

HOTHFIELD

NEWS

BY THE COMMUNITY FOR THE COMMUNITY
VOLUME 12 NUMBER 1

January 2021

THAT WAS 2020, THAT WAS!

Looking back on Hothfield News 2020

Quite a year! in January, 2020 started as it meant to go on, with torrential rain and the famous Hothfield Lake filling up across the back road to Bethersden. In February, some good news! The endless roadworks in The Street finally, slowly and grudgingly came to an end. In March, advance notice was given of the Gardeners' competition, and Bingo re-started in the Village Hall.

In April, though the Gardeners' Competition still featured, both front and back pages were filled with advice and instructions on how to isolate yourselves, protect your households and stay at home. 'These regulations may change', we said.

In May, the lockdown was extended for three weeks (little did we know), the Gardeners' Competition was called off, and the History Society gave us a cheerful article on Fevers and Epidemics.

June's cover was more cheerful, with Jack and Henry Legget urging us to follow their example and clean up the village. July saw pictures of the new Vineyard, and in August there was actually a service in Saint Margaret's! We were now so confident about Covid-19 that Aunt Jemima could rake up lots of jokes about it. In September, the Friends of Saint Margaret's were able to run an outdoor cake and crafts sale. Things were looking good.

October saw the Kent Wildlife Trust worried that the increased use of Hothfield Heathlands was producing more litter and dog mess, and asking us to restrain our dogs from frightening the wildlife. In November the church re-opened, held one service, and re-closed. The Editor, desperate for anything to fill the pages and stop him publishing his own stories, appealed for more input from the village. This resulted, in December, in an article about the Air Ambulance and news of a local business making gowns for the NHS. Things were turning grim again.

Happy 2021, everybody!



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THE BENEFICE OF CALEHILL WITH WESTWELL



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No services at Saint Margaret's during lockdown. For details of online services, see our website www.calehill-westwell.uk

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Our Fish and Chip Van (The Mermaids Plaice) will be coming to Hothfield Village Hall car park every Wednesday from 6.30pm -7.30pm. For pre orders, please call 07973 410973 before 1pm Wednesday Cash and Card payments welcome

HOTHFIELD NEWS

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Available on line at <http://www.hothfield.org.uk/community/hothfield-parish-council-17945/newsletter/>

The deadline for the February 2021 issue is 20 January.

Letters and articles for publication are always welcome. Advertising is free to businesses working in, or for, the Parish of Hothfield. Email the Editor for information on advertising prices for outside companies.

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October Draw Results

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3rd prize £8.90 no. 89

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HOTHFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

The back page of this month's Hothfield News is a tear-off survey about your Village Hall. We would like to know what people in the village and the surrounding area would like to see happening in the Hall. Please do fill in the survey and hand it in to Jay at the Post Office. Alternatively, it can be filled in on line. It is really important that we hear your views, so as to offer the best possible service.

For full minutes of meetings of Hothfield Parish Council, please either see the noticeboard outside the village shop or visit www.hothfield.org.uk

PLEASE NOTE:

The email address for the Parish Council is parish.clerk@hothfield.org.uk



Happy New Year from everyone at 1st Charing Scout Group. We are keen to get started with some proper scouting but may have to be patient for a bit longer. We took part in the 'virtual Race Around the World' to raise money for scout groups who may not survive

the lockdown. We are very proud of all those that helped. Special applause to Kaiden, Rowan, Logan, Tobias, Perla and Oscar who were our joint champions

Terry Lister Group Scout Leader
07748818660



JANUARY ON HOTHFIELD HEATHLANDS

It was stop-start-stop-start in 2020 for the loyal volunteers keeping the bracken and birch at bay on the heathland and for the team that check the livestock daily, as they adapted to new safety measures. Volunteering was suspended again on 10th December. Warden Cristina Juan wrote "It has been heartening to see how we have all come together and just cracked on. This year has really shown how much our little community of Wildlife Warriors means to all of us. Being able to get out on site with you to continue our work has

wasn't the same without them and their particular browsing habits. The dung beetles will be happy too! There are around 60 species in the UK and several remain active through the winter.

A walk in the low January light reveals a less glamorous inhabitant which becomes more apparent with leaf fall but grows all year, at a rate of just 1 – 2 mm a year, and when used as a



dye produces bright glamorous colours. The reserve hosts many lichens in subtle shades of green grey, black and even yellow. Easily seen on tree trunks, 300 species and



made a huge difference to us and we hope it has given you the same amount of joy in otherwise difficult times." Everyone hopes they will be able to restart soon. Meanwhile in early December 4 highland cattle and 2 longhorns returned to the reserve; it

subspecies are associated with oak, over 500 with ash. Lichens are a unique combination of a fungus and an alga living as one unit in symbiosis; the fungus shelters the alga and absorbs moisture from the atmosphere which the alga needs for photosynthesis to



produce food which the fungus needs. Lichens come in many forms, leaflike, wispy, pixie cups, thin coats on trees, crusts and spots, and grow on rocks and stones (and roof tiles), living and dead wood, on the soil including under heather plants, often several together and close to mosses. Yellow-green granular *Candelariella reflexa* is easily seen on tree bark, often at the base where dogs have urinated, often with strappy silvery *Ramalina farinacea*. The citation for Hothfield Heathlands SSSI mentions "the good lichen flora which includes several *Cladonia* species." Adapted to many habitats from arctic to desert, they are not parasitic, so not harmful to their plant hosts, but are sensitive to pollution. They provide nesting material for birds, shelter and food for invertebrates that are the food for others and are a subtle element of this complex wildlife haven that has provided solace to so many recently.

Margery Thomas



Important message

from Ian Rickards, Area Manager, Kent Wildlife Trust

Please do not feed the livestock on the reserve.

