

## FUN QUIZ NIGHT AND HEARTY SUPPER

CHOICES INCLUDE VEGAN



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**Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> March**  
**Hothfield Village Hall**

TN26 1EQ

**7pm for 7.30pm All welcome!**

**Tickets £10, under 12s £5**

**From Hothfield Post Office**

To help plan catering, kindly buy tickets by noon 19<sup>th</sup> March

**Teams of up to 8 people**

**Bring your own drinks and glasses**

**For more details or to reserve tickets**

**call 07510 944 055**

**email [hothfieldmemories@hotmail.com](mailto:hothfieldmemories@hotmail.com)**



**Prizes &  
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Proceeds to Hothfield Village Hall and Hothfield History Society  
[www.hothfieldmemories.org.uk](http://www.hothfieldmemories.org.uk)

### Dates for your Diary

Hothfield Parish Council next meeting 7pm 13th Feb Hothfield Village Hall

The Arts Society Egerton next lecture 2.30pm Wed 12th Feb—see page 8

Fun Quiz Night & Supper Hothfield Village Hall 7pm Sat 22nd March

Hothfield Common became a protected Site of Special Scientific Interest due to the way the land had been used by local folk, for fodder, fuel and forage for other domestic uses. After losing the last of the Commoners in early 1900's, the effect of that usage is now achieved by Kent Wildlife Trust and the Ashford volunteer team.



Will Glasson joined as Ashford Area Warden in 2023 and here reflects on his first full year working across the local sites.

*"I feel a part of a very close team and it seems like I've always been here. The beginning of 2024 started in the typical festive British way with pouring rain putting lots of our leaky dams to good use and making our work parties more interesting. In spite of this we were out managing scrub and having fun down at The Warren, pulling trees out of the main pond with the added bonus of dredging out some nice stinky mud. It was the outside shower for most of us when we got home after that!"*

*For the Spring and Summer tasks we had slightly nicer work conditions though still some wet weather keeping the bogs on Hothfield Heathlands topped up all summer. We had some massive work parties on there and*

*at Conningbrook Lakes Country Park, meaning we could clear huge amounts of the ever-present bracken at Hothfield, and the invasive plant Himalayan Balsam at Conningbrook. Balsam seems to grow best entwined amongst nettles and I think I'm only just starting to stop tingling from it. (Himalayan Balsam, *Impatiens glandulifera*, was introduced in the UK in 1839 and is an invasive weed of riverbanks and ditches, where it prevents native species from growing. MT.) The blooms of heather we had this year were spectacular and the orchids were abundant. The boundaries of Hothfield bog which were mechanically cleared contractors were particular hotspots, demonstrating how quickly things recover and the importance of management.*

*In the Autumn it was time to rev up the chainsaws and brush cutters for clearance work. At Conningbrook the tasks were reed cutting and coppicing. The power tool operators had a head start but are quickly being caught up by the clearance team! At another Ashford reserve, Stone Wood, we combined coppicing, opening up sunny woodland paths and working in the leaky dam area, also known as "Dinosaur park". Although we did not see any T. rex, it does look like a throwback to a time when beavers were roaming the area, with dams holding back the torrential rain from the previous day creating a set of slow draining ponds.*

*After a soggy winter the rain gods decided to take pity on us, giving us a dry day for our annual winter celebration, we even managed to cook the sausages!*

*My highlights have been seeing lots of amazing work achieved throughout the year and seeing the impact this is already having on our reserves as well as the potential going forward. The work we have achieved is impressive and I am always honoured to be part of such a great team. I am excited for what the next year will bring. "*

Will and the volunteers were back on the reserve on 7 January experimenting with an improved method for tree popping (removing large saplings including roots to stop birch and willow in particular to regrow) has proved a game-changer. Using a winch on the KWT Land-Rover, in a short winter day two people pulled out over 100 trees, some 10cm+ in diameter. A shout-out to Geoff who's job was to connect the cable to the trees.

The Kent Wildlife Trust Ashford Volunteer team are out every Tuesday and Thursday, and the second Sunday of the month. New people are always welcome, and further details can be found on our website

<https://www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/volunteering-opportunities/ashford-area-practical-team-volunteer>

Margery Thomas





# 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)

## Council Tenants ABC Electrical Inspection

The letter we have all received regarding electrical inspection and testing programme, addressed "Dear resident", for NRT Group is genuine as I have contacted Linda Curtis, Compliance Manager, at Ashford Borough Council and I have received an affirmative response. I was sceptical as well because in this day and age a letter head and finding out whom is in charge these days is not difficult.

Councillor Fletcher

## Newsletter Volunteers Needed

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 term is in full swing with all sections having lots of fun. The clear cold nights have allowed us to go outside and view the night sky. Lots of astronomy badges to give out. Clouds have stopped us seeing all the planets lined up so far but we are hoping for the best.

It was lovely to start term with a presentation evening at beavers. Two of them have gained their Chief Scout bronze award. They were quite shocked to discover that Bear Grylls isn't Chief Scout any more!

I'm looking forward to an evening with creepy crawlies soon, though I can't imagine why people keep some of these as pets....

When I was a scout, many many years ago, I remember camping in the winter, even in deep snow. I'm so glad this still happens. Good luck with the winter survival camp everyone!

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

Thursdays @ 10.30am

Dance Visions Zumba

Contact: [bookwhen.com/dancevisions](http://bookwhen.com/dancevisions)

Fridays @ 18.30

Bowls Club

Contact: John 07492 862974

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## Who remembers the Nit Nurse? – Hothfield School 60years ago

4



When Hothfield's village school closed in 2006 we were fortunate to be given a few mementos from the school including the school trophies and a hand-held fire alarm bell. We were also given the school Log Book or diary from 1965 to 1979.

