

LOWER HALSTOW VILLAGE NEWS DECEMBER 2025 & JANUARY 2026



Santa Run in the Village in December 2020 during Covid lockdown restrictions

**Compiled, edited and published for the village on behalf of
St Margaret's Church**

Lower Halstow Village News
Dec 2025 & Jan 2026

SERVICES AT ST MARGARET'S

7 December 2025 - 8am, Quiet Communion
- 3pm, Christingle Gift Service, if you are able please bring a new item/gift for the Salvation Army to distribute to those who won't get much in our community. These will be collected during the service.

14 December 2025 - 10am, Morning Worship

*21 December 2025 - 10.30am, The Six Communion, Uplift
- 3pm, Carol Service

24 December 2025 - 1-3pm, +Quiet Christmas+
- 3.30pm, Crib Service
- 11.30pm Midnight Communion

25 December 2025 - 10am, Christmas Communion

*28 December 2025 - 10.30am, The Six Communion at Hartlip

*4 January 2025 - 10.30am, The Six Communion at Iwade

11 January 2025 - 10am, Family Worship

18 January 2025 - 10am, Communion

25 January 2025 - 10am, Songs of Praise

+A time to escape the hustle and bustle of Christmas, sit a while, light a candle, enjoy being still.

St. Margaret's have a busy December arranged with lovely family services. Please keep a "watch" for the services arranged. Come and enjoy this special time for Advent.

*Services at other churches

CRAFT AFTERNOON, SATURDAY, 20 DECEMBER 2025, ST MARGARET'S CHURCH 1.30 - 3.30PM

All Welcome, free event but donations would be welcomed
Refreshments available

ALTAR FLOWER ROTA

7 December 2025- Eileen
15 December 2025 - TEAM
4 January 2026 - Lynne
18 January 2026 - Helen

COMMUNITY CAFE

Memorial Hall

Second Saturday of the Month

11.30am – 2.30pm



MOBILE LIBRARY

The mobile library stops outside the Memorial Hall fortnightly from 1.50pm to 2.35pm. The next dates are Thursdays 11 December 2025 and 8 and 22 January 2026.

SENIORS CHRISTMAS PARTY, FRIDAY 5 DECEMBER 2025, 2-5PM

From Margaret Millsted-Williamson:

We are returning once again to past times with afternoon tea and musical accompaniment with Bob Harbord playing the piano. The party is free, but raffle tickets will be on sale.

This invitation is offered to all over 66 (current retirement age) who live in Lower Halstow. We can seat about 50 people and so places are offered on a 'first-come' basis. To this end please confirm your place by letting Margaret know at maglou1@yahoo.co.uk or by putting your name on a piece of paper and posting it me at 1 The Green (the old post office).

Hope to see lots on you on the 5th.

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from the front
of the choir

Happy Hour All Age Singing Group

6.30pm – 7.30pm

Would you like to join us. No experience needed.
You don't have to be able to sing.

We want to spend an hour a week, twice a month
just singing for the joy of it. We will have a go at some
contemporary songs and gospel songs.

£3 per family or £2 for an individual to help pay for the hall.

Memorial Hall

School Lane

Lowers Halstow, ME9 7ES

Under 16's please have an

adult drop you off and pick you up

Under 12's will need an adult to stay for the singing.

They may even like to sing with us.

1st and 3rd Monday of each month.

1st & 15th December 2025/5th & 19th January 2026

Contact: Liz (07730893747)

Gill:(gilliangay99@yahoo.co.uk)

LOWER HALSTOW PRIMARY SCHOOL

It's been a busy few weeks here at Lower Halstow School! From exciting classroom projects and sporting events to special visitors and celebrations, there's been plenty happening across the school. We're so proud of everything our pupils have been up to — read below to find out more about what's been going on!



Our first whole-school event of the year was our annual Rainbow Harvest Festival, led by Teresa Parker. Each class represented a colour of the rainbow and brought in food donations to match, all of which were generously given to the Swale Food Bank. The celebration included heartfelt prayers, poems, autumn descriptions and beautiful artwork from children in Year 1 and 2, as well as some wonderful singing from everyone. A highlight of the morning was joining together to sing our favourite harvest song, "Cauliflowers Fluffy." It was especially lovely to have Acorn Class join us for the very first time.

