

Cuckfield *Life*

Inc. Brook St, Ansty & Staplefield

Local village talk,
by the village

Issue #24 : OctNov '14

Free



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EDITORIAL

By David Tingley, Editor

Most of you will be reading this just a couple of days before one of the biggest days in the Cuckfield calendar – the Independent State of Cuckfield Mayoral Election. Friday 17th Oct is the date and The White Harte is the place. We will be bring you coverage of the community event in our next issue, out next month.

However, in these pages we have plenty to shout about right now!

Resident **Robert Hammersley**, conductor and leader of a local choral society, talks to Claire Cooper as he takes his position under the Village People spotlight on **page 20**. Thank you to Robert for being willing to do this. If you know someone who you think would make an interesting reading subject to the rest of Cuckfield do email us at editor@cuckfieldlife.co.uk.

There are plenty of events taking place in the next month or so. Whether it's concerts, craft fairs, fireworks celebrations or live theatre. On that subject, Kate Fleming gives us a taste of what **Cuckfield Dramatic Society's** production of *Racing Demons* will be like when it opens in November. This contemporary play sounds like a must-see and within the setting of Holy Trinity Church should be a very interesting evening. Read Kate's article on **page 37**.

Many of you will have either attended the **Cuckfield Village Show** last month or entered the competition, or both! It was my first time at the celebration of village talent and I loved it. On **page 8** you can see just a small sample of the goodness and how many of the locals turned out.

Although WWI celebrations have been occurring throughout 2014, November seems like a particularly pertinent time to showcase a couple of Cuckfield gents who have been awarded the **Russian Ashakov medal**. It's a pleasure to feature this on **page 25**.

See you at the Mayor's Procession on 18th!

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Cuckfield Life Published
by Kipper



 David Tingley
The whole village turns
out for last years Cuckfield
Mayor's Procession

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We'd love to hear from groups, organisations and individuals about what's happening locally. Include a photo if you can. Email your stories to editor@cuckfieldlife.co.uk

Bonfire night

Plans are well underway for one of the village's biggest fundraising events – the annual Cuckfield Bonfire.

This year's event takes place at Cuckfield Park on Saturday 8th November.

Gates will open at 6pm and the fire is due to be lit at 6.45pm. The firework display, by Pyro 1, with music from Bright FM, will start at 7.30pm.

Admission costs £7 for adults, £5 for children under 16, while under 4s go free.

Food on offer includes hot dogs, a hog roast, burgers, pizza, drinks (no alcohol), snacks, sweets, doughnuts and popcorn.

This year proceeds will go to Holy Trinity School, Woodlands Mead School for children and young people with special needs, Kangaroos which runs out of school activities for young people with severe learning disabilities, and other local charities.

Play Meadow Update

by Flis Irving

The MSDC Cabinet took the decision on 9th September to reject the substantial community bid, in excess of £100,000, to purchase the Play Meadow at the end of Courtmead Road on behalf of the village of Cuckfield, a bid supported by the Parish Council. This, however, is not the end of the fight. We now have the full weight of the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan on our side and, with a revised planning application having been submitted recently for yet another oversized house on the land, the final push can now begin.

The Play Meadow only has the inflated value given to it by MSDC if plans for the vast overdevelopment of the plot are passed. By sending objections to the proposal, which can be viewed on the MSDC website, to Steven King, the new Chief Planning Officer, villagers can try to make sure that this is not the case. Comments can be posted to him at the Council offices in Oaklands Road, Haywards Heath, RH16 1SS or sent via his email address: steven.king@midsussex.gov.uk, quoting Application Number 14/03388/FUL. This must be done before the deadline of 24th October.

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Air Ambulance appeals for volunteers

A life-saving charity providing a Helicopter Emergency Medical Service (HEMS) in the South East is appealing for more volunteers in Kent, Surrey and Sussex.

Volunteers can help by placing and emptying collection boxes, selling merchandise at fundraising events, being store and street collectors, drivers, couriers and office administrators and representing the charity at cheque presentations. They can also help raise awareness of the service as public speakers.

Head of Volunteer Resource Amy Hamer said: "As a charity, we cover a region in excess of 3,500 square miles with a population of 4.5million people.

"Volunteers are the lifeblood of the organisation and absolutely vital to our operation in terms of raising funds and awareness. They can give as little or as much of their time as they like and all new recruits will receive an induction and training in each of their chosen roles."

To find out more about becoming a volunteer go to www.kssairambulance.org.uk/involved/volunteering, call Amy Hamer on 01622 833806 or email amyhamer@kssairambulance.org.uk.

Make festive memories

Santa Runs are back and this year St Catherine's Hospice are making them bigger and merrier than ever. The nearest event to Cuckfield is at the K2 Leisure Centre in Crawley, which takes place on Saturday 22nd November.

The charity is asking as many as possible to take part in a Santa Run this Christmas and raise sponsorship. The money raised at each Santa Run will contribute to the £180,000 it costs to care for patients and their families in the local area over the twelve days of Christmas.

Registration is now open! It's just £10 for adults and £5 for under 16s. There's also a family rate of £25 for 2 adults and 2 children. Register at www.stch.org.uk/santarun or call 01293 447364.

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Another defib for Cuckfield

Soon to be out-going Major Mike Schlup cut the ribbon on a new Automated External Defibrillator (AED) that was unveiled last month along with organiser Nicky Lawrence (pictured). This unit take the total number of AEDs available in the village up to five, this one being installed on the east side of the nursery building at Whitemans Green.

The installation was made possible when 'Team Hagan' took on the gruelling French cycle challenge 'Marmotte Granfordo' back in July. The team, Paddy Westbury, Nick Fewtrell, Chris Renardson and Adrian Bennett, raised over £2,000 for The Sussex Heart Charity; who installed the machine with the kind permission and help from Ben Toogood and Mid Sussex District Council.



Youth club get inspired by charity

Last month The Sussex Heart Charity came to visit Cuckfield where they held an Open Afternoon at The Old School – allowing those from the village to read displays about healthy diet and see demonstrations of how to use the defibrillator devices which are installed around Cuckfield.