Over the last few months more and more people have been feeding the ponies, either picking up grass from the ground or bringing extra food on site for them. This creates several issues

- They can react badly to any food they are not used to. This could cause painful and dangerous reactions, some of which can be fatal.

- The animals learn to beg and become dangerous to visitors (biting, pushing and kicking). Even picking up grass and offering it to them will encourage dangerous behaviour.

People love to see the ponies, but if the hand feeding continues, we will have to remove them from the reserve.

These ponies are checked every day and their wellbeing is our priority, if we determine they are hungry, suitable food will be provided for them.

If you would like to know more about our conservation grazing please visit www.kentwildlife.org.uk or 01622 662012

5 Happy New Year from Hothfield History Society

Clearly 2020 will go down in global history, although personally I haven't noticed much impact in Hothfield, apart from more people out and about walking, using the play area (when allowed) and on the Heathlands. There were even families without dogs!

e now have a vineyard, and some new houses occupied in the village centre, but have I missed any other notable events? If you have a Hothfield story that you'd like to share, from any time, not just about 2020 or the pandemic, then feel free to e-mail the History Society at: hothfieldmemories@hotmail.com and we can save it in the archive and even share it with your permission.

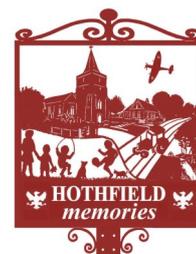
Website upgrade:

The village's History website has been running since 2013 and is now overdue for an upgrade. The basic software in the background is out of date, and the appearance of the website doesn't always work with mobile devices and smaller screens.

Therefore our host is having to initially turn off the on-line catalogue, and soon after the website itself will not be available, for which I apologise. Don't fret, nothing will be lost and the contents will eventually reappear in a revised format and different layout.

The History Society now needs to raise funds to pay for the upgrade and the design work to improve the layout and style of the website to make it fit for future years. I will of course let you know about progress and when the website will be available again. In the meantime I can share your recollections via this Newsletter.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed and worked on our website, and sent photos, stories and documents. 2021 will be a new era for the website and a new 'normal' for all of us. We wish everyone a happy, and different, new year!



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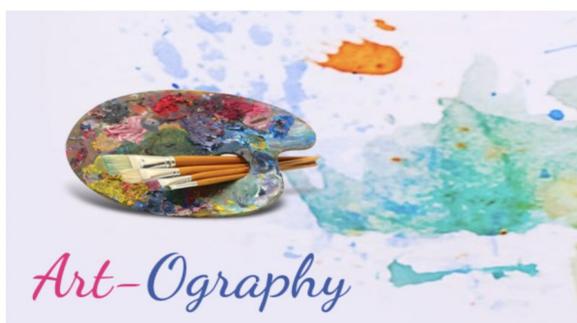


The aim of our dedicated team of volunteers is to protect our unique Wealden towns, villages and countryside from the effects of damaging and unsuitable development, preserving its charm and character for future generations to enjoy. We welcome active members to help us with a range of activities, from scrutinising planning applications to organising events. If, like us, you care about the Weald, please get in touch and get involved.

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Hothfield Village Hall

Local Residents' Survey January 2021

Help make use of this valuable local asset



1. Firstly, the Hothfield Village Hall Committee and Parish Council wish all residents a very Happy New Year! It has been a very stressful and sometimes distressing year and, we hope that a much brighter 2021 beckons. We are asking for your support in looking for ways of preserving a valuable village asset – the Village Hall.

With virtually the whole of the Hall's bookings having been forced to be cancelled due the pandemic, we are looking for your assistance in responding to this brief questionnaire. We have put together a brief description of the types of events, classes, etc, that could be attracted to the Hall given sufficient local support and would ask you to simply tick the ones that you would be likely to attend in the future. We are only seeking to gauge what interest there may be generally for certain activities (e.g.: Well-Being, Clubs, Exhibitions, etc) Once we have your feedback we will narrow the options down to the most popular and seek to bring as many as possible to the Hall in 2021. There are very likely ones we have missed so we would be grateful for any additional suggestions you may have.

Once completed, we would ask you to simply drop your questionnaire into Hothfield Post Office where Jay will collect them on our behalf, or reply on-line via the following link: https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=DQSlkWdsW0yxEjajBLZtrQAAAAAAAAAAAAAN_tcUp5tUNij2WVNCUINLNFINWkRGSkUN05JTUhJMC4u

Any responses to be returned by 31st January at the latest, please.

Please add any comments or suggestions on this form as indicated or email hothfieldhall@outlook.com. Phone Phil Theedom On 07402 882960 (Survey queries only).

Please tick the boxes of any activities of interest to you or your family.

We would also like to take this opportunity of reminding all Hothfield residents that positions are still vacant on both the Village Hall Committee and the Parish Council. Both would appreciate an influx of new blood to give a more varied representation of the village. Anyone interested please contact Paul Fothergill for the Village Hall on paul.fothers@yahoo.co.uk or Ian Lloyd for the Parish Council on ian.lloyd@hothfield.org.uk

Many thanks.

1. Your Name and contact details may be added here if you wish:

	Definitely	Possibly	Not at all
2. Art/Craft Club	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Social Clubs (Bingo, Darts, Whist Drive etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Clubs/Societies (Book, Bridge, Gardening, Music, etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Exhibitions (Art, History, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Well-Being (Weight Loss, Dance, Yoga, Badminton, Bowls, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Performance (Youth Theatre, Amateur Dramatics, Music Performance etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Junior/Toddlers (Scouts/Guides, Play Days, Football/Rugby fun day, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Ad Hoc Events (Quiz Nights, Jumble Sales, Village Market, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Hothfield Heathlands (e.g. Kent Wildlife Trust presentation)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. Your suggestions