We rocked out for TTRS Day this term, as we celebrated the biannual relaunch of our Times Tables Rock Stars program! Children came to school dressed as rockstars, showing off some truly amazing costumes. They spent the day taking part in exciting times table battles to improve their speed and accuracy with times tables. It was a day full of fun and friendly competition, with children challenged to beat their own best times, and work as a team when classes battled against one another. Times Tables Rock Stars is a program that can also be used at home as well as in school, giving children the chance to practise and improve their times tables at anytime.

During the month of October, our school celebrated Heritage Month with a wonderful variety of activities that helped the children learn about and appreciate the many cultures that make up our school community and the wider world. Our children have enjoyed listening to music from different countries, exploring the rhythms and instruments that make each culture unique, the classrooms have been filled with sounds from around the globe! The children have also been listening to stories and folktales from different traditions, discovering how people everywhere use stories to teach lessons, share values and celebrate their heritage. One of the highlights of the month was when the whole school took part in outdoor cooking activities. Pupils worked together to prepare and cook traditional dishes from the countries we have been learning about. The air was filled with delicious aromas as everyone tried something

new — from spicy curries to bubble and squeak, we were so impressed with how enthusiastic the children were and how willing they were to try new cuisines and flavours.

In Term 1 pupils in Years 2 to 6 had the exciting opportunity to take part in Chance to Shine Cricket coaching, run by Kent Cricket Club. The sessions offered free coaching where children learned a wide range of skills suited to their age, including catching, fielding and bowling. Everyone had a fantastic time developing their cricket techniques while enjoying the fun of being active outdoors. Our Year 6 pupils also had the chance to develop leadership skills, learning how to help, guide and support younger players in the future. It was wonderful to see the children so engaged, working together and enjoying the sport!

Pupils and staff took part in Show Racism the Red Card Day on Friday 17th October, proudly wearing red to show their support for equality and inclusion. The day began with a special assembly focusing on the importance of being inclusive, kind and standing up for what you believe in. Together, we explored how everyone has a part to play in making our school, and the wider community, a welcoming place for all. Throughout the day, individual classes completed activities to reinforce the message of respect, fairness and celebrating our differences. The children shared thoughtful ideas and creative work that showed their understanding of how small actions can make a big difference. It was a truly inspiring day that reminded us all of the power of standing together against racism.

One of the highlights of Term 2 was our annual 'Meet the Experts' Careers Day, where the children had the opportunity to learn about a variety of fascinating professions. Our visitors included a lift engineer, midwife, paramedic, foster carer, police officer, firefighter and prison officers — who even brought along their amazing sniffer dog, Faith! The children were thrilled to watch Faith demonstrate how she searches for contraband in cells. It was a wonderful day that inspired our pupils to

think about their future careers and the exciting opportunities that lie ahead.

And last, but not least we are thrilled to announce that Lower Halstow School has become an official partner of Gillingham Football Club, joining the GFC Foundation as their fifth school partner! As part of this partnership, Gillingham coaches are visiting the school each week to help our pupils develop their football skills and enjoy learning from professional coaches. We've also booked an exciting stadium tour for our Year 6 pupils, and the school has been presented with a Gillingham football shirt signed by all the players — a fantastic memento of this new partnership. We are really looking forward to working together and seeing our pupils grow both on and off the pitch!

Michelle Crowe
Head of School

PASTORAL LETTER

Dear Friends

Festivals of Light in the midst of darkness. Here we are in the middle of the darkest time of the year. And one of the most popular of our annual festivals is a celebration of the coming of light into the world.

Christmas is coming, and we can rejoice, because we know that, whatever our beliefs, faith, or traditions, any darkness which might be around us now isn't forever. And as time passes, we also try to remember anyone who may find it hard to celebrate.

When Christians chose this time of year to celebrate the birth of Jesus, it was with the specific purpose of offering him to everyone as a light in the darkness He had been born, not in power and glory, but in the vulnerable weakness of a baby, born to a tradesman's family, in a time of empire, conflict, and oppression. Then as now, he offered unconditional love to anyone who reached out to him.

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We continue to celebrate his birth - but it should be not only with presents, parties, and gathering together. We should try to care for one another all the more, showing love towards anyone in need.

Dark times may come and go, but Light remains.

Blessings

Ron Partridge, curate and chaplain (retired)

THE TUESDAY SOCIAL

We do not hold a December meeting but would like to thank everyone who has come along and supported these evenings.

