



April 2021

Supported by



Chelsfield  
Park  
Hospital

## The Glorious 12th



See you down the  
Pub!

The Newsletter and "What's On" Guide for  
Residents & Friends of Chelsfield Village

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At last there may be light at the  
end of the tunnel. Please  
continue to take care, wear  
facemasks and keep distancing  
until all risks are over.

In the mean time share with us  
your stories and  
experiences.

Submit anything for inclusion in  
the May 2021 issue to:

[chelsfieldvillagevoice@gmail.com](mailto:chelsfieldvillagevoice@gmail.com)  
or post to:

Chelsfield Village Voice  
2 Bucks Cross Cottages  
Chelsfield Village  
BR6 7RN

to arrive on or before  
Monday 26th April 2021

## The Primrose & Cowslip

In February I wrote about the barn owl and suggested that if anybody saw one around the village then it would be good to hear about it through these pages. Well, one of my work-mates at the hospital did just that only a short while ago. It seems it was seen perched in a tree above the kiddies playground – yes, we do have these wonderful birds here in Chelsfield although I have never seen one around here.

So, this month, with spring on our doorsteps I thought I'd write about two plants that are prominent at this time of year: the primrose (*Primula vulgaris*) and the cowslip (*Primula veris*). These plants always seem very similar to me albeit the cowslip has an extended neck (stalk) and looks somewhat more delicate.

I'll start with the primrose. This is a plant that is a firm favourite due to blooming so early during the year and the colour that it brings – no snowdrop insipid colour schemes for this showy



perennial plant. Its flowers can be pink, white or yellow and its range spreads from Scandinavia through Europe to beyond Turkey. Such is its popularity that it has often been picked to the point where it can be scarce in the wild and, along with all wild flowers was consequently included in the Wildlife and Country Act of 1981 such that picking it became illegal. It is a very hardy plant and does not need much care– if any, to return to flower each year. Such hardiness may have been the cause of an old country lore story which said that if you were to plant a primrose upside

down then it would produce red flowers. Good luck with that !

The primrose gets its name from the Latin *prima rosa* meaning 'first rose' of the year, despite not being a member of the rose family. In different counties of England it is also referred to as butter rose, early rose, Easter rose, golden rose and lent rose. This flower even has its own day: April 19th - 'Primrose day' which is the anniversary of the death of the former British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli: primrose being his favourite flower. Queen Victoria supposedly sent him

bunches regularly and to this day primroses are laid at his statue by Westminster Abbey on this date every year. It is also the county flower of Devon and William Shakespeare refers to it in 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'.

*And in the wood, where often you and I,  
Upon faint primrose-beds were wont to lie...*

It does seem that the primrose has a lot of folklore associated with it. Ancient Celtic wisdom associates seeing a large patch of primroses with a gateway or portal into the faerie realm. Apparently touching a nearby rock with a posy of primroses is supposed to open a doorway to fairyland; however, if you use the wrong number of flowers (the exact number varies in different versions) you will cause a fairy curse to be placed upon you. Similarly Hanging primrose flowers outside your house is an invitation to the fairies to come in although leaving them on your doorstep is said to encourage the faeries to bless the house and all who live there. So in folklore it seems that there is a close

association between this plant and faeries. So much so that letting these little flowers die is a terrible offence to them and you may draw their anger. However, if you eat the blossom you may have a faery appear before your eyes.

As for the cowslip, this is a plant that old memories tell was once as common as daisies but suffered with modern farming techniques in the 1950s. According to folklore, they first grew from the ground where St Peter dropped his keys and this is recorded in the French, German, and old English names (clef de Saint Pierre, Schlüsselblumen, and Key of Heaven respectively). The modern name cowslip, on the other hand, derives from the observation that the plant used to grow best in meadows frequented by herds of cows. It has a similar Latin name to the primrose but the suffix veris refers to spring reflecting, like the primrose, its early showing. The flowers have a lovely almost-apricot scent and it prefers more open landscapes such as meadows and open fields. Its seeds are often

included in wild flower seed packs and these are often used on motorway banks and similar engineering works which help to re-seed those lost over recent decades. In years past both the primrose and the cowslip were often used in cooking and the following recipe for cowslip pudding was originally published in a book called 'The London Art of Cookery' by John Farley published in the early 1800s. Note the frequent lack of quantities and cooking times!

