

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD.....it doesn't seem to be a problem these days. We go to the bakery or supermarket and voilà....!

Food is so easily available today that we don't appreciate any more that it needs to be 'grown'. Some of the fields surrounding Lenham supplied the locals' daily bread for hundreds of years.

Maybe we ought to respect the soil and the fields as much as we respect old buildings. Both have supported human life for centuries and they still do. The wheat in the field which we cross when walking our dog might end up in our bread, the barley in our favourite beer. The meat from the lambs grazing on the land could be served for Sunday lunch in our favourite pub. The lambs' wool is turned into something useful, be it a jumper or loft insulation. The timber from the coppiced woodlands on the Downs has been used for buildings, fencing or firewood since records began, and today the timber that lights up our cosy fireplace also powers large industrial plants. The beans grown in a Lenham field might be exported to an Asian country where there is a great demand for black beans on certain holy days, thus helping to improve the national balance of payments.

For centuries people's wellbeing has been connected to the use of land. In 2024 Lenham faces a decision which could remove valuable, Grade 2 farmland for ever. The Stour, which has its first springs in Lenham, is today a scarce chalk stream. It could be turned by the



cleaned effluent from sewage works for an additional 5000 homes into a drain of some sorts, which won't have, of that we can be certain the chemical constituent to remain a chalk stream.

The chalk stream and the fertile fields could prove to be part of Lenham's history.

