

# HOHFIELD NEWS



## Dates for your Diary

Hothfield Parish Council next meeting 7pm 9 Oct Hothfield Village Hall

Egerton Music Festival 11th & 12th Oct Egerton Millennium Hall 7.30pm

Barn Dance With Attitude—Hothfield Village Hall Sat 12 Oct 7.30pm—See Page 7

What is the use of a Heathland?

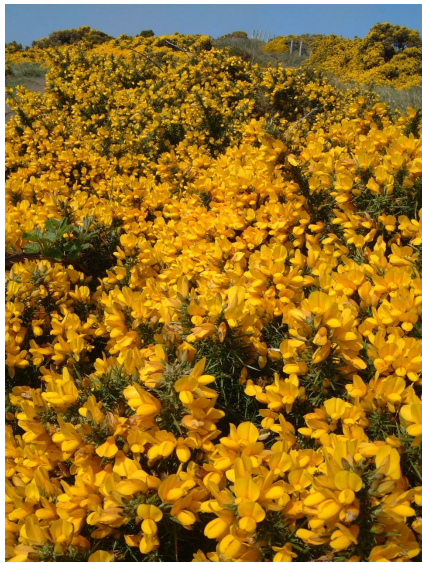
Hothfield Heathlands has always been an essential area for wildlife, and more recently are used for recreation, walking and general appreciation of the countryside.

But in the past heathlands played an important part in the local culture and community.

Small sections of heath and peat turves were cut out and removed from the common, and burnt as a fuel in homes. Peat burnt at a much lower temperature than wood, which you may think would be a bad thing. But before houses were built of brick, you could safely burn your turves, without burning down your house! The turves were dug in such a way, that they created shallow pits, in which the heather regrew quickly. Within 7 years the turves were ready to cut again.



Birch, which is the bane of our lives from the perspective of reserve management, was very popular for all sorts of purposes. It



became particularly popular following the plague, as the connection was made between dirty houses and disease. The production of besom brooms (brooms made from birch) went through the roof!

Gorse was a very popular firewood, and was particularly popular with bakers, as it was so very flammable. It is likely that a lump of gorse in a baker's oven would have been the spark that started the Great Fire of London.

Bog myrtle, for which Hothfield is the only place in the South East of England was used for all sorts of flavouring, but was particularly useful as an insect repellent. The Bog myrtle was also used to flavour heather beer, our country's oldest beer.

Sphagnum mosses, which are the building blocks of the peat bogs, were often dried out for bedding, but also had an antiseptic quality and used as a battlefield dressing. (There is evidence that further in the past it was used for treating piles and for making stone aged nappies!)

The fluffy white seed heads of cotton grass seen across the reserve in June could be spun into useful fabrics. Bog bean roots were ground up to make a bread flour, although the toxins they hold wouldn't do you much good.

Bracken was used for animal bedding, and the charcoal made from burning bracken was excellent for glassmaking, making particularly clear glass. However it had more sinister uses, and a woman that was found pregnant out of wedlock was sent to cut bracken as it was believed to cause miscarriage (whether that the bracken itself, or the process of waving a heavy scythe around all day isn't clear).



Even the vigorous bramble was used, and not just for their berries. The long stems were trimmed of their spikes, and created lengths of very strong twine (useful for tying up your besom broom).

Most of these skills and practices have long disappeared from living memory, but we continue to replicate some of these practices on our volunteer task days, particularly the removal of birch and bracken.. Fortunately, visitors are happy enjoying the plants and wildlife, leaving them there for everyone else to enjoy.

For further information about Hothfield Heathlands and the Kent Wildlife Trust please visit our website on [www.kentwildlife.org.uk](http://www.kentwildlife.org.uk) Area Manager, Kent Wildlife Trust

# Hothfield Parish Council

For full minutes of meetings of Hothfield Parish Council, please either see the noticeboard outside the village shop, or visit [www.hothfield.org.uk](http://www.hothfield.org.uk)  
PLEASE NOTE: The email address for the Parish Council is [parish.clerk@hothfield.org.uk](mailto:parish.clerk@hothfield.org.uk)

## Hothfield Parish Council

We need Volunteers to deliver this Newsletter to Coach Drive and Beech Drive. Please contact the editor. At present a few extra newsletters will be left in the Post Office.

## Charing Scout Group

The new term is well under way and all our sections are firing on all cylinders. While we still have light in the evenings we are getting outside as much as possible. Beavers chose a wet evening to bring their bikes along for their cyclist badge. Cubs and scouts have both been looking at disability awareness. We also had great fun celebrating 'Talk like a pirate day'.

