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PARISH MAGAZINE



September 2024



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From the Rectory

Dear Friends,

Many aspects of modern living are so much easier than those our forebears had to deal with – but with them come periodic frustrations. This week I experienced three – each very common concerning a bank, visiting a hospital and trying to park the car.

On Tuesday we tried to open a new account with the bank we've been loyal customers of for many years. It proved almost impossible online, so we thought we'd go into the bank – one of the bigger branches – in person, only to find that one can't open an account physically anymore.

On Wednesday I wanted to visit two people in Pembury Hospital. Not knowing which ward either was in I rang the hospital and was put through to the reception desk. In the past that has always worked quickly and well – and is useful as the enquiry desk inside the main entrance closes quite early. After 15 minutes hanging on, I gave up.

On Friday, one of our daughters and I went up to Ashdown Forest with the dogs. In trying to pay the £2 car parking fee we got nowhere with *RingGo* or *JustPark*; eventually, using the QR Code, we were able to pay.

What did I learn from these mundane everyday events? Perhaps the need to be flexible (we tried another bank)... maybe greater awareness of the circumstances that others live under (the NHS funding issues)... and of not being defeated by technology without a good try.

Also, patience. The world today is filled with impatient people; so many seem to be in a hurry. Stress levels are high and the pressures we live under often provoke impatience. The Bible teaches us that 'love is patient' in the famous passage in 1 Corinthians 13 that we often hear read at weddings. From the Scriptures, we learn that the more we receive God's love, love him and those around us in return, the more we learn patience and are able to live at peace, less in a hurry.

As well as being more patient with others, this can help us be more patient with ourselves as well. When we make mistakes, instead of being angry with ourselves, if we are able to mirror something of God's infinite patience we may find that we're less frustrated by inflexible banks, being kept waiting on the phone and trying to park legally... maybe!

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Churchwarden	Mrs Jill Pardey	01892 661882
Churchwarden	Mrs Gilly Halcrow	01892 770607
Sexton & Verger	Mr John Collins	01892 662389
Licensed Reader	Mr Donald Yonge	07872 529740
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Withyham Flower Guild	Mrs Jill Pardey	01892 661882
Withyham Altar Linen	Mrs Diane Pedder	01892 770240
Withyham Church Cleaning Rota	Mrs Anne Radford	01892 770021
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Churchwardens' Notes

by Jill Pardey & Gilly Halcrow

Although August should ordinarily be a quieter month with lots of people on holiday, it seems to have been rather busy. The month started with the return of Adrian Leak to conduct the Communion Service as James and Mary Campbell were away. Adrian and his wife Josephine are always warmly welcomed back to Withyham.

On 18th August, the annual Pet Service was held outside the Rectory. Quite a few dogs attended and were well behaved. We were introduced to each and everyone of them, however, the Campbell's new dog, Peggie, had to watch from one of the windows as she was on heat and chaos might have ensued had she joined us properly.

One wedding took place on one of the few sunny Saturdays during the month. With the church full of family and friends and also full of flowers and with the bells afterwards, it created a joyous occasion.

Please do support Gilly Halcrow's fundraising talk **Whatever Happened to Christopher Robin** on September 21st (see page 9 for details) – with a licensed bar and delicious eats in the interval, it should be an enjoyable evening for all.

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Church Calendar – September 2024

St. Michael and All Angels, Withyham, with All Saints, Blackham

(all services at Withyham unless stated)

Sunday 1st 14 th after Trinity	9.45 am	Zoom
	11.00 am	Holy Communion
	6.30 pm	Evensong
Sunday 8th 15 th after Trinity	11.00 am	Matins
Sunday 15th 16 th after Trinity	11.00 am	Matins
	6.30 pm	Evensong
Sunday 22nd 17 th after Trinity	11.00 am	Harvest Festival, Withyham
Sunday 29th 18 th after Trinity	11.00 am	Matins
	2.00-5.00pm	St. Michaels & All Angels' Day

The east end of Withyham Church will be closed from Monday 30th September for Phase II of essential repairs to the ceiling

Sunday 6th Oct 19 th after Trinity	9.45 am	Zoom
	11.00 am	Holy Communion
	6.30 pm	Harvest Festival, Blackham

Parish Registers – August 2024

Funerals

On 22nd July the funeral took place at St. Michael and All Angels Church, Withyham of Anthony 'Richard' Paul CARDEN who died on 10th July 2024 aged 86, followed by cremation at Kent & Sussex Crematorium, Tunbridge Wells on 23rd July.