The visit was followed by the team going to visit Holy Trinity Church youth club – Inspire. The young people were invited to use the AED and also taught basic life support techniques. Charity chief executive Andrew Forsyth was presented with a cheque for £250 which the Inspire group had raised.



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Craft and Gift Fair

The third annual Craft and Gift Fair is to be held at the Old School on Saturday 8th November between 10.30am and 2.30pm.

There will be 40 stalls selling home produced cupcakes, handbags, scarves, jewellery, candles, greetings cards, Christmas decorations, home ware, photo prints, books and lots more gift ideas. Plus Father Christmas will be attending with a small gift for every child.

Homemade soup, cakes, tea and coffee will be available throughout the day.

Why not call in for coffee, lunch or tea and the solution to your annual problem of what to get your Auntie Ada?

The event is being organised by The Old School, with any profits going towards the ongoing maintenance of the building on Church Street. Admission is free.

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Village shows off skills

The 9th Annual Cuckfield Village Show was held last month within the grounds of Cuckfield Park. The warm September afternoon was welcome and had a great turn out from the village as young and not-so-young sat on hay bales together, with refreshments coming in the form of tea and cakes from the WI and the beer tent.

With over 90 different categories in the show there were hundreds of examples of craft and gardening skills on display in the marquee. A homemade bookmark, pizza face, floral art, cake pops and coloured potatoes; there was something for everyone!

At the end of the afternoon the host, Sue Mayou, presented the awards of special recognition to those who had taken part, and special mention should certainly go to 'Best in Show' winner George Baty.

The Cuckfield Society is already working on plans for next year's event and it hopes to release details of the categories before Christmas to give entrants more time with the crafts.



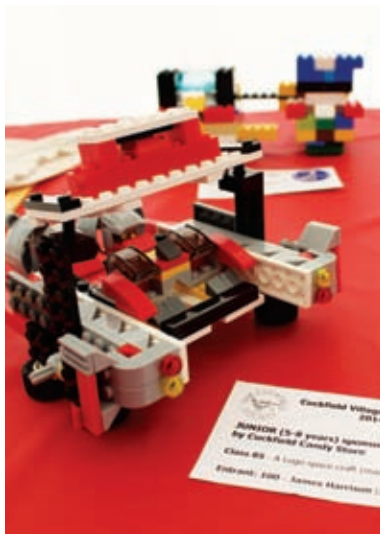
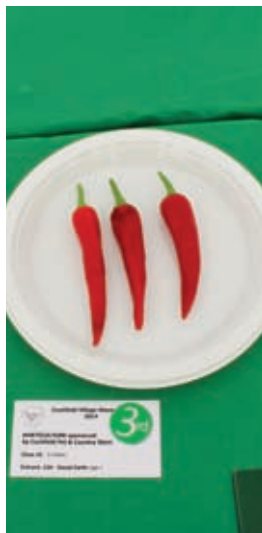




photo by Elizabeth Mailey

Tour of Britain

When the Tour of Britain announced it would be cycling through Cuckfield there was much excitement in the village. The event took place last month and, as you can see here, hundreds of people lined the route to catch a glimpse of the spectacle as it zoomed past. Photographer and keen cyclist Elizabeth Mailey from Staplefield even managed to capture the image of 'Wiggo' above. Thanks to all who sent in photos of the event.



photo by Brian Cutler



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Small is beautiful

Cuckfield Museum is delighted to announce the exciting news that it has once again been awarded Full Accreditation status by the Arts Council. This is the result of month's of work by a sub-committee of Trustees and Executive Committee Members who are delighted to announce success. To give an idea of the work involved in preparing the application for accreditation, the Arts Council's Guidance Notes alone ran to 130 A4 pages detailing the requirements. These ranged from data covering all aspects of organisational health; users and their experiences in visiting or making use of the museum and its records; and (not least in importance, of course) the documentation, care and conservation of the collections themselves.

Registration under the Accreditation Scheme indicates that a museum has achieved a nationally approved standard in management, collections' care and delivery of information and visitor services. This puts it on a par with such prestigious museums as The British

Museum. It means that if, for example, the Museum is seeking a grant or looking to make an acquisition for its collection it will be regarded as reliable and well run and therefore better placed to be successful. A well deserved accolade for all the volunteers who run this small, local museum.

It seems appropriate, therefore, that the latest display is called 'Small is Beautiful' and you will be amazed to see just how small some of the exhibits are! All the miniature items are from the museum's collection or on loan from local residents. There are three tiny dolls which are Victorian cake/pudding charms, a tiny Eskimo baby from an Edwardian 'snow babies' Christmas cake decoration and what must be the smallest Noah's Ark you have ever seen. Made of metal with painted glass figures and animals, it is a perfect example of artwork in miniature. There's also a miniature Toy Store, full of exquisitely made toys, kindly loaned by the Chapel Gallery in Cuckfield.

This display is running alongside the major wartime display to commemorate WWI. Well worth a visit if you have not yet seen it, so do call in.

There's also an extra talk to fit in to the Autumn schedule and this will be on 'West Sussex World War One Hospitals'. It is given by Katherine Slay, from West Sussex Records Office, who looks at what life was like for staff and patients at that time. This is particularly relevant to Cuckfield as The Queen's Hall was used as a hospital during the war and it ties in nicely with the current WWI nursing display. It is in the Council Chamber at 2.30pm on Tuesday 18th November. Further details can be found at www.cuckfieldmuseum.org



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Local food

VILLAGE GREEN

By Margaret Tyzack More, Cuckfield Local

Just recently I spent an inspiring day over in Pulborough, the focus being Local Food: Growing Stronger Communities. I learned many fascinating things, including something I didn't know about the Co-operative Society.

As far as growing food locally is concerned the West Sussex Coastal Plane, stretching from Portsmouth to Brighton and north to the South Downs, is quite unique. It is the lightest area in the UK, particularly in the middle of winter and 1% more light means around 1% more crop. This makes it the perfect place for large glasshouses. Seven thousand people are employed and agriculture is the largest industry after tourism, showing that the Green Economy works.

Why am I telling you this? The glasshouses operate as closed loop systems where the crops are pollinated by bumble bees, so the tomatoes, salad crops and so forth are grown without pesticides, which is good news for us. There is also enough electricity generated to feed excess into the National Grid. Win, win all the way round.