If anyone has family members who are no longer in scouting and would like to donate their uniform we'd love to have them and promise to put them to good use.

**Terry Group Scout Leader 07748818660**

## Hothfield Village Hall

Bookings via  
[www.hothfieldvillagehall.co.uk](http://www.hothfieldvillagehall.co.uk)

### Regular weekly events

Mondays @ 16:30

Target Shooting School  
[www.targetshootingschool.co.uk/ashford](http://www.targetshootingschool.co.uk/ashford)

Tuesdays @ 19:00

Bowls Club

Contact: John 07492 862974

Wednesdays @ 17.30

Koba Dog Training

Contact: justine@kobadogtraining.co.uk

Fridays @ 18.30

Bowls Club

Contact: John 07492 862974

## Land to the South of Church Lane—Update

We're Rachel and Martin who have recently bought the land next to the vineyard off Church Lane. I thought that it might be good to update you on what is happening in Mansion Copse. Firstly I am pleased to say that Ashford Borough Council has agreed that it shall no longer be known as land to the south of Church Lane but by the new official title of 'Mansion Copse Farm', Church Lane, Hothfield. We asked for that name to reflect the fact that the land has always been known as Mansion Copse since long ago. You may have seen that a post box and temporary name sign has appeared.

Much has happened on the matter of trees. Firstly the Forestry Commission have visited and asked us to remove all the Spruce trees in our wood. This is because European Bark Beetle has spread to Kent and they need to create a fire break to stop the beetle working up the UK and devastating the forests further North. Whilst our trees seem free of spruce beetle they are in poor condition and therefore very susceptible to invasion. If that happens we will be ordered to remove them and burn the trunks on site releasing the stored carbon. We will be removing them voluntarily subject to the terms of a Forestry Licence. In any case this will provide more space and light for the variety of native trees that are competing with the spruce trees, and so those majestic oaks and other trees should prosper. Additionally more natural broadleaf trees will be planted to replace the spruce and they will be maintained by us for a minimum of 10 years to ensure they are healthy and will continue to thrive independently from that point.

Sadly we will be losing the oak that's growing against the old wall that once stood in front of the Manor. We consulted with the Planning and Conservation departments regarding this. Their considered view was that the wall is of greater historic significance and unique and the tree was ultimately going to destroy the wall and should be removed. There are plenty of other mature oaks on the site. This work will be undertaken at the same time as the felling of the Spruce trees prior to the next growing season. The commemorative oak planted by Baron Hothfield will not be removed but will be carefully subjected to a crown lift to prevent further damage to the main trunk caused by lower limbs becoming over heavy and splitting the trunk. This should ensure that its general condition is improved and help its continued life into the next century!

Over the next few months, and in order to complete the forestry work, the entrance track will be improved and in February, in addition to the replanting of the woodland, a minimum of 1875 hedgerow whips and 63 trees will be planted along the perimeters to reconnect the existing sections of woodland together as wildlife corridors.

A busy few months but my expectation is that by next summer the overall health and appearance of Mansion Copse will have greatly improved.

The future - Rachel and I have always said that as part of our stewardship of Mansion Copse that we would love to construct a single modest eco home on the site and ultimately that remains our hope for the future. In the meantime we will continue to enhance and conserve the land to the south of Church Lane. **Rachel and Martin**

## Village History Website relaunched



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Your new-look history website has been re-launched, at the same address:

[www.hothfieldmemories.org.uk](http://www.hothfieldmemories.org.uk) It has the same content in a slightly simpler format and easier to read and navigate with smart phones and smaller devices. I've tidied up a few loose ends and errors that came from the old site. It would now be great to add new content, pictures and stories from you. You can post your own page or send messages via the new website. Even recent news and stories from the last 25 years would be good.

A big Thank You again to the generous sponsors who contributed to the new website: Kent County Councilor Charlie Simkins, Borough Councillor Clair Bell, Hothfield Parish Council and Hothfield Education Foundation. If you're a young person, in particular, and we can help with a local history project, or if you would like to research a topic of Hothfield's past (there's a lot that we don't know) then please get in touch and see what we can do together: [hothfieldmemories@hotmail.com](mailto:hothfieldmemories@hotmail.com)

### Royal Connections number 1

One of the founding members of Hothfield History Society, Charles Oliver, sadly passed away in 2014. He was an active member of the community, a Borough Councillor for a while, a campaigner, and helped to set up Ashford Museum amongst many other worthy activities. His widow Jane sadly died last winter and their daughter Hattie has the unenviable task of sorting out the family home.