*Cut and pound small the flowers of a peck of cowslips, with half a pound of Naples biscuits grated, and three pints of cream. Boil them a little, then take them off the fire, and beat up sixteen eggs, with a little cream and rose water. Sweeten to your palate. Mix it all well together, butter a dish, and pour it in. Bake it, and when it be enough, throw fine sugar over it, and serve it up. When you cannot get cream, new milk will do well enough for these sorts of puddings.*

Steve Fuller, April 2021

## Mutterings From The Millers

March started like a lion with nearly every type of weather throughout the month together with 43 mls of rain but will definitely go out like a lamb.

Peter managed to apply the first dose fertiliser and hurray hurray plant the spring oats. We are astounded at the amount of worm casts on the ground giving us such wonderful conditions for drilling (planting). Although the ground was wet from the winter rains, the drill managed to plant the seed beautifully. Peter took a gamble and started drilling on Wednesday 24th March (same date for the last

two years that we have planted oats) as rain was forecast for the Friday but actually rained on Thursday afternoon about 2 hours after he had finished. Warmer temperatures are forecast for the beginning of April so he needed to get on with it before the ground becomes too dry! Oh it is fun being a farmer.

Access was needed into Harecroft, the field opposite Harefield house but of course with the major road works a great big hole had been dug for the power cables. Peter managed to talk to the work supervisor giving him the dates he would like access and the work

crew filled in the trenches when needed. The workman were very interested in the tractor and drill and watched for a little while whilst Peter was drilling.

Great news from the government, from the 31st March all poultry and captive birds were allowed back outside. This housing measure was introduced from the 14th December 2020 to help spread the risk of Avian flu. There were 13 confirmed cases in England amongst chickens, turkeys and ducks but not in this area fortunately.

On the wildlife side, the deer are still grazing in the middle of the big field, quite a sigh and the skylarks going strong. Have heard the chiff chaffs along with the usual dunnocks, robins etc and have noticed a couple of blue tits going in the nest box. Hope they will lays eggs and not just having a nose. The gold crests can be seen quite clearly flitting about the larch tree especially as the needles haven't appeared yet but



the lovely red female flowers, or larch roses, have just opened. The emerging cowslips have been really trampled on the Chelsfield Green but one or two are just showing. Hopefully with the warmer weather they were burst forth.

Our first swallow was spotted here on the 5th April last year so hopefully it won't be too long before they return and this months weather verse is:-

*Swallows and martins usually arrive around the middle of April.*

*If they arrive earlier, this indicates a fine summer.*

*The later they arrive, the shorter and more unsettled the summer will be.*

*Chris Miller  
Court Lodge Farm*

## Situation Vacant



*Improving lives after a stroke*

**ICARE Day Centre Trust Ltd**

**Deputy Manager – 4 days per week**

***Do you want to make a difference to the lives of people recovering from a stroke?***

At the ICARE Day Centre Trust we are looking for a Deputy Manager to work Monday to Thursday at our Centre in Green Street Green, Orpington.

We are a small charity providing quality rehabilitative day care for people who have had a stroke and support for their carers and families. The Deputy Manager will work flexibly in a small team under the direction of the Centre Manager, providing care and personal attention to the people attending the centre and sharing in all the tasks involved. They will also be prepared to take on specific responsibilities from time to time, and to deputise for the Manager as required.

Salary will be £16,968 a year from April 2021.

To find out more: email Sue Chown at [admin@icarecentre.org.uk](mailto:admin@icarecentre.org.uk), phone 01689 862883 or write to ICARE at Old School House, High Street, Green Street Green, Orpington, Kent BR6 6BJ



# the BO peep

**“The Best Pub Baa None...”**

**Open all day, every day  
for food & drink**

Subject to the government announcement on 5th April we are pleased to confirm that the Bo Peep Garden will re-open on Monday 12th April for outdoor drinkers and diners and from Monday 17th May indoors!