Around fifty percent of our food is imported, which means an increase in the number of traffic accidents and CO2 emissions from the giant trucks speeding up and down our motorways.

One of the speakers was Gemma Lacey, Head of Sustainability at the the Southern Co-operative. "Must have a word with her about pubs," I thought! However, it turns out that the Southern Co-op is an independent regional business with many community food stores and other interests. It is totally separate from the Co-op based in Manchester, which is the one causing Cuckfield all the problems with the move from the village centre to Whiteman's Green and the loss of the The Ship, our North Cuckfield local pub. The branch in Haywards Heath is Southern Co-operative and stocks Sussex cheeses as well as as lots of other locally sourced food.

Running into a friend from the Sussex Wildlife Trust, who also attended the day, I was able to ask a question that has been bothering me. "Does sudden oak death syndrome kill oak trees?" Apparently it does not. What it does do, however, is to kill beech trees slowly, so now you know. Puzzled? So am I.

I've always loved oak trees and lived for sixteen years in a converted barn in Sheffield Park surrounded by oak beams. Interestingly, I found out that some of them were ship's timbers, possibly from the Spanish Armada. A lady living in an old house just north of Cuckfield told me that when the galleons were no longer fit for purpose or had been damaged beyond repair they were broken up and some of the timber taken up the River Ouse for house building. Her house is built with these timbers, as are many others in East Sussex. Repair, Renew, Recycle even then.

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Trends in interior design

DESIGN AT HOME

By Fiona Evans, Limited Editions

Each year interior design shows inspire us with an amazing array of furnishings and finishes; everything from stunning textiles, statement lighting, fabulous rugs, carpets, beautiful tiles to the latest in curtain poles and really all that is required to add the finishing touches to complete an interior design project. The 'Decorex' trade show I have just visited was exciting, vibrant and gave an insight to trends for 2015.

I really love to see anything that is handcrafted, as it gives a special unique edge to the finished interior. For example, there were beautiful patterned and plain rugs which were hand knotted, hand woven or hand tufted and available in an array of colours and choice, of styles – a fantastic way to add art to your space. Throughout the show I noticed that blue was a popular choice especially blue/green and turquoise. Rugs were no exception, with a fabulous turquoise rug on display that would look equally amazing as a wall hanging. Not limited to colour and available in a neutral palette as black, white and grey, textured, sculpted and shaggy carpets and rugs are a great alternative to add depth and interest to wooden or tiled floors in a neutral interior.

Being a great fan of glass I was drawn to the amazing selection of glass items on offer, from stunning hand crafted lamps, vases and bottles in dazzling colourless glass to those in glistening colours or infused with eye catching metals such as gold and bronze. All very tempting as small or large statement pieces.

Furniture designers displayed magnificent pieces finished to perfection, to be made bespoke to your requirements and finished in the latest designer fabrics, printed, woven or embroidered designs. There is such choice; fantastic large bold colourful designs, soft, pale neutrals, textured neutrals, geometric designs in vogue with 1970s vintage, animal prints in crazy colours, large and small floral patterns, wonderful patchwork designs, birds, plaids and zigzags. Zigzags in particular seemed to be a popular choice.

Lighting is taking on new twists and turns with examples inspired from mid-century and industrial eras in line with the current trend of all things industrial. Large statement lamps with visible filaments fitted individually or in groups add to the industrial edge. There were plenty of other styles of lighting from classical to contemporary, including fantastic chandeliers, confirming that there is something new for everyone.

Wallpaper design is bold. On show were large statement prints, panoramic effects, multiple repeat images, patchwork designs and hand blocked wallpaper – all inspirational and the list goes on. Bespoke fabric walling and panels, textured wall murals are also choices for 2015.

Overall I would say that bold prints, zigzag designs, turquoise, industrial style lamps and coloured glass will be on trend for 2015.

Sleeping and sitting named as top triggers for back pain

Orit Aharonovich from Cuckfield Chiropractic Clinic is urging people to think about what they put their backs through during an average day, as research findings reveal that sleeping and sitting are two of the main culprits for triggering neck and back pain in the UK following a national back care awareness campaign earlier this month.

More than three quarters (76%) of people surveyed in the South East say they are currently experiencing back or neck pain or have done in the past.

Surprisingly, it's not strenuous exercise putting most people's backs out - 43% of respondents in the UK pin sleeping as their most common pain trigger and 44% said sitting is also a trigger.

It seems the modern lifestyle could be to blame; 82% of those surveyed say they spend up to six hours a day sitting in front of a computer and almost one in five (19%) spend more than four hours a day watching TV.

Orit comments: "As a nation we're becoming increasingly sedentary and struggle to switch off - whether it's sitting at a desk or lounging on the sofa, hunching over a mobile device or lying in bed for too long, the effects of modern lifestyles are taking their toll."

Please donate old and foreign money to Hospice

Any old or foreign coins and notes can be used by St Peter & St James Hospice as part of its fundraising. Even coins and notes that are no longer legal currency can be converted into funds to support the Hospice.

If you have any old or foreign money at home that you think is worthless or you do not need, please donate it to St Peter & St James Hospice. You can send the coins and notes to the Hospice address, take the money to the Hospice Reception or put it in the collection buckets and pots in shops and elsewhere in the community.

When looking at fundraising for the Hospice, 86% of its funding comes from the community. Everyone at St Peter & St James is grateful for the community's generosity and support.



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Tavistock & Summerhill School is a registered charity number 180066.



photo: Arthur Angel

Chamber music concert

Ensemble Reza is a group of highly talented musicians who are close friends performing together. The group are also committed to music education and have run several inspirational projects with schools across Haywards Heath. This programme of work will be developed in 2015.

Ensemble Reza are really pleased to be returning to Holy Trinity Church on Saturday 29th November at 7.30pm with a fantastic programme including the spectacular Mendelssohn's Octet and Dvorak's American Quartet. Both pieces are monumental in the

chamber music repertoire and feature Dvorak's musical portrait of the Bohemian landscapes and the sparkling romanticism of Mendelssohn.