Hattie has very kindly donated some folders of bits and pieces that the History Society might find interesting, collected by Charles. Among the papers is an extract from the Telegraph newspaper showing

the lineage of the current Queen Camilla. She is part of the Keppel family who descended by marriage from the Southwell family. Edward Southwell had married the daughter of Katherine Tufon who was herself the daughter of Thomas Tufon the 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of Thanet. The Tufons were also the Barons at Hothfield (the title 'Lord Hothfield' hadn't been created at that time). So Queen Camilla is the eighth generation from the granddaughter of our own Thomas Tufon. Thomas' father was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Thanet and he had married Baroness Clifford (Margaret Sackville) and inherited her estates of Westmorland and Cumberland eventually making Thomas the 18<sup>th</sup> Baron of Cumberland and the title Lord Clifford. Lady Margaret's mother was Lady Anne Clifford who herself has a remarkable history fighting to inherit the estates from her brother and then rebuilding numerous castles into stately homes in the north of England.

Thomas himself married Lady Catherine Cavendish the daughter of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Newcastle; and the Cavendish family were also very well titled through the generations. William Cavendish (junior) had the title of Lord Clifford in the early 1800's and is famed for his connection with the modern variety of banana.

The Tufons were clearly moving in the right circles for many hundreds of years, and already had considerable wealth, lands and titles. The marriage to the "Cliffords" vastly expanded the Tufons' lands and titles even more than before. Also a marriage into the Blower family saw the Tufons assume part of what we now know as the Medway Towns and nearby parcels of land in 1601. Charles Oliver's notes list the influence that the Blowers had, and which the Tufons claimed, including land in: Gillingham, Rainham, Upchurch, Halstow, Newington, Detling, Stockbury and Bredhurst. The Blower name was corrupted to 'Bloor' and a part of Bloors Place still exists today and once had its own wharf on the bank of the river Medway. In 1603 John Tufon accompanied King James I on his way from Scotland to become the English King; John was later Knighted and his sons were Baronets. **Chris Rogers, Hothfield History Society**



Welcome to our new-look website

This website records the history of the parish of Hothfield, near Ashford, Kent, UK. Here you can browse through stories and our collection of local historical material, which includes photos, old documents and memories of local people. Find out [more about us](#) or [get in touch](#).



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# THE GRANARY SPA

Holistic & Beauty

I am so happy to tell you all our amazing news that we are finalists for Best Beauty Salon of the year in Kent!

We are really looking forward to attending the Kent Health and Beauty Business Awards evening on Friday 11th October, where we will have a three course dinner and disco!

The spa will open at a later time of 12pm on the Saturday 12th October to allow our team some well deserved time off and rest.

Our amazing Shar has also been selected as a finalist for Beauty Therapist of the year. Shar is a true inspiration, beautiful inside and out and we are so proud of you.

Love, Georgia x



## SHIFT HAPPENS

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Paul 07703 685143

[www.shifthappensdrivingtuition.co.uk](http://www.shifthappensdrivingtuition.co.uk)

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### Art Group

There is a small group that meets twice a month on Monday afternoons in Westwell Village Hall.

We enjoy painting, drawing etc, together with a cup of tea and a chat.

If anyone is interested in joining us, please contact Penny Sutcliffe on 01233 634191 for more details.



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## ANNA LUBANSKA

PHOTOGRAPHY

PHOTOGRAPHY



BASED IN KENT

 ANNA.LUBANSKA.PHOTOGRAPHY  
 ANNALUBANSKAWILK@OUTLOOK.COM  
 07521000697

## RENEW Gardening Services

Joseph Ellis

Phone number: 07753174115

Email: [renewgardening@gmail.com](mailto:renewgardening@gmail.com)



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# HOTHFIELD POST OFFICE STORES

Sunday	0900 To 1200			Post Office closed
Monday	0900 To 1300	1400 To 1800		Post Office closes 1730
Tuesday	0900 To 1300			
Wednesday	0900 To 1300	1400 To 1800		Post Office closes 1730
Thursday	0900 To 1300	1400 To 1800		Post Office closes 1730
Friday	0900 To 1300	1400 To 1800		Post Office closes 1730
Saturday	0900 To 1300	1400 To 1800		Post Office closes 1230

## Michelle's Furry Tails Dog Grooming

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**Harvest 2024!**

We are approaching our fourth harvest at Nine Oaks and as in previous years we will be welcoming volunteers to come and help us pick. Dates can change due to changing weather, however, at present we are expecting to harvest on the 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of October.