On 14th August the interment of the ashes took place in Withyham Churchyard of Clement 'Michael' MARCHANT, who died on 26th April 2024 aged 93.

On 14th August, the funeral took place at the Tunbridge Wells Cemetery Chapel of Valerie Jean MACINTOSH, who died on 12th July aged 73.



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'WHATEVER HAPPENED TO CHRISTOPHER ROBIN'

A DELIGHTFUL, ILLUSTRATED TALK

BY GILLY HALCROW
SATURDAY

21ST SEPTEMBER 2024

6.30 FOR 7PM

ST MICHAELS & ALL ANGELS
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Family Support Work August 2024 update

by Nikki Kerr,
FSW Director of Fundraising & Marketing

Dear Friends,

With the summer coming to an end, we've experienced another few weeks full of activity. Our annual Warnham Park visit, as well as another trip to Arundel Castle Cricket Foundation, took place in glorious sunshine, and the many trips to beaches, parks and nature reserves have kept all of our families occupied. Behind the scenes, we have used this slightly quieter time of year to welcome our new Trustees and Chair, and make important plans for next year.

We know that activity will ramp up in September when children return to school, and we expect to be adding even more families to our waiting lists. It is a sad reflection of the times that so many families are finding that we are their only source of potential support, and desperate for us to work with them.

We know that many of you will be in the middle of planning harvest activities. Please do let us know if you are organising any events, which we can help you to promote, and if you are collecting harvest donations from us it would be very helpful to know in advance so that we can plan our van schedule (**See page 31**).



We still have very low stock of some of our foodbank staples, but we hope that this will improve over the coming weeks and we will be able to resume our full foodbank delivery schedule – recently we have had to cut some of our deliveries due to insufficient levels of food.

With many thanks for your continued support and prayers.

July's work in numbers

- 234 visits and 1,119 calls with families supporting 252 adults & 252 children
- 37 supported meetings with other agencies
- 68 group sessions held supporting 726 parents and 452 children
- 91 food deliveries made

Prayer points

- Pray for all the children starting a new school in September
- Pray staff return to work well rested after time off during the summer
- Give thanks for our new Trustees and pray that they will quickly settle into their important roles with us



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In 2011 Paul was diagnosed with Parkinson's. An incurable illness that gets progressively worse.

Paul found that it can also be funny!

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Display of Angels made
by children of
Withyham School

St Michael & All Angels' Day

Sunday 29th September

Withyham Church

2-5pm

*Craft & History Activities,
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Notes From Withyham Parish Council

Withyham Parish Council serves residents of Blackham, New Groombridge (the East Sussex side of the River Grom), Marden's Hill (St John's, Crowborough) and Withyham.
The Council met on Monday 8th July.

Full action from this meeting is available at www.withyhamparishcouncil.org.uk and www.facebook.com/WithyhamParishCouncil
Minutes can also be obtained from the Clerk via the Parish Office on 01892 864557 or clerk@withyhamparishcouncil.org.uk

Welcome Our New Councillors – Please join us in welcoming our wonderful new Councillors, Emma Bowers and Sue Skinner. With strong links to Blackham and Withyham, we are delighted that our Parish now has the representation reaching out to all its residents.

Graffiti – The wonderful new play area at Groombridge Recreation Ground has been vandalised with graffiti – this is such a shame for all the families and young children who come here to play, and for all the brilliant community volunteers and team that worked so hard to make this new play area a reality. Let's keep this community resource in good order for everyone.



Operation Crackdown – An initiative run by Sussex Safe Roads Partnerships, this provides communities of Sussex an opportunity to report specific instances of anti-social driving, as well as abandoned vehicles on the road. If you would like to submit a report, please visit www.operationcrackdown.org Thank you for helping us keep our roads safe.