## **OPENING TIMES**

Monday-Saturday

11.00-9.00pm Hot and Cold Drinks

12.00-7.30pm Food

3.00pm-5.00pm

Tea, Coffee, Cream Tea, Cake, Full afternoon Tea (24 hrs notice)

Sunday

11.00-7.00pm Hot & Cold Drinks

12.00-5.00pm Set Sunday Lunch

We will also be offering a takeaway menu

Monday-Saturday 12.00-7.00pm

& Sunday 12.00-4.00pm

For further details please check our website at [www.thebopeep.com](http://www.thebopeep.com)

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### **'ARE WE NEARLY THERE YET?'**

Hello everyone, the countdown has begun to re-opening.

We will be opening our doors again on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> April at 12 noon to welcome everyone back in – or rather should I say out. Alas, as you probably all know it will be outside only until Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May and that is if we are allowed.

All the COVID restrictions will be in place, the Rule of Six and two households mixing, 2 metre distancing, wearing of face coverings when not seated, hand washing and sanitizing and you will only be allowed into the pub to use the conveniences. Table service will be in operation, so please be patient with us, as all our staff will not be back to work at this early stage although we will do our best to ensure no one waits too long.

So let's wrap up well and pray for some decent weather for April certainly until we can get back inside mid May.



See you all soon, we hope & keep safe.

*Ade & Kay - The Five Bells*

## Chelsfield Zoo?

I don't know about you, but I have been watching too much daytime television in recent weeks.

What disturbed me, was, apart from the number of adverts to save poor old donkeys, irritating Peloton exercise bikes, and funeral insurance policies .... generally poor value ... that smug bloke with his tomato sandwich (white bread), his parsnips and his awful

scraggy neighbour.....oh yes, I've seen it on TV...was the number of animal adoption schemes... all £3.00 a month.

It started with an elephant ....we don't really have room and included giraffes ..hard to fit in the conservatory...a snow leopard, a rhinoceros (probably called Neil)... a Jaguar (always wanted one)... an orangutan (smelly)... a gorilla and a

tiger.

£2.880 pa. so far. We are thinking about a deaf python called Leonard but have decided against a bi-polar bear.. (could be difficult ) and a pangolin, for health reasons.

The penguins arrive after Easter.....Sponsor two, get another 48 free.

Watch this lack of space.

*Chris Parsons*

## Chelsfield Village Hall - The Netflix Story

Recently we had an enquiry from a nice lady from Netflix, interested in using our Village Hall in a forthcoming production, and we arranged to meet at the hall the next day. I did wonder how she found our hall. She said it had not been easy, but had been found by the director on the Internet. Apparently, although we do not have our own site, we are on the local bouncy castle provider's site for use for children's parties.

She explained that they

were planning a musical production of Roald Dahl's Matilda and needed an old fashioned village hall for one of the scenes. She had a detailed list of requirements that they needed, such as the size, shape and entrance appearance, which we seemed to satisfy.

Apparently the scene that they had in mind was one where Matilda is going to her dancing class, being driven in an outlandish Cadillac through a quaint English village (not ours) and up

the drive to the village hall. She steps out of the car and dances into the hall at which point the hall transforms into the Blackpool ball room.

A pity we cannot manage that trick ourselves. Unfortunately a few weeks later she contacted us again to tell us that they had decided to use a different hall. What a shame, it could have been interesting for the village being taken over by a film production company for a few days.

*Peter Gandolfi*



## Chelsfield Village Hall Reopening

We are making use of the current period of inactivity to catch up with the many jobs that the hall has needed. These include interior painting, new curtains and resurfacing the wooden floor as well as other minor work. These will hopefully be finished in April, ready for limited opening in May and hopefully full open to all in June, government guidelines permitting.



The hall is now taking

bookings for local groups as well as weekend children's parties. For bookings please

contact:

[cvhlettings@gmail.com](mailto:cvhlettings@gmail.com)  
01689 831826

## Roundabout Progress



It all seems to be taking shape now, although a little behind schedule.

These images give some idea of what it will be like. The upper photograph shows coming out of Warren Road and the lower photograph shows as one in approaching the Warren Road turn off coming up Court Road from Orpington.



The finished roundabout should provide a huge calming effect on this section of road, making travels easier and safer.

## Halstead Easter Hunt

Join the Easter hunt: Saturday 3rd April



HALSTEAD  
+EASTER HUNT+

We'd love for you to help us with our Easter trail! We'd like for you to decorate one of our wood slices and hide it along one of our public footpaths or recreation areas on Friday 2nd April.