All the Team wish you a joy filled
and peace filled Christmas

REAL CHRISTMAS TREE RECYCLING

From Steve Gates

Shaun and the gang from Treecraft have again kindly offered to shred and recycle our Christmas Trees. Bring trees to the hardstanding next to the Memorial Hall **before Sunday 4 January 2026**

THE THREE TUNS

We continue to be closed on Tuesdays throughout December, except for **Tuesday 30 December** when we will be opening in the evening for the festive quiz. We would like to wish everyone an enjoyable festive season, a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

VOLUNTEER FLOOD WARDEN FOR LOWER HALSTOW REQUIRED

From Kay Howard-Challis

Due to a volunteer moving out of Lower Halstow, we are looking for other volunteers, should you be interested, please let me know, my contact email address is:- howardchallisk@gmail.com, where we can discuss what the position entails.

THE TUESDAY SOCIAL - 27 January 2026

Join us for a fun, not to be taken too seriously

Quiz Night

hosted by our lovely Becky Memorial Hall, School Lane, ME9 7ES

7.30pm – 9pm

£4 entry on the door Refreshments Raffle

Phone Liz on 842272

The Tuesday Socials are fundraising events
for St Margaret's Church, Lower Halstow

REED CUTTING BY THE GIBBS FIELD STREAM

From Kay Howard-Challis, Volunteer Flood Warden:

It was brought to my attention that during this summer, people who back onto the Gibbs field next to the stream, were cutting back the reeds and putting the cuttings straight into a brown bin. The IDB (Internal Drainage Board) look after the stream every year for Lower Halstow, by cutting back the reeds that are in the stream, they leave the cut reeds on the banks, and collect the dead reeds a week or so afterwards. The reason they leave the reeds on the bank of the stream, is so the aquatic life that live within the reeds of the stream, can then work their way back into the stream, these organisms are crucial to the stream, as they absorb pollutants, so providing a healthy habitat for other creatures, who live within the stream. Therefore if you feel you want to clear any reeds near you, please leave the reeds for a week or two before putting the dead reeds into your brown bin.

HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR TO ALL

Glenda and I (Gill) would like to wish everyone in the village a very happy christmas and a happy, healthy new year. We would like to thank everyone who volunteers to deliver the Village News - Jackie Swift, Paul Still, Sue Edwards, Jackie Branchett, Yvonne Quigley, Pam Shepheard, Teresa Aylott, Edwina Swift, Chris Jones, Liz Moulant, Hilary Gates, Gill Waltham, Kay Howard-Challis.

LOWER HALSTOW MEMORIAL HALL VILLAGE NOVELTY DOG SHOW 2025

From Kay Howard-Challis: (this was received too late to be included in the October & November Village News)

A huge thank you to everyone who entered their Dog, or in some cases Dogs, into our Novelty Dog Show. What a successful day, even the rain did not deter anyone from coming. The Show was won by Nancy, a Dalmatian cross breed, who on the day wagged her tail, and was so happy to have won the show, and of course her owner who was very delighted too, well done Nancy.

There are so many people who must be mentioned, because, for them too, the show could not have been so successful. Kerry Gardener the Judge, she admitted having to choose between so many dogs, was very hard, as they all deserved a 1st place, Jemma, her very helpful Steward, Pat Perrett for helping me with the registration, Richard, Kaye and sons, doing the much needed Neighbourhood Watch Community Cafe, Julia Dunphy, for manning the NSPCC stand, which made £71.00, and Kaitlin for her cake stall. You were all very necessary in making this Dog Show a success, thank you all.

There will be another Novelty Dog Show in 2026, so look out for the date in our Village News. I would also like to say thank you to The Colour Shop in Station Road, Rainham, as they designed and provided a great Banner, at a very reduced price, thank you Austin.

We wish everyone a very Happy, Healthy Christmas and New Year 2026

BUS SERVICES IN LOWER HALSTOW - Services 327/328

(SD = School Day, SH = School Holiday)

This summary was created with lots of help from Julia Dunphy. For details of stops etc look at chalkwell.co.uk

Monday to Friday, not Bank Holidays

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Sittingbourne to Chatham

7.20 (SD), 7.30 (SH), 9.35, 12.30, 15.32 (SD), 16.02 (SD), 17.50

Chatham to Sittingbourne

7.38 (SH), 7.39 (SD), 9.26, 13.24 (SH), 13.34 (SD), 15.53 (SH), 16.13 (SD), 18.28

Saturdays

Sittingbourne to Chatham

7.45, 12.55,

Chatham to Sittingbourne

9.08, 14.37, 17.17

LOWER HALSTOW PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Council meetings are held in the Memorial Hall on the first Tuesday of the month at 7pm.