Tickets for the VIP pre-concert event starting at 6pm in the Old School Cuckfield, including a free glass of bubbly: £15 adult and £5 under 18. Tickets for the concert only £12 adult and £5 under 18. Tickets are available from Carousel Music, Wealden Stores, Pepperbox in Cuckfield or directly from Ensemble Reza (www.ensemblereza.com).



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Robert Hammersley

VILLAGE PEOPLE



From choir boy to conductor and composer, Cuckfield's Robert Hammersley has had a distinguished musical career working with some of the country's leading musicians and choirs. But one of the highlights of his year is the annual Remembrance Concert in Haywards Heath, when Robert picks up the baton to lead choirs of adults and children singing his own composition 'Remembrance'. With rehearsals for this year's event well under way and tickets selling fast, Robert spoke about his career and explained why leading community singing brings him such joy.

By Claire Cooper

Brought up in Maidenhead, Robert was encouraged to sing from an early age by his father who was organist at St Mary's Parish Church. "I got my first experience of singing in a choir on Christmas Day 1947 when I was nearly five years old," said Robert. "Not enough boys had turned up so I was quickly put into a cassock which was so big I almost tripped over it!"

But by the age of nine it became clear that Robert had an exceptional singing voice when he gained a place in the prestigious King's College Choir in Cambridge. "The competition was huge with 105 boys auditioning for just six places," he recalled.

Robert continued to excel and in 1955 he achieved every young choir boy's dream – to perform the solo, 'Once In Royal David's City', broadcast by the BBC to every home in the country as an introduction to the Queen's Speech on Christmas Day. He was just 12 years old.

In 1961 Robert was offered a place at Oxford University but, surprisingly, not to study music. "I took a course called PPE," said Robert. "But I continued with my music and joined the Magdalen College Choir." However, a disastrous maths exam led to a change of direction. "I got virtually zero on a maths paper," Robert recalled. "I was told I could change courses and read music or leave. I wasn't entirely happy so I chose to leave."

Leaving his studies behind, Robert got a job selling bread for the Co-op in Guildford! This left plenty of time to develop his passion for performing and making music. "I joined the Guildford Cathedral choir where we made several recordings, including the platinum disc of

Christmas Carols from Guildford Cathedral, which I'm proud to say have recently been reissued and are on sale today," he said.

He also conducted the Guildford Singers, a local choir which won the BBC's 'Let the People Sing' choral competition, and founded the professional Guildford Chamber Orchestra.

Robert won a place to study at the Guildhall School of Music, where he was presented with several awards including the Dove Memorial Prize, a medal awarded for general excellence in composing and conducting, studying with Sir Adrian Boult and working with Sir Neville Marriner, Sir John Eliot Gardiner and Barry Rose.

He was offered the chance to return to Oxford to complete his degree at Magdalen College. "I was able to compress the degree into 18 months as I had a family by then," he said.

During that time he was appointed Musical Director of Oxford University's 'Schola Cantorum', the country's leading mixed voice student choir. With Robert conducting, the choir attracted national acclaim with its BBC recordings which included a performance of Monteverdi's Vespers with the English Chamber Orchestra.

After leaving university, Robert became senior lecturer of music at Bournemouth University before being offered a job at Piers School, the largest in Oxford. "The area had a lot of social problems, including high unemployment due to the closure of the Morris factory, and the school was a bit of a rough house!" Robert recalled.



“Brian Derbyshire, who later became Head of the Sixth Form College in Haywards Heath, had taken over as headmaster and was very keen to promote music.

“We had some significant successes, including student Sally Harrison who went on to become a soloist at the Royal Opera House and to play Carlotta in Phantom of the Opera.”

Robert later became community musician to Wantage Schools. “I was a ‘roving music teacher’ encouraging adults and children to work together in community music-making projects.”

He then moved on to Lord Williams’s School in Thame. “Three schools had merged into one making it the largest school in the country but it also meant that, with 2,500 students, I had a huge trawl of students for my choir,” said Robert. “I was extremely proud when we were invited to take 55 students on a 17 day tour of the US, performing in New York, Washington and Boston.

“After one performance in St John the Divine Cathedral a little boy came up to me and said he thought we sang like angels – that really made my day!”

Robert’s move to Sussex came following a late night phone call from James Flecker, Headmaster of Ardingly College. “James asked me if I was interested in applying for the position of Director of Music,” said Robert. “I had also been shortlisted for a job at Latymer Upper in Hammersmith but when I came Sussex and saw the school on a beautiful bright snowy day, I thought... this is the place for me!”

It was Robert’s first experience of teaching in a private school.

“One of the reasons the job at Ardingly appealed to me was that I was able to work with children from seven years old through to 18 and get that continuity.

“By the time the children reached senior school we already knew each other well. We built up a thriving choir of 60 students and were the only choir invited to sing at St Paul’s Cathedral while it was without its organ, as it was felt we were the only ones who could cope,” said Robert. “That was a wonderfully rewarding way to finish my full time teaching career!” He retired from Ardingly College in 2007 after eleven happy years and forty in the teaching profession. He now teaches singing at Handcross Park School.

Robert’s successful Ardingly students include Mike Christie, best known for being a member of the X Factor runners-up G4, also soloist in Four Weddings and a Funeral.

While working at Ardingly, Robert was also able to further his passion for community music making, continuing as conductor of the Choral Society.

“Formed in 1916, the society was originally made up of local people but in 1948 amalgamated with the college choral society,” said Robert.

“We have three main concerts each year – The Remembrance Concert, the Easter Concert and a Christmas Eve concert which raises money for St Peter and St James Hospice.”

The Remembrance Concert, on 9th November, held in aid of the Royal British Legion, traditionally opens with a performance of ‘Remembrance’, a choral piece for two choirs written by Robert to the words of the poem ‘For the Fallen’ by Laurence Binyon.

“We originally sang it in the chapel at Ardingly, with the choral society singing at the East end of the church and the prep school choir answering them from the west. It worked beautifully. The effect was very emotional.”

“Now we hold the concert at the Dolphin Leisure Centre, which doesn’t have quite the same effect but the venue is much more accessible for people.”

