



Cobham & Luddesdowne

March 2026

News

£1

PARISH of COBHAM with LUDESLOWNE and DODE

Priest-in-Charge – The Rev'd Canon Alyson Davie

For all enquiries, including Weddings, Baptisms and Funerals, please contact Alyson.

Phone no. 01474-812068 email:- alyson@stjohnsmeopham.co.uk
(Rest Day: Friday)

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

Church Safeguarding Officer - Hilary Savage - 01634 723027

Church Office Phone no. 01474 813495

Church Officers of St. Mary Magdalene, Cobham

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

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Treasurer	Janet Weaver	01732 823936

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Cobham

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Ron Chamberlain
Lynn Ruddock

Luddesdowne

Diana Bampton
Jill Beety
Sue Campbell
Janet Weaver

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

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

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March
2026

Mothering Sunday *By the Revd Roy Shaw, a retired but active priest in the diocese of York.*

Mothering Sunday - the fourth Sunday of Lent- offers families an opportunity to honour the women who have nurtured them. Lots of different streams and traditions have come together to make today's Mothering Sunday the special day that it is.

In the Middle Ages it was an occasion for everyone to visit their 'mother' church - the place where they had been baptised. Later, an opportunity for those who worked away from home to visit their mothers became added to the mix of reasons to make it a special day.

Today we honour all women who have in one way or another been special to us, and in church this is usually signalled by small bunches of flowers for every woman present. Treating mums and grans to Sunday lunch, chocolates and flowers is also part of the present mix. And will there be a simnel cake to be seen - a tradition from ages past - with its rich layers of marzipan, and eleven balls of marzipan on top, reminders of the 11 disciples who remained faithful to Jesus?

Not everyone has enjoyed a wonderful or enduring relationship with their mum, so lest we get carried away on a wave of love and sentimentality, there is usually space in the Mothering Sunday church service to reflect on and pray for those whose relationships with their mother were not all they might have been.

Also, there are the families blighted by the lack of, or death of a child; families remembering a mum who died tragically young; women who never had a child but would have dearly loved the opportunity; all these and more are a recognition of the imperfections of human love, human life.

These imperfections can be brought in prayer to the God who mothers us. In the Old Testament, Isaiah speaks of God comforting His people like a mother hen. In the New Testament, both Matthew and Luke bear witness to Jesus expressing His desire to gather His people as a mother hen gathers her chicks under her wings. Yes, God has strong maternal qualities which He invites us to discover and enjoy!



Cobham Gardeners' Society

At last, this month the clocks “Spring” forward one hour and we will hopefully begin to feel Winter is finally coming to an end.

Our first talk for 2026 in February – “Pruning” by Kevin Tooher which was very informative and enjoyed by 50 members/guests who we are sure are eager to get into their gardens and practice what they learnt!

This month we have our second talk of the year by Caroline Halfpenny “Companion Planting” plus we have our Spring Show and Plant Sale! Looking ahead to April on the 17th we have our fish & chip supper to celebrate 125 years of Cobham Gardeners’ Society and on the 24th make your own Willow obelisk.

So, there is plenty happening within the society and it really does feel Winter is coming to an end!

Wednesday 11th March at 6.30pm for 7pm
"Companion Planting" by Caroline Halfpenny *See page 27*

Spring Show & Plant Sale

Saturday 28th March at 2:00pm to 3.30pm in the Meadow Room

This is the society’s first Show of the year. The show features Gardening Tips, Adult & Junior Show Categories, Flowers, Vegetables, Preserves & Photographic entries. Tea, coffee & home-made cake is on sale. There’s **Free Entry for Members & Non-Members**. For information email cobhamgs@hotmail.co.uk

125 Years of Cobham Gardeners’ Society Celebratory Supper Friday 17th April, 7pm in the Meadow Room

See page 16

Make Your Own Willow Obelisk

Friday 24th April, 2pm to 4pm in the Meadow Room

See page 25

You can buy Membership of Cobham Gardeners at any time. You can apply for membership at the talks or via email cobhamgs@hotmail.co.uk It is only a modest £10 for the year – money you get back from free entry into all Gardeners’ expert speaker talks and massive savings of up to 50% on quality plants at local garden centres.

Cont'd from Page 4

Here are the RHS Top 10 Jobs for March.

Spring arrives, usually by mid-March and more frequent sunny days provide the opportunity for an increasing range of gardening tasks.

It's time to get busy preparing seed beds, sowing seed, cutting back winter shrubs and generally tidying up around the garden.

