Bratton's Europe represent the slow fleet whilst seven Lasers competed and were led in the end by Bob Palmer. Etain Wythoke led the Novices.

Race 2 saw the Europes competing, with Bratton and Roberts led by Richard Eagleton, ahead of Darren and Sarah Good (Miracle) and Dave Kerr (Lightning) in the slow fleet.

Monday's race 3 was one of a pair of particularly short races, the result of a falling tide and a delay to recover the

rescue boat. It was Bob Palmer (Laser Radial) who took the fast fleet honours ahead of Tony Witham's Supernova, and Andy Bullen (Laser Radial).

Richard Eagleton (Europe) won the slow fleet with Dave Kerr second and Arne Lovius (Comet) third. Maxine Doorey and Michael Cazzana (Laser 2000) led the novices.

After a fast turnaround, race 4 started, with the dropping wind. This time Eagleton was followed by Malcolm Brookes' Comet, ahead of Dave Kerr. The fast fleet was this time won by Tony Witham (Supernova) ahead of the Laser Radials of Andy Bullen and Bob Palmer.

For the observer, it looked like the Supernova just won by three seconds and half a boat length from Flo Wright's RS Aero - but that was before the handicapping.

April had closed with the more Saturday Series action while the club ran its 'Get Back to Sailing' tuition.

Oliver Good represented the cadets in a club Hartley, but with a better time than his parents' Miracle, who were second to Rachel Wynn in her Cadet Extra. Neil Sith was third ahead of Dave Kerr's Lightning.

The Fast Fleet saw Colin Coard leading the Laser foursome, but still beaten by the Supernova of Tony Witham. Tim Murray's Vortex was tail end Charlie this time after a win the previous week. It was good to see novice Dave Baldwin challenging in his Laser too.

BRT'S BATE COMES THROUGH TRYING TIMES

BY JACKIE KNIGHT



Mandie Henderson, Cathy Bate and Laura Ward

CATHY BATE completed her first ever triathlon as three Bexhill Runners and Triathletes members took on the exciting challenge of East Grinstead's Tri-A-Tri.

Mandie Henderson and Laura Ward also finished the event which involved a swim, cycle and run.

There were celebrations for all BRT runners who entered the famed London Marathon with fantastic racing records for William Carey of 2hr.48min.14sec, Oliver Carey (2:51:56), Tom North (3:16:35), Tom Brampton (3:36:25) and John Fitzpatrick (3:55:17).

Barefoot runner James Graham, the club's London Marathon 2023 ballot entry winner, ran to support Butterflies Child and Adolescent Counselling Service and Ruth Fraiss competed to raise funds for the Ukraine appeal.

Claire Overfield's spirit of adventure saw her compete in her first 50k Run to the Sea Ultramarathon. The point-to-point course presented spectacular views through a mixture of terrain as she battled against the elements from Horsham to Hove Lawns. She was joined by Zak Overfield, Elize Bailly and Kerry Snell in her outstanding achievement.



Claire Overfield, Elize Bailly, Kerry Snell and Zak Overfield

The Rathfinny 10K running event drew Gareth Smith through the wine estate and across hills with a great finish time of 1hr.06min.44sec.



John Wilkinson, Harry Scott, Ellie Docksey, Malcolm Jones and Jackie Knight

The fabulous five took on the Rye 5-miler challenge, a beautiful scenic East Sussex countryside route with several challenging hill climbs. Ellie Docksey, Malcolm Jones, Jackie Knight, Harry Scott and John Wilkinson all finished in under an hour with personal bests.

Carole Cranthern achieved a 21:58 PB at Hastings Parkrun to come home first woman. It was great to see BRT Juniors taking part and superb times, too. We hope to see BRT Juniors at Junior Parkrun when it starts this month.

If you have ever thought about running with a friendly group of like-minded people, please go to the BRT webpage for more information for both adult and junior membership. www.bexhillrunnerstriathletes.co.uk

HOOE FC YOUTH DISH OUT AWARDS



Hooe FC Youth marked a successful season with their presentation day and BBQ.

The youth section now has over 130 children playing in nine teams, including three girls' teams, playing in the Rother Youth League, Crowborough & District Junior League and Sussex County Women and Girls' League.

Club chairman Jay Skinner-Swain said: "I am extremely proud of all the players at the club, they all work so hard and support each other brilliantly — the club is all about them.

"I would like to thank the club's coaching staff and committee members for their hard work and place on record our thanks to Hooe



Parish Council for their continued support of the club, it is greatly appreciated. I would also like to thank the youth team sponsors Treetop Landscape Contracting and 1066 Bakery".

The club have also worked hard to become an FA accredited club which means it is recognised for creating an environment where young players can enjoy sport and thrive at football.

Hooe FC, an FA accredited club, prides itself on a warm welcome to all. If any child who would like to give football a go, then they should contact Jay via e-mail jay19942009@hotmail.co.uk or 07713 950161.



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SPORT



FOOTBALL PAGE 30



Terry Davies rocks his opponent

Action from Bexhill's home show

BEXHILL BOXING SHOW IS A KNOCKOUT



BY SPORTS REPORTER, MIKE LEGG

IMAGES BY DANIEL SHERWOOD PHOTOGRAPHY

COACH Terry Freeman hailed a knockout show for Bexhill Amateur Boxing Club. Fight fans got their money's worth as they were treated to 17 bouts and one skills contest at Pebsham Community Centre on May 20.

Boxers came from across the region to compete on the show, which is a valuable fundraiser for the club as it bids to drum up cash to extend its gym on Bexhill seafront.

A rammed show did not finish until after 11pm as Bexhill's hard-working team of coaches and volunteers worked their socks off.