‘Remembrance’ is due to be performed in the Sydney Opera House on Anzac Day next year by a choir of 300 children and also at a Remembrance Day concert at Alsager near Crewe.

Robert’s other compositions include ‘Fragile Earth’, which premiered at Dorchester Abbey in October 2011. “It’s about looking after the earth’s resources,” said Robert.

The Ardingly Choral Society currently has around 80 members but there’s always room for more! “There are no auditions, and everyone gets a warm welcome. All you need is to enjoy singing,” said Robert.

“Singing with a choir gives you that warm feeling and you can forget about everything else for a while. We also offer a chance to sing great and challenging pieces of music. We have a high standard but we get there by making it fun and enjoyable.”



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The Talbot returns

OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Hardings Event Management have just reopened the popular village pub The Talbot after some extensive development at the High Street site.

A family run company based in Brighton for 15 years, Hardings had been searching for a pub for nearly six years before spotting the opportunity in Cuckfield. Dean Harding started the family business fifteen years ago and now Hardings Catering provides event hospitality services to golf clubs, hotels and individual clients too. They cater for about 20 weddings a year and has the contract to run the bar and restaurant at the ice rink at The Royal Pavilion in Brighton.

But, back in Cuckfield, Dean is very excited to have had the opportunity to make changes to The Talbot. The existing restaurant space upstairs is being converted into private apartments and a whole new entrance has been created from the courtyard at the side. The owners of the building removed the old barn at the back and have built a beautiful barn-like structure which provides a new kitchen at the back and a restaurant area downstairs, as well as a new entrance porch with a welcoming, wide staircase up to The Hay Loft, a light and airy function space available for private use.

If there was one phrase which summed up Dean's vision for The Talbot, it would be 'a traditional pub'. "We are all about good old-fashioned value for money," he explained. "The Talbot already had a great reputation and we are just going to build on that. We are welcoming back the Friday night drink 'down the local', our all day food offer is great tasting and substantial, and my personal favourite – the weekend breakfast treat for all the family!"

Examples of the menu include smoked haddock, Scotch egg with curry mayonnaise and mustard cress, braised beef cheeks in Harvey's ale with a potato and leek pie and the classic Knickerbocker Glory. Oh, and a cheese trolley for the perfect post-meal wind down!

Dean believes in using trusted local suppliers. Meat from local butchers, great coffee from Kendricks in Worthing and fantastic crabs 'to die for' from local fish suppliers in Brighton. "But it's not just about food," Dean goes on. "My traditional values go right through to staff training too. Our team knows what's on the menu and will always be attentive to your needs."

Martin Slocombe is continuing to manage the pub and he is joined by former head chef at The Lamb in Piltdown, Neil Bennett.

"It's a tremendously exciting time as we welcome Cuckfield residents to turn up and just have a look round. The new building looks great and we are really pleased to show it off to all!"

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Cuckfield ex-servicemen awarded Russian Ushakov Medal

By Claire Cooper

Two former servicemen from Cuckfield have been awarded medals from the Russian government in recognition of their roles in the Arctic Convoys during the Second World War.

Bunny Watts (pictured left) and Don Craneheld (right), both now in their nineties, are proud recipients of the Russian Ushakov Medal. The medal, named after the Russian Admiral Fyodor Ushakov who never lost a battle and was proclaimed patron saint of the Russian Navy, recognises the men's courage and bravery during their service in the Arctic Convoys.

Bunny travelled to the Russian Embassy in London with his wife and daughter to be presented with his medal by Russian Ambassador Alexander Yakovenko.

"We shook hands and he spoke of how the Russian government and people appreciated our contribution," said Bunny. "The organisation and planning of the event was marvellous and the officials couldn't have been more helpful. There was tea and cake and even schnapps for those who wanted it!"

Medals were presented to 41 ex-servicemen – 35 who had served in the Royal and merchant navies and just six from the RAF, including Bunny.

Bunny served in one of two squadrons delivering Hurricane fighter planes to the Russian army.

"The Russians didn't have any fighter planes and the country was in a pretty disastrous state as the Germans were closing in," he recalled. "Our job was to train the Russian pilots to fly the Hurricanes and to teach the ground crews to service and maintain the aircraft."

By 1945 the British forces had delivered 3,000 Hurricanes to the Russian army.

Don Craneheld was conscripted into the war-time Royal Navy shortly after leaving school and served as a seaman on Russian Convoys.

"I suppose the most significant, and in some ways peculiarly precious, consequences of receiving the Russian Ushakov Medal has been the revival of the memories of a 91 year old man of those distant days when, as a 19 year old Ordinary Seaman, I served on HMS Ledbury in the Arctic winter of 1943," said Don.

He added that conditions were frightful. "Sailing in those dark Arctic seas, carrying ammunition for the guns, in the dark, over heaving icy decks, star shells to reveal Uboats in the pack - all taken in the stride in the stress of the moment when so young.

"Those Russian Convoys, now so lauded, had no more significance for an Ordinary Seaman on the lower deck regarding the general conduct of the war than the sufferings and death of so many in so many other theatres of conflict," he added.

After Don left the Ledbury for officer training, the ship went on to serve in the Mediterranean, where she received more battle honours than she ever did on the Russian run.

"My memories made me think how, though I survived my time, so many of my friends did not - one died in Japanese prison camp, another was torpedoed in the Channel, another shot down over Berlin.

"The Ushakov Medal is SO Russian. It is so much more magnificent in its velvet box than the medals from my own country. Its very shape is different too.

"This silver medal is just like other Russian medals awarded for exceptional courage, not only in WWII when we served as Comrades in Arms, but in all the conflicts they have suffered since.

"It is good for me to recall those years we suffered together in order to win our war and save, as we thought, our world from a most wicked regime."



Make-ahead dessert

ON YOUR TABLE

Greek yoghurt & vanilla panna cotta

Take the stress out of entertaining with this delicious make-ahead dessert. We top ours with a red wine jelly, fresh blackberries and biscotti.