1. Protect new spring shoots from slugs
2. Plant shallots, onion sets and early potatoes
3. Plant summer-flowering bulbs
4. Lift and divide overgrown clumps of perennials
5. Top dress containers with fresh compost
6. Mow the lawn on dry days (if needed)
7. Cut back Cornus (dogwood) and Salix (willow) grown for colourful winter stems
8. Hoe and mulch weeds to keep them under control early
9. Start feeding fish and using the pond fountain; remove pond heaters
10. Prune bush and climbing roses

More advice can be found on the RHS website <https://www.rhs.org.uk/>

Cobham Church



Thanksgiving Service and interment of ashes

David Edwin Bryan PALMER was born on the 15th December 1944 and died on the 15th December 1925 at the age of 81 years. The service took place on the 12th January 2026 in Cobham church followed by the interment of ashes in Cobham's Garden of Remembrance. The services were conducted by The Rev'd Dave BUBB Associate Minister at CSK Hampton Church (previously a lay member at Cobham church). Our condolences and prayers go to David's wife Mary.



New Dog Breeds for Crufts?



With Crufts Dog Show held this month, here are some ideas for new breeds for the Kennel Club...

Collie + Lhasa Apso = Collapso: A dog that folds up for easy transport

Spitz + Chow Chow = Spitz-Chow: A dog that throws up a lot

Pointer + Setter = Poinsetter: A traditional Christmas pet

Great Pyrenees + Dachshund = Pyradachs: A puzzling breed

Pekingese + Lhasa Apso = Peekasso: An abstract dog

Newfoundland + Basset Hound = Newfound Asset Hound:
A dog for financial advisors

Terrier + Bulldog = Terribull: A dog that makes awful mistakes

Bloodhound + Labrador = Blabador: A dog that barks incessantly

Malamute + Pointer = Moot Point: Owned by...oh, well, it doesn't matter anyway

Collie + Malamute = Commute: A dog that travels to work

Deerhound + Terrier = Derriere:
A dog that's true to the end





Local Funding Group'24

Exhibition of Local Historical Photographs

Saturday, 14th March, 2026

From 10.00 am – 4. 00 pm

at St. Mary's Church Room, Sole Street
DA12 3AX

Entry: £5. 00 Children free

Enquiries: sally.kimber@btinternet.com

Supporting St. Mary's Church Room



Local Funding Group '24



COFFEE MORNING

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2ND THURSDAY OF EVERY MONTH at 10.30am

Meet old Friends and make new Friends

THE TUESDAY POP IN

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

Next pop-in - 10th March

CONTACT: MARY PALMER—01474816788



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Thursday Fellowship.

We meet on the 19th March at 2pm, this is a week earlier than usual to accommodate the lucky members going on a theatre trip. Enjoy!

We welcome Peter Kettle, our Licensed Lay Minister, who also speaks for the Rochester Diocese Poverty and Hope Appeal. This appeal supports 5 projects in Africa-Tanzania and Zimbabwe, Brazil, the Caribbean, Myanmar and the Amos Trust in Palestine. Peter will be able to bring us up to date on how the Appeal makes a difference to the lives of people in these regions with a range of needs and activities.

We start with a time of worship and end with Tea and Cake.
Everyone is very welcome.



Sunday Afternoon Club Programme to Easter

8 March: Baby Moses in danger

A rescue involving his big
sister and two mothers



3 April: Good Friday

The Easter story over
three amazing days



3.00pm on Sunday Afternoons in the St John's
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Sole Street WI

Early February marked the return of our craft sessions. We were kindly donated some lovely bunting by one of our Sole Street members, and we decided to personalise it by adding each member's initials to a triangular pennant. The bunting will be making regular appearances at our events, bringing a healthy dose of panache.

On 27th January, the Sole Street WI ladies gathered for a social evening filled with tea, chatter and questionable talents. We discussed the year ahead and what's coming up in the diary, before breaking into groups for a quiz.

Things then took a creative turn with a game of Pictionary, where our brand-new whiteboard bravely showcased our *enthusiasm* rather than our artistic ability. The evening ended with a humming game, which confirmed two things: none of us can hum, and we laugh far better than we sing. By the end of the evening, there was far more noise from giggling than humming — the perfect finish to a very fun evening



Join us on Tuesday 24th March as Julia Davies takes us on a tasty trip through the history of puddings.