Free Electric Blanket Testing – With the colder months approaching soon, East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service will be hosting opportunities throughout October for free safety checks. Please stop by to ensure your blanket is winter ready.

Monday 14 th October		
Heathfield Fire Station	High Street, Heathfield, TN21 0UP	10.00am - 12.00pm
Mayfield Fire Station	Tunbridge Wells Road, Mayfield, TN20 6PJ	2.00pm - 4.00pm
Tuesday 15 th October		
Uckfield Fire Station	Bell Farm Road, Uckfield, TN22 1BA	10.00am - 12.00pm
Crowborough Fire Station	Beacon Road, Crowborough, TN6 1AF	2.00pm - 4.00pm

Summer Maintenance – Alex, Withyham Parish Council’s maintenance person has been working diligently over the summer to clean and maintain our noticeboards, benches and bus shelters. We hope you have noticed the improvements, please do get in touch with the Parish Clerk if you have any other incidents to report.



Times Gone By – This month we celebrate the rich history of St. Thomas C of E Primary School, in Groombridge. Established in 1844, its buildings, and uniforms, look a little different today.



The Next Council Meeting – This will be on Monday 9th September at 7:00pm in Groombridge Old Station. Please do come along if you would like to see us in action. As always, please see our website for useful information about what we are doing in the parish as well as our agendas and minutes at www.withyhamparishcouncil.org.uk



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£15 - Alexander Bishop

£10 - Jill Pardey

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Each number costs £12 per year, if you would like to join, please contact Rick Hunnam (01892) 770347 or email chair@withyhamvillagehall.co.uk.

What's on?

Forthcoming Events
in the Withyham Village Hall

FRIDAY CAFÉ Friday 13th September - 10:30 - 12:00

HALL LUNCH Thursday 19th September - 12:15 for 12:30

Save the dates

CHRISTMAS LOCAL CRAFTS MARKET Saturday 30th November

CAROL CONCERT Thursday 12th December

More information to follow soon....



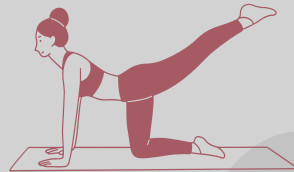
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2024 Dates

13th September

11th October

8th November

13th December

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Thanks to the following institutions for supporting our cafe.



FRIDAY CAFE REVIEW

At the Friday Cafe in August we had a lovely time with the gelli plate. Even those who thought they weren't creative produced some beautiful art. Thank you to Sarita Ashby and June Noble for the delicious cakes, and thank you to Kate Roberts for lending us the paints.

We had a great quiz (thanks to Nikki Newcombe) with all the answers starting with the letter A and lots of giggles from the naughty table!

Here's some of the artwork that was produced.





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Saturday 21st September

10am -12pm Groombridge Village Hall

Withyham Parish Amblers

Saturday 21st September




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9am Meet to walk at 9.15am

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Meeting Rosemary Russell by James Campbell

Rosemary grew up in Triples Cottage, Station Road – the house that she lived in all of her life until she moved to Crowborough in 2010. As her parents were older, and her father more than 20 years older than her mother, for Rosemary and her older sister it sometimes felt like being brought up by grandparents.

Rosemary attended Withyham School. There were 27 pupils there so no canteen. The lovely Mrs Vaughan used to arrive with a basket of homemade sandwiches; her speciality was beetroot. Rosemary moved to her secondary school then in Groombridge where she enjoyed life, latterly as head girl and being sent out on jolly errands. The children caught the bus from outside Welfare's Shop. Sometimes, if the weather was bad, the bus was cancelled and the children had to walk to Groombridge! She finally left aged 16½ when the school itself closed.

During the war, her father was an Air Raid Warden. When there was an air raid, the children hid in a cupboard under the stairs that had a hip bath – full of apples! Her parents were one of the few to have a telephone – one of the old candlestick phones with one piece to speak into and another to listen with. Their number was Hartfield 88, and it was much in demand from neighbours asking to use it to ring the doctor; the exchange was at Hartfield.