Ingredients

250ml double cream
1 vanilla pod
35g caster sugar
1 gelatine leaf
125g Greek yoghurt



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By Simon Dennis,
head chef at
The Rose & Crown



Method

- 1 Place the gelatine leaf into a bowl of cold water and leave to soak for 4 minutes.
- 2 Slice the vanilla pod open along its length and then scrape out the small, sticky seeds using the tip of a small, sharp knife. Add the seeds and pod to a saucepan with the cream and sugar. Bring the mixture slowly to the boil.
- 3 Remove the gelatine leaf, squeeze out any excess water and stir into the mixture.
- 4 Add greek yoghurt to the pan and whisk in until there are no lumps.
- 5 Remove the pan from the heat and allow to cool for 10 minutes.
- 6 Pass the mixture through a sieve and pour into 4 bowls / ramekins.
- 7 Place the panna cottas in the fridge to set for at least 4 hours.



Restaurant celebrates Indian and Bangladeshi cuisine

On Wednesday 22nd October Spice Village, the contemporary Indian restaurant in Cuckfield, are holding an Indo-Bangla event. The chef has designed three fixed price menus for one night only, which are a celebration of the best of Indian and Bangladeshi cuisine.

Booking for this event is essential as tables are already going fast.

Guests will be able to choose from one of three set menus on the night all of which cost just £13.95. There will be flexibility within each menu to adapt your choices and one of the menus will be suitable for vegetarians.

The menu features traditional Bangladeshi recipes including Chicken Handi and Lamb Rezellah.

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So long, farewell

FROM THE MAYOR'S TABLE

By Mike Schlup

And now, the end is near, and so I face the final curtain. Regrets? Not a single one. This is my last submission as Mayor of Cuckfield and I have had a fantastic year. I've met all sorts of people from the youngest at Holy Trinity School when I opened their new yurt (outdoor teaching space) to the eldest at the Christmas Lunch and the D-Day celebrations at Pelham House.

I've climbed to the top of Cuckfield's greasy political pole and the view up there was fabulous but I'll have to save the juicy details for my memoirs. As I plummet back to earth, much like the brave skydivers from the Wheatsheaf, I hope that those toes that were trodden on to get here will be able to welcome me back into the fold of the common voter.

I spent some time this year finding out a little more about all the good causes that the Independent State of Cuckfield (ISOC) supports. Did you know that over 30 local groups and organisations benefited from the thousands of pounds raised by all the candidates during last year's mayoral campaign. These included many youth groups, several sports clubs and other worthy causes. If you refer back to Issue 16 of Cuckfield Life (available on the website) you will find a detailed summary of exactly how the funds were distributed.

As I sit here, I look at the Mayor's robes and wonder, "Will they be too long for the next Mayor?". We won't know until the bell rings on election night. This year's candidates are now gearing up for the final push, with election night set for Friday 17th October at the White Harte. Everyone is welcome, so please come along as it will be a great fun evening. As ever, corruption is rife and the result will not be known until the very last minute. And don't forget the Mayor's Procession the day after.

ISOC is heading towards its 50th anniversary in 2016 and I sincerely hope that this fantastic organisation will continue for many more years. Its main aim has been, and always will be, to raise money for local good causes. So if you're 16 or over and have a connection with Cuckfield, then why not consider running for Mayor next year. Even if you raise just a few pounds it all goes into the village (town) pot. Plus, I guarantee it will be great fun taking part.

What next for me? I will be taking some time to get to know my family again. Their support has been unwavering and I would particularly like to thank my children for putting up with their father prancing around Cuckfield in full mayoral regalia at every opportunity. I would also once again like to thank all those very generous individuals and local businesses who supported my campaign. I may consider another foray into the murky depths of ISOC politics in the future but for the time being I will retire to the back benches (of the remaining local pubs). Who knows who I'll bump into there!



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Charity bootcamp for Duchenne

A newly opened training studio at Borde Hill Garden is getting involved in helping The Duchenne Children's Trust, as they raise money to cure Duchenne muscular dystrophy, the most common genetic killer of children's worldwide.

Local couple James Gairdner and Vivien Brennan asked Level 10 to help by offering their time, training and venue for free to make the charity event happen on Saturday 29th November.

Stacey & Ryan, from Level10, are running three 45min bootcamps on the day at their facility at Borde Hill. The times available are 7.15am, 8.15am and 9.15am, all proceeds will go to The Duchenne Children's Trust.

Vivien said: "James and I feel honoured to be able to contribute to this mission - End Duchenne in 10 - we've done various events in the past but this year will be very different."

To book your spot in a bootcamp please make a minimum donation of £6 at www.justgiving.com/duchennebootcamp and leave a message with your name preferred session time. Or call Vivian Brennan on 07725 034837.

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A Cuckfield/Canadian love story

Daphne Hall (nee Knight) was born at 40 (now 2) Glebe Road, Cuckfield in 1928. Writing in 2008 she remembered:

'The Canadians held socials and whist drives in the Queen's Hall, which is where I met my future husband in October 1942 when I was 14. It was the first time I was allowed to go, with my Mum. I was not impressed with this chap who asked me to dance, in his rolled up sleeves and braces showing, so I said NO! He sat beside my Mum and absolutely wooed her off her feet!! He had chocolate bars and cigarettes don't you know!! Needless to say, he was a steady visitor at our house for many moons. His name was William (Bill) Moldowin.

Bill was a private in the Medical Corps with the 16th General Hospital out of Vancouver B.C. In 1944 he was commissioned to the rank of Captain with the Salvation Army and went to Europe with the 3rd Anti Tank Regiment as their councillor in the front line and tuck store manager. He ended up in Holland.

When he came home in April 1945 we were married in the register office in Haywards Heath. My Mum had passed away in February and, although she had given her blessing on our marriage, my big brother was rather reluctant to consent (his baby sister).

Bill got an extra week leave and we bought a tandem bike and rode to London.'

Daphne followed her husband out to Canada in February 1946 when she was six months pregnant. She travelled with other war brides, the journey being supervised by the Red Cross. She remembers:

'We were escorted from Haywards Heath station to London, put up overnight in shelters before leaving



for Liverpool, where we boarded the Mauretania. It was the first and largest sailing to Canada; war brides and troops. Cabins had four bunks. I had a lower bunk because I was pregnant. The other three bunks were wives with children.'