Jayne Holden

Lewis Solomon

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Dates for your Diary



The dates for the **Cobham Parish Council** meetings are:

Tuesday 3rd March St Mary's Church Room at 7.30pm
Annual Parish Assembly Tuesday 21st April Meadow Rooms at 7.30pm
Annual Parish Meeting Tuesday 12th May Meadow Rooms at 7.30pm
Tuesday 2nd June St Mary's Church Room at 7.30pm
Tuesday 7th July Meadow Rooms at 7.30pm
Tuesday 8th September St Mary's Church Room at 7.30pm
Tuesday 6th October Meadow Rooms at 7.30pm
Tuesday 3rd November St Mary's Church Room at 7.30pm
Tuesday 1st December Meadow Rooms at 7.30pm

The dates for the **Luddesdown Parish Council** meetings are:

Annual Parish Assembly Monday 16th March Luddesdown Village Hall
Annual Parish Meeting Mon 18th May Luddesdown Village Hall
Monday 20th July Luddesdown Village Hall
Monday 21st September Luddesdown Village Hall
Monday 16th November Luddesdown Village Hall
All meetings start at 7.30pm

- * Keep an eye out for details of forthcoming events at St Mary's Church Room.
- * Concerts presented by Two Women events at St Mary Magdalene Church Cobham, will be advertised within these pages
- * Cobham Choir—The World's Songbook, See *back page*

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Marie Curie's Great Daffodil Appeal 2026 – as it celebrates 40 years

Throughout the month of March, the end-of-life charity Marie Curie will be holding its annual flagship fundraiser, the Great Daffodil Appeal.

There's only one chance to give someone the best possible end of life.

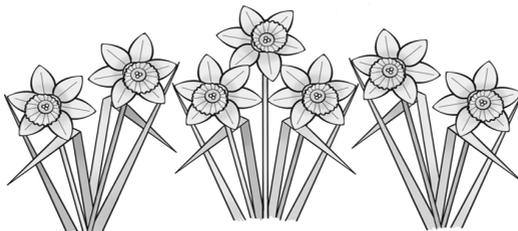
And one chance for you to help give care that makes all that possible. Care that protects someone's dignity – instead of leaving them alone or in pain. This Great Daffodil Appeal is that chance.

Now in its 40th year, the appeal raises vital funds to help Marie Curie provide end of life care and support in homes, hospitals and hospices across the UK. By donating and wearing your daffodil this March, you can help Marie Curie Nurses bring expert end of life care when there's no cure, whatever the illness.

Money raised also funds the charity's free support line and webchat which is available to anyone with an illness they're likely to die from and those close to them. It offers practical and emotional support on everything from managing symptoms and navigating care to financial information, including how to get help with energy bills and bereavement support.

Whether it's taking part in a fundraising challenge, organising a bake sale or volunteering your time to collect donations, every penny will help Marie Curie deliver quality care to those who need it most.

The Great Daffodil Appeal only happens once a year. This is your chance to make it count. For information or to donate visit: [Mariecurie.org.uk/daffodil](https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/daffodil)





FRIDAY 17TH APRIL 2026 CELEBRATORY SUPPER

Come and join us to celebrate 125 years of Cobham Gardeners' Society with a fish & chip supper at the Meadow Rooms.

£15 per person. Price includes a welcome drink from Silverhand Estate, a fish and chip supper, a copy of our anniversary souvenir booklet compiled by Michael Wood detailing the first 125 years of our Society, a presentation by Mike Pickersgill and Michael Wood on the history of the club, plus a chance to mingle and reminisce with fellow society members.

Spaces are limited on a first come first served basis. To book please email your name and number of spaces required to cobhams@hotmail.co.uk

Meopham Library Writing Group

Meopham Library Writing Group meets again on Thursday 5th March 2026 at 10am.

Each month there is a writing theme, which can be used as a starting point for a short story, poem or an article. If you are interested in writing, you are warmly invited to join our small, friendly group. New members are always very welcome. Creative writing can be used to record special family memories and is also helpful for anyone facing difficult times, as well as being a very enjoyable and sociable activity. Future meetings will be held on 2nd April, 7th May and 4th June.

Please ring 01474 813379 for more information.

BELL RINGING by Peter Hartley

We rang in January for the Thanksgiving Service for the Life of David Palmer who had the rare distinction of dying on the same date on which he was born eighty-one years earlier. Ringing was our tribute to David who, not always with the support of the diocesan authorities, had tirelessly worked for the worship and care of Cobham church. He served on the Parochial Church Council, worked on the fabric, and solved numerous technical problems including lighting, plumbing and heating.

Fortunately the village still has Mary Palmer who assists in the church in every way, organised the monthly Pop In gatherings, volunteers in the Community Shop, is a good neighbour, and was Secretary of the Friends of Cobham Church which sadly is no more. The Friends played a crucial role in raising the finances for our bell restoration thirty years ago. The PCC now has to manage and finance everything.