After school, Rosemary had three jobs. First, for over five years, she worked for an optician in Tunbridge Wells as the receptionist and also as the bookkeeper.

Then, more briefly, at the old Kent and Sussex Hospital on Mount Ephraim. Finally, for all of 37 years, Rosemary worked for a professional photographer in Tunbridge Wells doing a wide variety of administrative tasks. When her boss retired in 2000, Rosemary did as well.

In the early days, Rosemary remembers catching the 8.22am train – steam of course – from Withyham Station. In the winter, if the weather was poor and the train from East Grinstead delayed, the Station Master would tell her to go home and have a cup of tea. Then he'd give her a ring when it was on its way; no one ever missed it. On other occasions, all those waiting would huddle around the fire in his office in the Station. The last train to Withyham was at 11.45pm. Sometimes the Station Master would be asleep and the train driver had to blow his whistle to wake him so he could open the level-crossing gates!

Rosemary met her husband Ken in the 1960s and they were married in 1973. His work as carpet rep. took him all around the southeast, but meant that they didn't have to move house. Sadly, he suffered a number of years of ill health and died at the end of 2004. Rebecca ("Becki") had been born in 1976 and now Rosemary also has a 21-year-old granddaughter, Keara.

Rosemary's contact with the Church began with her listening to the Sunday Service on the radio, sometimes singing hymns accompanied by her mother on the piano. She joined the Sunday School in Church in the days of Rev. Arthur Miles, graduating to the Choir aged ten and becoming a Bellringer at 13. She rang her first peel (three hours) at the time of her 21st birthday. She was a member of the Withyham Church Choir for 54 years. She also remained a faithful and regular bellringer until 2019, including two spells as Tower Captain. She was also a stalwart at the Fete for many years.

Ken and Rosemary weren't great travellers abroad, Ken preferring country pubs and a pint. Since his death Rosemary has discovered cruises, including to Russia, Iceland, the Canaries and Croatia: next up, Scandinavia. Like her father, she loves gardening; this and other activities keep her busy and contented.

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Groombridge Horticultural Society by Sue Obbard



Hours of daylight are becoming measurably shorter, but with variable weather in recent weeks it's been ideal growing weather – especially for weeds. On the upside, there should be plenty of produce and flowers in price condition for our September show on Saturday 14th September. The show runs from 2:30-4pm in the main village hall in Groombridge. Please contact Gwyneth Davies for more information.

At 8pm on Thursday 17th October, in the new hall Groombridge, Steve Barnes from Birchden farm will give a talk on *The Adventures of an Asparagus Grower*.

If you would like to join us, please contact Lyndsey at
lyndseysymonds@gmail.com or call Gwyneth Davies on 01892 862430
groombridgehorticulturalsociety@gmail.com
www.groombridgehorticulturalsociety.co.uk



Groombridge Film Society



We are taking our summer break, but we will be back in September for our
AGM on Thursday 12th September at 19:30 in the Village Hall Club Room.
- members and non-members are welcome.

As usual this is a very straightforward sociable event to elect the committee and its officers (Treasurer and Secretary), hear our plans for **GFS** - now in its eighth year
– and enjoy a glass of bubbly!

It is also a good time to join the society or renew your season's membership.
We look forward to sharing details of our 2024/25 programme which runs from October to May.

Film Nights: Sundays **October 6, November 3 and December 8** in the New Hall.

Saturday October 19th **GFS** will be hosting the Community Cafe in the Village Hall.
We look forward to seeing you!

If you would like to join the committee, be a volunteer on film nights or have ideas for films you would like us to consider screening, please let us know at:

[**groombridgefilmsociety@gmail.com**](mailto:groombridgefilmsociety@gmail.com)

Withyham Church Essential Building Work – Phase II by Gilly Halcrow and James Campbell

In April, the ceiling tiles in the Nave (the main part of the Church) were re-attached. However, it was discovered that although the ceiling above the Chancel (where the choir sit) looks similar from the ground, it is actually made of plasterwork and not wooden. Some repairs are necessary.