After docking at Halifax, Daphne took a six day train journey across Canada dropping brides off along the way. The girls passed the time playing cards and singing. Daphne couldn't get used to being asked how many eggs she would like, having had one egg per week for the last five years!

The couple settled happily in Richmond near Vancouver, close to Bill's parents, and Bill resumed his work in a saw mill. Their daughter Evelyn, the first of five children, was born in April 1946.

Following Bill's death in 1968, Daphne remarried but in 2006 was widowed again. Daphne continues to live a busy life in Canada, swimming regularly, managing her large garden and belonging to different social clubs.

She is still in touch with friends and was last in Cuckfield in 1992 for the 900 celebration. Daphne always makes a point of visiting the Queen's Hall – where her story began.

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Six sonnets in commemoration of WWI

Inspired by the village War Memorial, Cuckfield poet David Perry has written six sonnets to commemorate those who died in the First World War. Here we bring you two of them.

By David Perry

1

Here is an altar to the un-necessary dead.
Found on the edge of a Wealden village,
Bordered by woodland and bounded by down,
Set under an arch or twisted hawthorn;
A block of grey, flaked and engraved masonry,
Holding the silence of a century
Mute with guilt, for this war was to make an end
Of war: its cessation a beginning
Of millennia, where peace and justice
Would flower and harmonise all nations; but barely
Two decades of uneasy gestation
Passed before the drama was reproduced,
With the same plot, a more malevolent cast
To be performed on a universal stage.

6

Here is a universal obituary,
A biography of mortality.
But, too, a celebration of duty,
Courage, heroism and consummate love.
A catalogue of self-sacrifice, but
Bequeathing a broken generation.
How many names carved in tribute here,
Became unknown fathers to unknown sons?
How many wives and mothers left to weep
And children made bereft, their youth betrayed,
All hope diluted to a dark reality.
What has all this to do with us? Lest we forget,
All our names are chiselled on this weathered stone.
For still, still, and still, the bell tolls.



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Seasonal delights at Wakehurst

When we think of the beautiful gardens of Sussex our mind probably springs to glorious summer days amid the foliage and blooms, breathing in the wonderful scents of nature. But a well-designed garden provides colour and interest throughout the year and offers a changing scenery of vibrant colours to cheer the heart and dramatic scents to lift the spirit.

The jewel in the crown of botanic delights has to be the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew's estate at Wakehurst in Ardingly. Often confused as being a National Trust garden, in fact the Trust has never had a hand in running the 500 acres which houses Kew's Millennium Seed Bank and the internationally famous gardens and woodland. Under its lease, Kew is obliged to admit NT members but a loophole means that none of the members' subscriptions are directed to Kew, which is forced to look elsewhere to meet the running costs and maintain the grounds to the high standards we have come to take for granted. The formal areas are planted to give year-round beauty and interest, while nature adds its own sublime elegance to the woodlands in autumn with a sea of golden, red and yellow leaves, barks, berries and seedpods to amaze the eyes and stimulating scents.

Winter wonderland

As part of its plan to generate income from visitors, Wakehurst is staging its first Glow Wild lantern festival this winter. Over four nights (Thursday 4th to Sunday 7th December), the landscape will be transformed into an after-dark experience. As twilight falls, the magic in the gardens begins.

Let your lantern lead the way through the new winding and whispering trail of fire, light and incense. The historic gardens and Elizabethan mansion will be brought to life with thousands of lights and handmade lanterns. This glittering night-time trail includes a flotilla of shimmering lights on the mansion pond, a sparkling galaxy of star lanterns hanging high above the water gardens and a myriad of aromatic fire lanterns in the walled garden providing a delicate scent of frankincense and myrrh.

Children will be entertained with a lantern-decorating activity, while the whole family can enjoy festive treats such as mulled wine, home-made hot chocolate and roasted chestnuts, and the choir under Wakehurst's massive Christmas tree. A Giant Redwood outside the mansion is decorated with 1,800 lamps and becomes a beacon for pilots coming into Gatwick.

The Glow Wild evenings are by advance online booking at kew.org/lanterns. Adults: £8; Children (4-16) £4. Family ticket (2 adults, 2 children) £20. Enquiries to 01444 894067.

Meet Santa in his grotto

Other festive delights at Wakehurst include Father Christmas in his grotto on the Sundays before Christmas (7th, 14th, 21st December). Young visitors can say hello and leave a message on the Wishing Tree. And on Sundays 2nd November 2014, 1st February and 1st March 2015, traditional afternoon high tea will be served in the mansion's oak-panelled dining room from £17.50. Enjoy the scrumptious menu in the room used by the last owners, Lord and Lady Price.

Booking essential as places are strictly limited. Call 01444 894040.





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Christmas Sale Day

Saturday 6th
December,
8.30am

HUGE SAVINGS!



Racing Demon in church

By Kate Fleming

Holy Trinity Church was built in the thirteenth century. At that time the people of Cuckfield could neither read nor write and so, in order to spread the gospel and tell people about The Bible before and after the life of Jesus Christ, priests performed the stories to their congregations in the church. The Easter Resurrection play *Quem quaeritis* (Whom seek ye?) is still the earliest evidence of liturgical drama in medieval England and the birth of the wonderful British theatre as we know it today. The church was the centre of village life, a place to gather, learn, celebrate and worship. Recently our beautiful parish church has been reordered; the old pews and the reredos have gone and new chairs and a welcoming flexible open space has been created which will splendidly accommodate community events as well as its religious use.

Cuckfield Dramatic Society has embraced the challenge of this change at Holy Trinity Church and is currently rehearsing *Racing Demon* in this new and exciting theatre space. *Racing Demon* was written by Sir David Hare in 1990 about the Church of England as first play of a trilogy on the state of the nation. David Hare is a playwright known for his strong political thinking and concern about current issues. The 'acerbic chronicler of his times' he uses the theatre as a didactic avenue to exercise the audience's thoughts, and the power of performance to engage, question and entertain.