Freeman said: "It was a great small hall atmosphere. It was a really good show with over 300 people there, so that was a very good turnout.

"Also, there was some much-needed money raised for the club. As a charity, we depend on donations and any profits to go back into the club.

"There were some cracking bouts, and although we didn't get all the results we hoped for, it was still good."

Sonny Studley (64kg) made it back-to-back wins as he forced a second-round stoppage against Finley Noakes (West Hill) after coming through a tough first.

The game Jacob Cooper (50kg) was stopped in the first round by Daniel Hearn (TM Boxing). Although a third stoppage loss, Cooper was boxing well when caught close to the end of the round by a much more experienced opponent.

Ollie Thornton (67kg) was stopped in the third by Harvey Beeker from the renowned Dale Youth in west London. He won the first, lost a close second round and just took too many clean shots in the third round.

Louis Crouch (70kg) lost on a unanimous to Aiden Sheriff (2BX), but coach Ian Fletcher said: "Louis boxed really well and done everything I'd told him, working off the jab, not falling in with his backhand or getting involved in a fight and sticking to his boxing. But the decision

went the other way. Louis had previously been stopped by this opponent in March but boxed out of his skin this time."

An excellent bout saw Alfie James (71kg), with coach Rian Witcomb in his corner, lose by a unanimous decision to Jack Ansbro (Dale Youth). James landed some lovely combinations and clean shots in one of best fights of the night, which again could have gone either way.

Demetri Kakoulli (81kg) lost a points decision to Ethan Finlayson (Eastbourne). Kakoulli boxed 6-7kgs above his natural weight as he had only been back to gym for a fortnight for the show. Again, every round was close, but Kakoulli finished strong with a clear third-round win with a lot believing he had done enough to get the decision, but it was not to be.

Aaron Davies (66kg) could count himself unlucky not to get the decision against Liam Jenkins (White Hart Lane) – especially as even his opponent felt he had taken the win in their 67kg contest.

The crowd were 100 per cent sure Davies deserved to have his hand raised but he lost on a split decision.

There was some family satisfaction, though, with brother Terry (59kg) claiming a points win over Roshan Patel (Dale Youth).

Freeman said: "Aaron boxed lovely behind his jab over the first two rounds, landing clean shots and keeping his distance. The third was far more competitive but we all felt he boxed lovely.

"Terry, is brother, also boxed very well, keeping his composure against a very strong and busy lad.

"Terry won on a split and, to be honest, I wasn't even sure, but we felt it was down to quality over quantity. The other lad threw more, but Terry's accuracy ultimately secured him the win."

Fraser Stephenson, 15, took part in a skills bout which always end in draws.

Matchmaker Fletcher said: "Although it was two wins and six losses, it could easily been 6-2 in other direction. But overall, a very positive night as all the boxers boxed well and their performances were something to be proud of."

CUP HEARTACHE FOR HASTINGS AND BEXHILL

REPORT BY PETER KNIGHT



Hastings & Bexhill attack the Vigo line

Hastings and Bexhill RFC's dreams of a final at Saracens' Stonex Stadium were dramatically brought down to earth at Vigo with a 45-22 defeat.

Fielding a strong squad, H&B made a more than promising start to their Papa John's Community Cup semi-final played in excellent conditions in north Kent.

Vigo had twice beaten Hastings this season in the league, but cup games throw up some strange results and after half-an-hour's play an upset looked to be on the cards.

Skipper Bruce Steadman opened the scoring with a beautifully struck penalty from 40 metres out. Vigo hit back with two quick tries to lead 12-3.

Hastings and Bexhill lifted their game and from a 5metre penalty Ben Davies charged the line to touch down and Steadman converted.

Hastings continued to pressure the Vigo defence; Laurence Maynard made a terrific break to burst through the home defence, he whipped the ball outside to Matt Sheppard who scored a fantastic try.

Immediately from the restart the ball was fed out to the backs to Charlie Gasper, who crossed the line under the posts to give Steadman a straightforward conversion.

Vigo hit back with a converted try to narrow H&B's lead to 22-19 at the break.

Unfortunately, the second half was a different story as Vigo scored four more tries with three conversions.

H&B made their task much easier by conceding far too many penalties and two consecutive yellow cards. For 20 minutes, Hastings were playing one man down and in this time the score rose to 38-22. At this level, an extra player is a big advantage. Vigo rounded off the scoring as the referee was blowing the final whistle.

The unfinished Bob Rogers Cup games will be played in August before the new season starts.

FELIX'S TON IS WORTH THE WAIT

Bexhill II's Felix Holland carried his bat for his second league century – SIX years after his first.

Holland made 104 not out although his team-mates showed little inclination to stay with him until Louis Haffenden made a quick 33 at No.9. The home side were also indebted to 46 wides to boost their total to 264-8 from their 40 overs. For Crowhurst Park II, Basie Sturdee took 3-28.

In Park's reply runs came steadily, aided by regular dropped catches. Jon Peters made 56 at the top of the order and Josh Barraclough 34 but they were always slightly behind the rate in the Sussex League Division Six East clash. Seven down with 29 needed from four overs, Adam Smith mopped up the tail with a triple wicket maiden, ending with 4-32. Rowan Crouch had earlier taken 2-37 and Taylor Wickenden 2-33.

Bexhill recovered from 67-5 the previous weekend (May 13) to beat Robertsbridge by three wickets with 15 balls to spare.

The hosts looked in control having set 213 but Sahil Khan's unbeaten 56, a quick 53 from Taylor Wickenden and an even quicker 38 from Dom Carey saw a youthful Bexhill to victory.