It will therefore be necessary to close that part of the Church from Monday 30th September. The Nave will be protected from dust coming from the Chancel by plastic sheeting on a frame. The remainder of the building will remain open.

Sunday services will continue as normal, led from the Lady Chapel with accompaniment on a keyboard. It won't be possible to hold funerals during this time. Because the plasterwork is being restored using traditional methods, the work is expected to take about a month.

Do let us know of any issues that arise.

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Groombridge and Hartfield Surgery Patients Participation Group by Tony Howell

We have arranged a **Quiz Night** on 5th October to raise funds towards the purchase of an additional Doppler Probe to allow the Practice to have one available in both surgeries.

Doppler Probes are used by the nursing team to check the circulation in the feet with possible peripheral vascular disease and patients with venous ulcers.

Narrowing of the arteries in the legs causes peripheral vascular disease, and if unchecked or undiagnosed, can lead to gangrene and amputations, picking up these symptoms early with the Doppler Probe can reduce the risk.

Thinning of the skin, and reduced blood flow, which often comes with ageing, causes venous ulcers. Once an ulcer forms (often after an injury) the recovery can be prolonged, often over 6 months. The most effective way to speed up recovery (usually to weeks rather than months) is to use compression bandages or stockings. But circulation must be checked before this treatment can be used.

The **Quiz Night** will be held in the Groombridge Village Hall on the 5th October commencing at 7.30pm, doors open at 7.00pm.

Tickets are £15 per person, which includes a burger or hot-dog with all the trimmings and a tray bake dessert. There will be a licensed bar.

Tickets will be on sale from 2nd September at Groombridge Post Office and Hartfield Stores. We hope to see you there.

Email us at gandhppg@outlook.com



Harvest Festival by Miriam Boobier

The Harvest Festival Service is at 11am on 22nd September St. Michaels and All Angels, Withyham. As in previous years, if you are able to donate any dry and tinned food for local families supported by **Family Support Work**, that would be greatly appreciated. On behalf of the families I would like to convey my most sincere thanks for your continued support. www.familysupportwork.org



BETSI

(Blackham Events Team for Social Inclusion)

SAVE THE DATE

Blackham Fireworks and Bonfire Event

Sunday November 3rd at 4.30pm

We are delighted to announce that we will be holding a Family Fireworks and Bonfire Event in Blackham Village. This will be a 'ticket only' event. More information to follow over the next few weeks but please pop it onto your calendar. This, like all our events, is designed to be run with safety and enjoyment in mind.

Please see our website betsi.a264.co.uk for more information about BETSI, who we are, and what we do.

Come and enjoy your fishing with CDA

All ages and abilities are welcome. We have a thriving junior section, a welcoming ladies section and both weekend and midweek matches running nearly all year round. We have waters to suit most styles of fishing across Sussex and Kent, from half acre ponds to a 280 acre reservoir, plus rivers and canal.

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**THE ARTS SOCIETY
ASHDOWN FOREST**

**Thursday 12th September at 2pm
Crowborough Community Centre,**

**Impressionism & Post-Impressionism:
with lecturer: Sarah Ciacci**

These are two of the most popular movements in art, with impressionists such as Monet, Renoir, Degas, Cezanne, and a generation of post-impressionists including Seurat, Gauguin and Van Gogh. Their stories are fascinating, their art diverse, and their ideas challenging

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Ashurst and Blackham Sportsfield by Suzanne Whiston

Nine local people have come together to form a new committee to look after the Ashurst and Blackham Sportsfield. The group oversees ongoing activities and aim to put on fun filled events over the coming months. Everyone is welcome and all ideas will be considered. The hope is to make the sportsfield an all inclusive, thriving community place, for the benefit of all in the local area.

The committee members are Suzanne Whiston (chair), Julie Ann Keating (secretary), Chloe Archard, Emma Tysoe, James Chappell, Joseph Chapman, Nick Philpott, Rob Adams and Sarah Lilly. We hope to see and hear from you all soon.

A Sports Day To Remember

On a hot afternoon, July twenty first,
Sporting rivalries sprung up in Blackham and Ashurst.
Wives challenged husbands, sisters took on brothers, young versus old,
They entered the sports field arena, with one aim, to win gold.