Generally picking takes between four and six hours and the day includes a cold 'Ploughman's' style lunch in the vines, washed down with our still and sparkling wines. If you are interested in joining us this year for harvest then please do drop us a line at [in-fo@nine-oaks.co.uk](mailto:info@nine-oaks.co.uk) and we will add you to the list.



It would be safe to say that 2024 has been an extremely challenging growing season in the vineyard. An unusually warm and wet winter, followed by a very wet spring and damp humid summer has made for the perfect breeding ground for mildew, particularly downy mildew. Over the past few months, we have been working extremely hard to keep the grapes as dry as possible and in some areas, this has been successful in keeping the grapes free of mildew and others it has not. Although this is disappointing, we have been really lucky to have two very fruitful years in 2022 and 2023, and this does go to show that the English weather really is our biggest challenge.



On a separate note, we have recently submitted an application to KCC PROW team to divert part of the PROW that currently runs through the vineyard. We have taken the decision to submit the application for a number of reasons, but primarily it is for the safety and security of those transiting the vineyard as we have noted in previous newsletters. The submission of the application is the first stage in a very long process with applications taking between two and three years to even begin to be processed. Once the application is in process, the KCC PROW team will organise and chair a series of formal public consultations allowing interested parties to have their say.

It has come to our attention that a resident of the village is holding their own public consultations regarding the PROW. We would like to make clear that these consultations are not part of the formal process. If anyone does have any questions or

points, they wish to raise regarding the PROW then please do reach out to us directly via: [info@nine-oaks.co.uk](mailto:info@nine-oaks.co.uk) and we will come back to you as soon as possible.

We would like to remind all that despite an application having been submitted, until and if the application is processed/approved the only routes to be used by walkers are those of the current marked footpaths; AW166 and AW167. Thank you for your support in this.

**Barn Dance with Attitude – Live Music - Hothfield, Ashford M20 J9**

Saturday October 12th: Hothfield Village Hall  
Great live music! The caller teaches everything. No experience or partner needed.  
7:30pm: Ceilidh Skillz Workshop  
8:00pm – 11:00pm: Dance with music from Hot Rats

£10 in advance; £12 on the door.

We do lots of fun, easy dances so that you will be able to join in everything. You don't need a partner; everyone dances with everyone and we make sure that no-one is left sitting out. Lots of our dancers come by themselves; we are a very sociable group so you will feel part of the crowd straight away.

Bring your own drinks and refreshments.

We would love to see you on the dance-floor. Why not give it a try?

Lots more details at <http://www.contrafusion.co.uk> and <http://contrafusion.co.uk/KentCeilidhs.html>.  
Videos at <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLITfIlISO9aV0DNCtcgAQdCDctI2rn6OZg>

# Saint Margaret's Church

For weddings, baptisms, etc. contact the Parish Office [calehillpcc@gmail.com](mailto:calehillpcc@gmail.com) 07395 910317

Rector: Rev. Sandra Marsh The Vicarage Pett Lane Charing Kent TN27 0DL Phone: 01233 713996 email: [revsandramarsh@btinternet.com](mailto:revsandramarsh@btinternet.com)

Services in October

Sunday 6th 11.00am Harvest

For services in our other churches, see [www.calehill-westwell.uk](http://www.calehill-westwell.uk)

## FRIENDS OF ST MARGARET'S CHURCH HOTHFIELD PRESENT



*A Christmastime Crooner, Canapés & Carols*  
*Monday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2024 6.45pm to 9.00pm*  
*At The Great Hall, Godinton House TN23 3BP*

Limited number of tickets available. Further information to follow. Please text or phone Sharon on 07968 054898 to express an interest or leave your details with Bina or Jay in Hothfield village shop.

Charity Number 1198602

### Egerton Music Festival

Egerton Music Festival is offering two concerts this year, ahead of the main festival 26 June to 6 July 2025.

On Friday 11 October The Vanguards play traditional bluegrass and original compositions, in the Millennium Hall, Egerton at 7.30pm. Tickets £10, £5 for under 16s.

On Saturday 12 October, again in the Millennium Hall at 7.30pm, the internationally known and award-winning Fibonacci Quartet perform Haydn, Mozart and Schubert. Tickets £20, free for under 16s.

Tickets can be booked via [egertonmusicfestival.co.uk](http://egertonmusicfestival.co.uk) or [wegottickets.com](http://wegottickets.com).



### HOTHFIELD NEWS

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