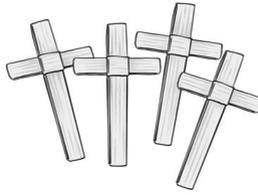
Regular worship in Cobham these days is now only one fortnightly Sunday Service. However, the Grade I listed church building, with its very special double pavement of memorial brasses, is open to the public every day of the year thanks to the rota drawn up by Mary Palmer for the small team of unlockers. This daily ministry to our church visitors is greatly appreciated as we can see by the comments written in the Visitors' Book.

Bell ringers across the land ring bells because they enjoy the art and science of ringing and to proclaim the church is still here. In Cobham on Sunday 1st February we rang for the service. We rang despite the isolation of Cobham caused by the closure of Halfpence Lane by Southern Water while they replace the old rusting iron pipes and a traffic accident at Jeskyns car park which closed Henhurst. The three generations of Cobham ringers that morning were two teenagers, two fathers and one ancient. We continue on.

David Palmer we miss you. But all will keep going.



St John's Meopham with St Mildred's Nurstead
Church Services March 2026



- Sunday 1st March 9.45am All Age Worship at St John's
 11.30am Holy Communion at St Mildred's
- Weds 4th March 10am Holy Communion at St John's Centre
- Sunday 8th March 9.45am Holy Communion at St John's
 11.30am Mattins at St Mildred's
 3pm Sunday Afternoon Club at St John's Centre
- Weds 11th March 10am Holy Communion at St John's Centre
- Sunday 15th March Mothering Sunday
 9.45am Morning Worship at St John's
- Weds 18th March 10am Holy Communion at St John's Centre
- Sunday 22nd March 9.45am Holy Communion at St John's
 11.30am Family Service at St Mildred's
- Weds 25th March 10am Holy Communion at St John's Centre
- Sunday 29th March Palm Sunday
 10.30am Morning Worship at Cobham Church
 for all four churches.

Cobham, Luddesdowne and Sole Street
Church Services during March 2026



Sunday 1st March

10:30am Holy Communion, Cobham

Sunday 8th March

10:30am Holy Communion (BCP), Luddesdowne

Sunday 15th March

10:30am Mothering Sunday Service, Cobham

Sunday 22nd March

10:30am Holy Communion, Luddesdowne

Sunday 29th March – Palm Sunday

10:30am Morning Worship, Cobham
(Joint service for all 4 parishes)

Midweek services in Sole Street

St Mary's Church Room, Informal Morning Prayer

9:30am 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th March



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**The 1st South Street Boys Brigade and Girls Association
Company**

The 1st South Street Boys Brigade and Girls Association Company meets at South Street Baptist Church, Wrotham Road, Meopham, DA13 0QJ (*next to Hope Hill*). Boys and girls aged 5-18 years are very welcome to join us every Friday evening 6pm-7.30pm during term time for fun and games.

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

SONG TIME meets every Monday 9.45am-11am during term time for families with babies and children under five. There are toys, art and craft, musical instruments and singing.

SOUTH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH Sunday morning services start at 10.45am. All welcome.

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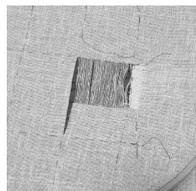
The theme for our postcard swap this month was 'wild flowers' (to include some French Knots). As I write this, the weather has been a bit warmer and there were definitely signs of (embroidered) Spring in our meeting place. You can see some of the postcards here.



This was a meeting of two parts. Some of us were working on our own pieces, such as an unfinished embroidery (UFO) left over from lockdown, or a little hat to go out to Ukraine to keep a baby's head warm. Most of the group were preparing pieces of fabric for the upcoming workshop with Christine Seymour-Godwin. The technique to be learnt is 'needleweaving'. The initial work involved stretching a woven fabric called Zweigart 28 count Cashel linen in a hoop and then cutting some of the weft (left to right) threads so that they could be drawn back and re-threaded to make a border ready for further stitching and embellishment.



The backing fabric to the linen will be silk that Christine is bringing with her on the day. This will be painted to tone in with our individual colour scheme of choice. Watch this space to see how the work progresses! Everyone was concentrating extremely hard and



the room was incredibly quiet!

Christine had been to talk to us before and we had seen how beautiful her own pieces were (see picture), so we are hopeful that our members will be inspired and equipped to have a go at producing something very exciting. If you or someone you know would maybe like to start a new hobby and to



join our group or would just like to find out a bit more about us then please pay us a visit - look at our website: <https://northkentembroiderers.co.uk/>

or email us at: info@northkentembroiderers.co.uk or contact our Chairman, Eileen on 01474 324734 Happy stitching, Karen
All photos with permission.