Fuelled by burgers, hot dogs, ice creams and fizzy pop,
Would be competitors, stood at the start line, limbering up.

On your marks; for sack races,
Get set; the three-legged chases,
And go; eggs on spoons please, not on faces.

Laughter, chaos, cheers and glories,
A tug-of-war victory for the oldies... well those over forty.

And so for the grand finale to the day's sporting show...
A cheer for the first ever winner of 'musical chair madness' – KING JOE



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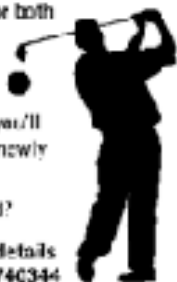
This panoramic, family run, nine hole course makes full use of the natural features of the valley it's set in - providing a genuine test of skill for both experienced and novice golfers.

Halfway between East Grinstead and Tunbridge Wells - set in the peaceful village of Blackham - you'll receive a warm welcome at the newly refurbished club house.

Why not call in and play a round?

Membership available, call for details or to book tee times on 01892 746344

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The Forest Row Repair Café

**Saturday 21st September
from 10am - 1pm**

Forest Row Community Centre, RH18 5DZ
Last orders at 12:30pm

Now the kids have gone back to school, you have time to look after those treasured items you've been meaning to bring for repair

REPAIR
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Row

The Final Word... on Badger Culling by Robert Veitch

Just before we went to press with this edition, I happened to watch *Brian May: The Farmers, The Badgers and Me* which proved to be something of an eye opener – even for someone who was previously well aware of both sides of the argument.

Even at 77 year of age, Sir Brian is most likely to be spotted on stages around the world, wielding his *Red Special*, banging out the *Queen* back catalogue. He's also lesser spotted on *The Sky at Night*, making use of his Phd in astrophysics, started in 1968 and completed in 2007 – sometimes life gets in the way. A well-known animal rights campaigner, he views badger as blameless and culls as unnecessary.

The programme suggested cows pass tuberculosis to each other and that current bovine TB skin tests produce a great many false negatives. As with COVID-19 tests, false negatives leave infected souls in circulation – free to pass the infection on to others.

It was a bit of an, 'everything you know is wrong' moment, although Sir Brian's findings need to be peer tested and replicated to be validated. Maybe, most interestingly despite years of campaigning, he realised the best way forward was to work with the farmers, because ultimately they wanted a solution too. Patience and flexibility, as mentioned at the front of this edition, can be a wonderful thing.

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Local Information

Kings' Hall, Withyham	chair@withyhamvillagehall.co.uk bookings@withyhamvillagehall.co.uk	
Chairman:	Rick Hunnam	01892 770347
Lettings:	Mrs Meg Stafford	07972 161243
Blackham Village Hall	venues4hire.org/venue/details4815	
Bookings:	Mrs Ruth Gubbins blackhamvillagehall@gmail.com	07890 303791
Groombridge & Hartfield Medical Practice	Withyham Road, Groombridge, TN3 9QP Old Crown Farm, High Street, Hartfield, TN7 4AD	01892 863326
Beacon Surgery , Beacon Road, Crowborough, TN6 1AH		01892 652233
Saxonbury House Medical Group , Croft Road, Crowborough		01892 603131
St Michael's Primary School	Mrs Katie O'Shea (Headteacher)	01892 770307
Withyham Art Group	Ali Hunnam	01892 770347
Dorset Arms Angling Club	Keith Grose	01892 652631
Withyham Cricket Club	Peter Hamerton	01892 655932
Blackham Country Players	Linda Weekes	01892 740261
Citizens' Advice Bureau , Crowborough		01892 655303
Withyham Parish Charity	<i>Trust providing financial help for those in need</i> Applications should be made to Gilly Halcrow	01892 770607
Withyham Parish Council (WPC)	The Old Station, Groombridge, TN3 9RD www.withyhamparishcouncil.org.uk clerk@withyhamparishcouncil.org.uk	01892 864557
WPC Office hours:	Monday 12:00 - 17:00 Tuesday - Friday* 09:30 - 12:00	
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