



The Bugle

No 274 2nd February 2026
If You Don't Want It Printed, Don't Let It Happen
Contributions to trading.as.wdr@googlemail.com

"There is always in February some one day, at least, when one smells the yet distant, but surely coming, summer."

Gertrude Jekyll



Time called until March

The doors of The Roebuck Inn, Laughton, are now closed, with new tenants expecting the keys in March. They'll have to wait until April to hear Wealden's verdict on their plans to convert the old ballroom area into a farm shop.

Laughton Parish Council decided neither to support or object to the plans, hoping that that the new tenants and the Village Shop would work together to safeguard both assets.

Footpath: official or unofficial ?

The new owners of Pittsfield, a field just north of Langtye Lane, Ripe, lying between two existing footpaths, say moves to make a shortcut between the two official are unnecessary.



Allan and Dorothy Martin, from Seaford, say they want to grow fruit and vegetables, and relax in the field. "We have never stopped anyone from crossing our land. All that we ask is that, if you need to take this shortcut, you keep to the edge of the field and not walk directly through the middle".

The couple say they are in direct contact with East Sussex Highways Rights of Way Team; "At our own expense, we have replaced the southern broken stile and hole in a barbed wire fence with an approved metal gate. The northern stile is going to be replaced with a similar gate as soon as the weather improves."



Low flyer

The large aircraft flying low south of Ripe last Tuesday afternoon was an RAF A400M Atlas transport plane, operating from RAF Brize Norton. The flight was part of the UK's Military Low Flying System, allowing training at low altitudes for operational readiness. The crew were in radio contact with Kittyhawk airfield, who gave them weather information.



Next service: Sunday 8th February, Holy Communion 10.30 am at Laughton, led by Revd Simon Foster.

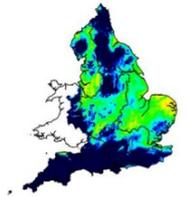


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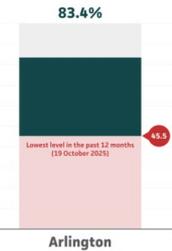
The rainfall map has turned upside down in the first month of 2026, with the south-west (187mm) and



south-east (123mm) topping the UK table. So Storm Chandra put many of our lanes underwater last week, and trapped a good number of foolhardy drivers.



21 to 27 January



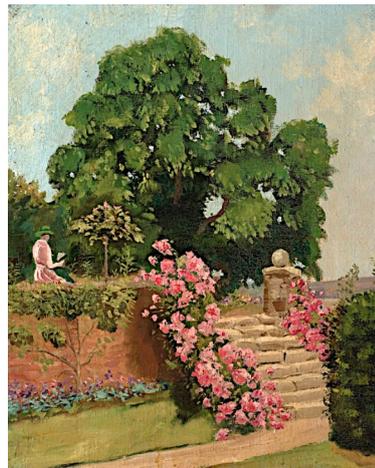
Flood alerts are still in place along the length of the Cuckmere, and, with the ground saturated, roads may suffer in February. Meanwhile, customers of South East Water can look forward to an average increase in their bills from April 1st.

As of Sunday 25th January, Arlington Reservoir's level was back up to 83.4% capacity. It holds 3,500 million litres when full, whilst South East Water's other big reservoir, at Ardingly, is currently 100% full, at around 5,200 million litres.

Channers Lane plan dropped

The planning application for a single storey building on a vacant plot in Channers Lane, Ripe, has been withdrawn. Wealden was due to make a decision on the latest proposal, for use as holiday accommodation, at the end of last month.

Wealden's Heritage Officer reported "Fundamentally, the proposal relates poorly to its very sensitive context within the designated conservation area the building reads as a mediocre modern bungalow design".



Winston's work ?

An American art researcher is looking for local help with provenance of this painting. She wants to prove it's the work of Winston Churchill, painted in 1916 in the gardens of Herstmonceux Castle. An investigation by the BBC's Fake or Fortune team last year was inconclusive.

It was bought by enthusiast Barry James for £140 at an antiques fair in Ardingly four years ago. Emily Esser wants to find out where the painting has been between 1916 and 2022; you can email her at herstgarden@gmail.com.



Chalvington with Ripe Parish Council meets tonight, Monday 2nd February in Ripe Village Hall, starting at 7pm.