On Saturday 3rd April, everyone in Halstead village will be invited to go out and find the decorations and hang them on our Easter display along Southdene.

If you 'd like to take part in decorating then email: [clerk@halsteadparish.org.uk](mailto:clerk@halsteadparish.org.uk) With the subject "Easter Hunt", with your name and address and some wood slices will be delivered to you.

## Halstead & District Horticultural Society Events

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Tues April 22nd 20.00hrs                    | Talk Halstead Village Hall (POSSIBLY ZOOM SO CHECK WITH BARRIE) Martin Heard "Tulip Mania" |
| Sat May 8th 09.30-12.00                     | Plant Sale (Halstead Village Hall)   |
| Fri May 14th 10.30hrs                       | Riverhill Himalayan Gardens Sevenoaks<br>Outing by own transport                           |
| Thurs June 24th<br>Staging 19.45 - 20.10hrs | Summer Show Halstead Village Hall  |

## The Falling Chandelier - A Brilliant Whodunnit!

This very well-organised Zoom evening took place on Saturday 27th February, as a fundraising event arranged jointly by St. Martin's and the Prime Suspects team, whose are all members of Petts Wood Operatic Society.

We were given some background information on the plot and characters beforehand, and from the outset the evening promised to be exciting and intriguing!

The plot involved a musical theatre production that was due to open on 20th March 2020 at The Royal Grand Theatre in Porpington - but on the cusp of opening came the first national lockdown and the theatres went dark.

Detective Inspector Lottie Marbles, who was leading the investigation, informed us that a few months later, Eddie Bull, the producer of the show, called a meeting at the theatre. Some of the key figures of the production were invited to attend, but Eddie was later found dead in the theatre foyer, cruelly crushed to death by a falling chandelier! The question was whodunnit? The police had identified 7 possible suspects and wanted our help in finding out which of them was the killer. We had three households on our team, all connected via the wonders of technology,

and it meant we were able to discuss our suspicions privately between ourselves. The cast were exceptional, and each suspect came into our team 'break-out rooms' in turn to be interrogated, and mercilessly cross-examined.

Was it the leading lady Manita De Ville? Or could it have been the handy man, the aptly named Andy Man? Then there was Ed's wife Cherie, and his brother Terry, who had financed the show. Could they have been responsible? Or Carrie Oaky, the dance manager, or Piers End, the theatre manager? Even Ed's loyal PA, Ella Fant, was a suspect.

D.I. Lottie Marbles reminded us that we needed to consider the killer's Means, Motive, and Opportunity, in committing such a heinous crime - and to beware the many red herrings!

Our team's careful deductions unfortunately led us to the wrong answer, but 3 out of the 9 teams taking part were successful in identifying the killer. The Detective's Code forbids me to tell you who that was.

The plot was extremely good, and the performances were exceptionally well-acted, so much so, that

most of the suspects were accused by one team or another. Each suspect certainly had a believable axe to grind with the victim!

All in all it was a brilliant evening's entertainment, all enjoyed from the comfort of our own homes. Our thanks go to the wonderful cast of The Falling Chandelier for a real treat on a cold and dark winter's evening!

*Diane Wisdom  
(Amateur Sleuth)*

There was an excellent turnout of sleuths for the Murder Mystery evening on 27th February, with 23 households making up 9 separate teams of detectives. 3 of the 9 teams managed to negotiate their way through the numerous red herrings to arrive at the correct solution, and our congratulations to them. Our thanks go the very talented Prime Suspects team from Petts Wood Operatic Society who ran the evening on behalf of St. Martin's church. We are also very grateful to participants who were generous with donations, and a total of £550 was raised, which was shared between PWOS and St. Martin's.

*Anne Ireland - Secretary,  
St. Martin's church PCC*

## Retirement of Rev John Tranter

Normally we would have been writing to you to give details of John's last service(s) and how we were planning to give him a good send off at the end of his seven years as our Rector.



Sadly, once again, Coronavirus has meant we have to do something different. The current situation means that at the time of his leaving there can only be around 30 people at his final service, to be held on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> April, so this will need to be ticketed and only a lucky few will be able to attend. We will still be subject to the 'rule of 6' outdoors and there can be no indoor socialising for a farewell party.