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Share the Easter story – with an Egg

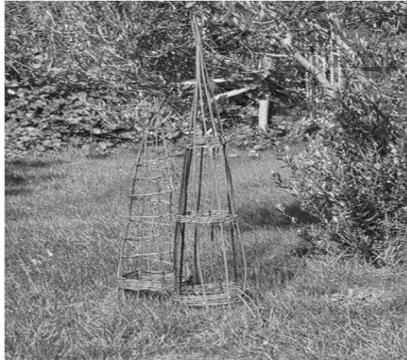
Out of the 80 million Easter eggs sold in the UK, The Real Easter Egg is the only one which has a copy of the Easter story in the box, is made of Fairtrade chocolate and which supports charitable projects.



There are six types of eggs to choose from. Each Real Easter Egg comes with an Easter story in the box, the stories range from simple guides to 24-page activity book versions. So, buy a 2026 edition Real Easter Egg this spring and encourage others to give one to their loved ones, a school or sponsor a food bank donation.

The 2026 Real Easter Egg will not be available in any supermarkets, but the full range can be ordered at www.realeasteregg.co.uk

Workshop - Make Your Own Willow Obelisk Friday 24th April, 2pm to 4pm



This workshop will be lead by Nicola Claxton of NJC Crafts who finds all things willow fascinating - it is a natural renewable resource, it smells great, and is lovely to work with.

Throughout the workshop she will demonstrate, teach you some willow weaving skills and guide you on making your own obelisk to take home with you.

£25 per person, includes all materials, tuition plus tea/coffee and a piece of cake.

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Cobham Gardeners' Society

Meetings & Shows at the Meadow Room in Dickensian Cobham, Kent
SatNav DA123BZ Registered Charity No 228007



Wednesday 11th March 2026 - 7pm

Companion Planting

Caroline Halfpenny talks about companion planting for vegetables and flowers; which plants enhance the growth, cropping, or vulnerability to pests and diseases, or even 'prepare' the soil for other plants. These intricate relationships will help you select appropriate plants to maximise a healthy ecosystem in your garden, greenhouse or allotment

Members free - non members £3



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Luddesdown & District Rights of Way Group.

We are a small friendly group that usually walks from The Cock Inn, Henley Street, Luddesdown, Gravesend DA13 0XB, at 11am on Wednesdays. We walk at a gentle pace for some 90 minutes in beautiful countryside. Occasionally we lead weekend walks. With four Socials a year in Luddesdown Village Hall and a twice yearly Newsletter, we would be delighted if you joined us for a walk or two. Becoming a member costs £7 per person a year. Please contact Walks Co-ordinator Janet Ferguson, preferably at janetferguson@hotmail.fr . Ian Sheridan, Acting Chairman, 07951 927 517

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Happy Mothering Sunday!



Hello – Did you know that big, wet licks from a dog can help a teenager’s mental health ? — No neither did I !

Teenagers who kiss their dog or are occasionally licked by their pet are happier, according to a recent study. They have even been found to have better mental health than those who do not have a dog.

Why should this be? It seems to all come down to the gut. Research has found that teenagers in homes with a dog have a specific gut bacteria constitution, known as the microbiome, which boosts mental wellbeing.

Gut bacteria samples from teenagers were analysed and the participants also underwent psychological assessment. Tests showed that those with dogs had healthier scores, and that their microbiome was rich in certain bacteria. When the dog-influenced bacteria were injected into mice in a lab, :(even the rodents became more social and engaged more with other mice.

The study’s author, Prof Takefumi Kikusui, of Azabu University in Japan, said that although dog ownership provides a sense of security through simple interaction, “the most interesting finding from this study is that bacteria promoting prosociality, or empathy, were discovered in the microbiomes of adolescent children who keep dogs.”



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Love and serve one another

On Maundy Thursday we recall the final command that Jesus gave to his disciples before his death. After the Last Supper, He rose and washed his disciples' feet. This was astonishing for a 'teacher' to do, but He had a firm purpose in mind: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." His disciples were to love through service, not domination, of one another.

In Latin, the opening phrase of this sentence is 'mandatum novum do vobis'. The word 'mundy' is thus a corruption of the Latin 'mandatum' (or command). The 'washing of the feet' ceremony was an important part of the medieval church's liturgy, symbolising the humility of the clergy, in obedience to the example of Christ.

Maundy Thursday Final Command Jesus Disciples Death Last Supper
 Washed Feet Astonishing Purpose Teacher As Loved you Must
 One Another Service Domination Latin Ceremony Medieval
 Humility Obedience

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