Racing Demon is set in inner city London and explores the lives, beliefs, loves and conflicts of four priests in this Church of England parish – Rev Tony Ferris, Rev Lionel Espy, Rev Donald Bacon, known as Streaky, and Rev Harry Henderson, their partners and two bishops. It also features a gay actor, a sleazy tabloid journalist and an abused woman. In spite of being written in the 1990s, it confronts twenty first century agonies within the Church of England and opens them up with sharpness, humour and sympathy. Empty churches, women priests, homosexuality, class and the lack of contact with ordinary people are some of the themes that weave through this play; sensitive issues irrespective of religious beliefs or

whether you consider yourself a churchgoer.

There are, however, some fascinating similarities between this production of *Racing Demon* and ecclesiastical drama no doubt performed in thirteenth century Cuckfield. This is the first time that this great play has ever been performed in a consecrated church. The actors are local people and the audience will be mainly from this area. The theatre of the community is being restored; it is being done by us and for us.

The cast are working hard, under the skilful direction of Jim Knight, to be ready to open the glass doors of Holy Trinity when the November nights have darkened and chilled and warmly welcome us to Cuckfield's church as their temporary stage. Be ready for a terrific evening's entertainment, fine acting, an amazing setting, poignant moments and some good laughs. Try not to forget when you are looking at the distinctive *Racing Demon* posters and buying your tickets that this is a very special theatre production done by very special people for very special people in a very special village.

See you there!

Performance dates and times: Wednesday Nov 12th to Saturday Nov 15th at 7.30pm

Location: Holy Trinity Church, Church Platt/ Church Street, Cuckfield West Sussex, RH175 JZ
Ticket Prices: All tickets are £10.

Tickets will be available from September 29th via the CDS website, www.cuckfielddramaticsociety.com or by phone from their ticket agency on 0333 666 3366 (local rate) Mon-Fri 9-7pm and Sat 9-5pm. Booking fees of up to 10% and an additional £1.50 telephone service charge apply to these two methods.

From October 13th tickets can be purchased without booking fees through CDS's usual ticket agents, Mansell McTaggart in Cuckfield High Street and Wealden Stores at Whitmans Green.

What's on this month

AT QUEEN'S HALL

AND ELSEWHERE

Regular weekly classes (many are drop-in classes):

Monday

- 9.10am **Stretch Tone**
11am **Weigh In – Weigh Out**
4pm **Irish Dance**
7.30pm **Haywards Heath & District Canine Society – Dog Training**

Tuesday

- 9am **Tiny Soccerstars** for 18 months to 5 years
9.30am **Tinkerbells** - music classes for 6 months to 4 years
3pm **Codanza**
6.30pm **Haywards Heath & District Canine Society – Dog Training**
7pm **Pilates**

Wednesday

- 9.30am **Tinkerbells** - music classes for 6 months to 4 years
10am **Stroke Communications Group**
12.30pm **Zumba Dance** (Live Wire School of Dance)
1.30pm **Modern Line Dancing** (Live Wire School of Dance)
4pm **Codanza**
8pm **Best of Ballroom Cuckfield Dance Club**

Thursday

- 9am **Tumbletots**
9.30am **Tinkerbells** - music classes for 6 months to 4 years
10am **Pilates**
7.30pm **Social Ballroom and Latin American Dance** (Live Wire School of Dance)

Friday

- 7.30pm **Evening Flower Club**
(second Friday of the month)

October

- 14th **Cuckfield Evening Flower Club** 7.30pm
Demonstration by Angie Hyde 'Over the Rainbow' (Sue Spooner 01444 831602)
16th **Parish Council Planning meeting** 7.30pm
Environment meeting 8pm

October

- 18th **Adur Concert Band** – 7.30pm, King Edward Hall, Lindfield. Last Night of the Proms-style concert in aid of St Peter & St James Hospice. (Tickets £7 from Tufnells, Hospice shop or 07711 422433)
21st **Cuckfield Evening WI Annual General Meeting**
Old School 8pm
22nd **Royal British Legion Womens Section** Annual General Meeting – The Old School 2.30pm
22nd **The Weald Of Sussex Annual Art Exhibition** –
–25th The Martlets Hall, Burgess Hill 10am–5pm Wed, Thurs, Fri; 10am–3.45 pm Sat. Free
25th **Weald Crafts** at Ardingly College 10am – 4pm
–26th Craft products made by people from the Weald. Free (www.wealdcrafts.co.uk 01825 767476)
27th–
6th **Great War: West Sussex** – Burgess Hill Library
Mon-Fri 9.30am–5.30pm, Sat 10am–4pm .
Display commemorating West Sussex people on the Home Front (01444 255452)

November

- 1st **Royal British Legion Women's Section** – The Old School 10.30am–12pm. For Poppy Appeal, £1
4th **NHS Retirement Fellowship** – Franklands Village Hall, 10.15am. War Graves Commission talk
6th **West Sussex & the Great War: The Home Front**
Burgess Hill Library 7pm. An illustrated talk, £3 (01444 255452)
7th **Free lunchtime concert** – Holy Trinity Church, 12.30pm (soup) 1pm concert. Herschel Quartet
7th–
9th **Attic Art Exhibition** – Aadastra Hall, Hassocks. Fri 1–5pm & 6–8pm, Sat/Sun 10am–5pm. Free
8th **Cuckfield Local Food Market** – 9.30am–12.30pm
High Street, behind Mansell McTaggart
8th **Christmas Craft & Gift Fair** – The Old School 10.30am–14.30pm. Free
8th **Cuckfield Bonfire** – Gates open 6pm, bonfire lit 6.45pm, fireworks to music 7.30pm. £7, U16s £5 (www.cuckfieldbonfire.co.uk)
9th **Remembrance Concert** – 7.30pm, Dolphin Leisure Centre, HH – Ardingly Choral Society & Mid Sussex Sinfonia. (Tickets from Carousel Music or on the door)
15th **Sussex Mineral Show** Clair Hall 10am–4.30pm. £2.50, children 50p (www.smls.org.uk)

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In fact, I was so impressed I decided to move to the village myself a few years ago where I now work, socialise and raise my own family.

If you are wishing to stay ahead of the game, don't forget to follow us on Twitter @mansellcuck for regular updates and news of properties just about to come onto the market, prior to general release.

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