However we are pleased to announce that John has agreed that he and Janet will return to the Parish, most likely on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> July, at which time we hope there will

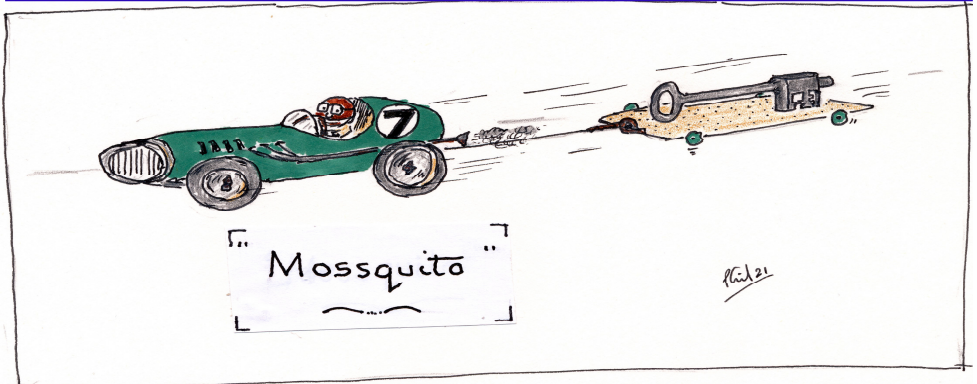
be no restrictions on numbers and we can be indoors if the weather is inclement. We have, of course, asked that he bring his 'lucky umbrella'. We shall organise a suitable event for that day so that people from Church, the Village and the wider Benefice can give John and Janet the farewell they deserve.

If you would like to attend the service on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> April at 10am please register your interest by emailing:

[churchwardens@stmartinchelsfield.org.uk](mailto:churchwardens@stmartinchelsfield.org.uk)

*Steve McCann &  
Philippa Rooke  
Churchwardens*

## Phil's Mossquito!



## The Last Basket Maker in St Mary Cray

Basket making is a very old industry and it has probably been taking place along the banks of the River Cray for centuries but in the 19th century it became “big business” as the basket makers were an integral part of the flourishing fruit industry.

However, it was far more cottage industry than factory. The 1881 census records hundreds of basket makers in Kent, including five Packmans in Orpington, St Mary Cray and nearby Crockenhill.

One of these was Daniel

Packman. The last basket maker in the village was his son Horace (Horatio) Packman and he was recalled in the Kentish Times and by local chronicler the Rev Ray Galer.

Until 1957 Horace Packman made baskets at his home, Viaduct Cottage. He was then 84. The cottage stood, appropriately enough, next to the railway viaduct that crosses the river and St Mary Cray High Street and its garden ran down to the banks of the Cray. It was demolished in the late 1950s when the viaduct was widened to take another line.

Horace was one of the 12 children of Daniel Packman and he and all his siblings learnt the trade from his father. Three of the children continued in the trade but not all in St Mary Cray. At one time Horace and Daniel ran separate basket making businesses in the village and for a while Horace’s daughter, Gladys Wise,



*Horace Packman, in his riverside workshop at St Mary Cray in the 1950s*

was also a basket maker. fruit crop.

The Packmans made baskets predominantly for the fruit and vegetable pickers and in the heyday of the fruit growing era — the late 19th and early 20th century — Daniel employed about 20 workers during the summer months. There were three busy times — before the strawberry season, then winter fruit and hop picking.

Fruit growing began to boom along the Cray and into the Orpington and Farnborough areas towards the middle of the 19th century. Each year more and more acreage was turned over to fruit until the Cray Valley had the highest percentage of fruit acreage in Kent.

The coming of the railways meant fruit and veg grown in Kent could be transported quickly to the vast London market, at the same time as the previous fruit growing areas further into London were being covered over with housing. In a two-way transaction, London also supplied the manure, from its vast horse-drawn traffic, which was so essential for a really good

But all that had passed by the middle of the 20th century and Horace Packman had diversified into making shopping baskets, big wicker travel baskets and other wicker goods alongside the fruit baskets.

In 1985 in an interview with the Kentish Times, Horace’s daughter Gladys Wise, then in her 80s, recalled the trade. “The river ran through the garden of the house.” she said. “The river wasn’t very wide and there was a plank going across it. We had to put the willow into the water to soften it, leave it to soak overnight weighed down with long

pieces of iron. My grandfather had the ideal spot on the river a little further along.