Speeding

The Parish Council are very concerned about the amount of speeding that is taking place through the Village in spite of the 20mph speed limit. There have been five road traffic collisions, in Lower Halstow, over the last year and three of those have happened in the last three months. Councillors will be consulting with Police to install speed watch cameras, which collect data including registration numbers so that reports of any speeding offences can be sent to the Police.

Allotments

The stopcock at the Memorial Hall Allotment site has been turned off to protect the taps from frost damage through the winter months and will be turned on again in the Spring.

CONTACTS

(Telephone mobile number or otherwise stated) If you notice any information is out of date, or you would like something else included, please let Gill know on ransleyfamily@gmail.com or call 07771 817152

Brickfields - Judy Telford, 07486 530068,
friendsofthebrickfields@gmail.com

Cricket Club - Mark Stevens, 07950318576

Dog Warden - Daytime 417850. Out of hours 07795 237479

Flood Warden - Kay Howard-Challis, 844408,
howardchallisk@gmail.com

Food Bank Donations - leave any food/toiletries items in grey box at 34 Crouch Hill Court. Place any money in an envelope marked "Food Bank" into letter box

Judo Club - Jon 07944 755036

KCC Potholes - 03000 418187

Kent County Councillor - Richard Palmer, richard.Palmer@kent.gov.uk

Member of Parliament - Kevin McKenna,
kevin.mckenna.mp@parliament.uk, 07519 087522

Memorial Hall - Bookings email lhmhallbookings@outlook.com

Mobility Items - to borrow items, call Tony Clark 07977 566097, Dawn 07910339116 or Jackie 07840 258665 (there is no room for further donations)

Neighbourhood Watch - Co-ordinator, Richard Asbury,
LHNWatch1@gmail.com, 07894 792802, Facebook - Search Lower Halstow Neighbourhood Watch

Noise nuisance - Daytime 417850. Out of hours 07881 817601

Parish Council - Parish Clerk, Ann Smith,
parishclerk@lowerhalstowparishcouncil.gov.uk

www.lowerhalstowparishcouncil.gov.uk Meetings are on first Tuesday of the month at 7pm

Playgroup - Heather Salisbury, 07984 613532

Police - PC Skye Williams: skye.williams@kent.police.uk General enquiries, 01622 690690, kent.police.uk Neighbourhood Watch 01634 792131

Samaritans - 116 123 - free number day or night;

School - 842344, <https://www.lower-halstow.kent.sch.uk/>

Scouts, Cubs and Beavers - Ria Smith, Group Scout Leader,
ria.smithuk@gmail.com

Short Mat Bowls - John Mustoo, 843681, Mick Porter, Secretary,
713120

St Margaret's Church - Rev. Amanda Lane, Associate Priest for The
Six, 842478 or alternatively call 07778393231 and leave a message,
PCC Secretary, Dawn Drury 07910339116, Church Enquiries, Jackie
Swift 078402 58665

Swale Borough Council - Main office, 424341

Swale Borough Councillors for Bobbing, Lower Halstow & Iwade -
Lloyd Chapman, lloydchapman@swale.gov.uk, Roger Clark, 430324,
rogerclark@swale.gov.uk

Three Tuns - 842840, www.thethreetunsrestaurant.co.uk,
info@thethreetunsrestaurant.co.uk

Village News - Distribution, Glenda Tress, 843757 Items for inclusion
send to Gill Ransley, ransleyfamily@gmail.com, 07771 817152

Walkers (Lower Halstow Walkers) 10am every Monday, including
Bank Holidays, from the Brickfields end of Lapwing Drive, a brisk 2 hour
walk or a one and a half/2 hour walk at a more moderate pace. Call
Margaret on 843927 for more information.

Wildlife Rescues -Lenham Hedgehog Rescue 07932 383552,
Columbines Wildlife Care 07738 573818/07738 515263, Thorne
Hedgehog Rescue 07825 952201, Kent Wildlife Rescue 07824 893399

Yacht Club - Dave Quigley, 841242

**The deadline for items for the February and March 2026 Village
News is noon on 10 January 2026**

**Please email items for inclusion as early as possible to
ransleyfamily@gmail.com**

ADVERTISING IN THE VILLAGE NEWS

If you would like to advertise in the Village News donations are
requested. Minimum suggested donations are - Full page £15 per
edition, half page £7.50 per edition and quarter page £3.75 per edition.
All monies received go towards the cost of printing the newsletters.
Everything else is done free of charge by volunteers. The PCC reserves
the right to exclude adverts if they appear unsuitable

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