“During the war my father took the family to Otford, where he used to teach potato basket making. In the later part of the war I helped. The baskets had to be exactly the right measurements to fit one in the other.”

In his Historical Sketches, the Rev Ray Galer, vicar at St Mary Cray and a chronicler of village life, recalled how he “passed the time of day” with Horace Packman.

“He was making baskets for the potato season, say, bushel-and-a-half



*The River Cray run, before it was culverted and landscaped, behind a row of houses and businesses including the workshop of basket maker Horace Packman*

baskets, not the six bushel baskets for the hopping season. He was still weaving as his forbears had done for 160 years and he was using the River Cray to moisten his canes, as they did their withies so many years ago.

“But it seems that basket making by hand is a dying-out trade today [1948] – he well remembers the time when his father employed many weavers, and the time when he and his father went to Dartford to fetch the osiers that grew so well and so thickly in the district.

“... how busy they had been and how great the trade when they supplied baskets for the farmers on the farms stretching from the Isle of Grain to

Lenham and Charing ... these were days of prosperity for the High Street when trade was good and agriculture brought wealth and livelihood to the neighbourhood.”

In another of his recollections, the Rev Galer recalled: “He [Horace] kept on weaving as he talked and one could realise by his touch the skill of bending the willow and cutting it to his exact liking.

“He showed us all sorts of willow or osiers, blackmores, black Spaniards, red and yellow willows, how they were grown and how one year’s growth is more pliable, whilst two years’ growth is too brittle, of how to peel them and of the length of time to keep

them under water and here the River Cray played a most important part.

“He spoke of the days when his father employed 28 to 30 men, real craftsmen of the old country stock, working hard on sieves, pecks and picking baskets.”

The building of the arterial road, the A224, in the 1920s and then the post-war housing estates spelt the end of fruit growing for the Crays and Horace was the last basket maker in the village. It must have been a healthy and satisfying occupation because Horatio Albert Packman lived to the ripe old age of 96. He died in 1963.

*Christine Hellicar*

## Vaccination Update From SELCCG

**South East London Clinical Commissioning Group (SELCCG)** have provided some details about Covid vaccinations that might allay some concerns.

In response to patients enquiring about their 2nd dose appointments,

SELCCG is advising over the phone, and will run a full-page advert in next week’s Newshopper plus provide on-line information and leaflets to pharmacists to reassure residents that:

The nationally agreed gap between the first and

second dose of vaccine for COVID-19 is between 11 and 12 weeks;

Everyone who has had their 1st dose, has a second vaccine reserved for them;

Your 2nd dose will be the same vaccine as your 1st;

Appointments are being made for everyone who is due to have their second dose.

Please wait to be contacted with your appointment. You will usually receive your 2nd dose at the same place as where you had your first. If your 1st was at Community House, this has closed and 2 new sites opened. You will be contacted and advised where to go for your 2nd dose.

If 11 weeks pass since your 1st dose and you have not been contacted for your 2nd, please call the appropriate vaccination site. SELCCG is confident it can offer all eligible

residents their 1st dose by 15 April. This will not affect anyone receiving their 2nd within 12 weeks of their 1st as sufficient stock has been ring fenced and will be made available to vaccination sites.

Independent experts, after rigorous scientific reviews, confirmed available evidence does

not suggest the AstraZeneca Covid-19 vaccine causes blood clots. People are at a greater risk of developing a blood clot if they contract Covid-19. The benefits of the vaccine outweigh the risks and people should have their vaccine when invited.

*Dave Lambert  
Neighbourhood Watch*



*Dawn at Chelsfield Lakes Golf Centre*

## Recycling Bin Collection April 2021

Tuesday 6th April	Non-recyclable refuse, Paper & Cardboard, Food Waste.
Monday 12th April	Plastic, Glass and Tins, Food Waste,
Monday 19th April	Non-recyclable refuse, Paper & Cardboard, Food Waste.
Monday 26th April	Plastic, Glass and Tins, Food Waste,
Tuesday 4th May	Non-recyclable refuse, Paper & Cardboard, Food Waste.
Every week	Batteries, Small Electrical Items, Textiles (please only present one small transparent bag each week, and re-present the following week if it is not collected)