From 1965 the Headmaster, Mr Robinson, wrote a brief entry almost daily recording any notable events. In 1965 the role was 148 pupils across Infants and Juniors; this dropped to 90 children by 1977, and 80 in 1978. Classes were mixed with different ages in the same class (e.g. First years and Second years together). It seems that the school's children were active in the village singing to the OAPs in the Institute Hall (there wasn't a village hall in those days), and singing to the residents of the Hospital as well as performing nativity plays, carol services, pantomimes, and displaying flowers in the church. There were also lots of trips out including to the Romney Hythe and Dymchurch Railway, "Ashford Airport", very successful day trips to Calais are recorded and the infants visited Mr Coles farm "The visit was a great success". A large group of French pupils also came to stay and went on lots of trips.

The school also competed with other schools in netball, rounders, cricket and football, with some notable victories; and two lads competed in the Ashford Schools' High Jump with one Hothfield boy coming second overall. Not bad for such a small village and small school. The pupils also took country dancing, and swimming but were let down one day when the bus didn't turn up to take them to the baths. The staff played the girls' rounders team – the result was almost a draw.

In January 1965 discussions were underway to build extensions to the school, and in the meantime a mobile classroom was installed, and the school used the Institute Hall for some activities. The mobile classroom was, however, short-lived as it was taken away to help a crisis in Gillingham the next year. Class 2 had rabbits which were housed in a hutch made by Class 3; these rabbits later had babies; were later stolen (more than once) and returned. In 1966 the school had a goat.

On 7 January 1965 the Medical Officer visited to see sanitary arrangements for the epidemic of yellow jaundice. On 13<sup>th</sup> January a health visitor came to inspect children's heads; there were several cases of infection and those children were given a bottle or tube of shampoo. She was back in May when "about two dozen children needed treatment". In December 1973 two families were excluded for having 'verminous heads'! ... by January 1975 all heads were 'very clean'.

On 21<sup>st</sup> January 1965 the school dentist arrived to inspect children's teeth prior to treatment. It seems that treatments started a week later over the course of a week. This seems to have been done for many years in a mobile vehicle that had difficulty getting on to the school premises as County Estates had not cut off tree branches that were in the way. There were also medical inspections including hearing and eyesight tests.

A rural science advisor came to see "the results of the flower collection and the section across the bog and the Common taken by Class 3 ... [he] appeared satisfied with the work which was going on."

Lots of visitors came to talk about a range of foreign countries; and the village Policemen (including PC Spooner) came to talk about road safety, "good behaviour about the village" and bicycle maintenance. The school seemed to be well supported by the Hothfield Education Foundation who paid for equipment like film projectors and screens which the Education Department would not fund; dictionaries were given to children leaving to go up to senior school by Lady Tufton or the Thanet Charities; Lady Rootes and Lady Tufton are also recorded as providing Christmas Trees. Sir Reginald Rootes was one of the school 'Managers'.

In July 1968 Mr Robinson left to go to a larger school. He signed off the Log Book saying "... I have enjoyed my 4½ years as Head of Hothfield school and gained a great deal of experience ... I trust too that I have also given to the school." He wished the best to his successor, Mr Pepper – a name that is often mentioned by residents of Hothfield who were at the school during his tenure until 1989. Mr Pepper's entries in the diary are very brief but it seems that the new extension was ready to use in September 1968 (and the roof was leaking in 1976 after the hot summer).

We've also got photocopies of older school log books from 1875 to 1931 (the originals are at the County's central archive at Maidstone) so I'll be looking through those too but the handwriting is a challenge.

Wishing everyone a happy 2025.

Chris Rogers, Hothfield History Society



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## SHIFT HAPPENS

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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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Thursday	0900 To	1300	1400 To	1800	Post Office closes 1730
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## BBC Food & Farming Awards finalist: Andrew Howard's On Farm Trials



Andrew Howard has a curious, restless mind. He's always wondering what he can change, and how he can prove whether a change has made a difference.

This curiosity has led him to invite scientists, conservationists and agri-tech businesses onto his arable farm, in Kent, to test theories in a multitude of on-farm trials. He's currently testing out drones that use AI to analyse crop nutrition, and experimenting with adding compost extract to his soils when planting seeds.

One of his passions is intercropping - the practise of growing more than one crop in the same field. He says it can spread your risk - if one crop fails, the other might still survive.

Andrew and his experiments have been chosen by judges, Charlotte Smith and Lucy Speed, as one of their three finalists in the "Farming for the Future" category of this year's BBC Food and Farming Awards. In this programme, Charlotte and Lucy visit the farm and learn more about his many trials. BBC Radio 4.

### Hoads Wood Update — Environment Agency

Since the last public meeting on 22 November 2024 the project team have continued to progress the work required to access the site and begin the waste clearance works. An updated programme of works has been submitted to us for review, and we are working with Acumen and other partners to ensure we manage the actions and risks to deliver this as quickly as possible. There is a considerable workload to be achieved before waste can be legally and safely removed from site and disposed of. Since the last meeting the critical actions we have progressed have been:

- 1) Securing all relevant authorisations, with appropriate mitigations, to access the site for additional waste sampling.
- 2) As part of the sampling process 42 waste samples were taken in December 2024 by Acumen at 14 trial pits. This was carried out at a range of depths (down to 4m) to understand more about the composition of the waste. The preliminary results have been received. Hazardous waste was found in 7 of the 42 samples taken and the rest are classified as non-hazardous. The waste is hazardous in these 7 samples due to elevated levels of Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons (TPH). This is not unexpected and allows Acumen to continue to plan for the waste removal as per their current proposals. Asbestos was found in trace amounts in two locations, where it had been suspected previously, but below the thresholds for hazardous waste classification. The results and analysis have been quality assured by our hazardous waste specialists and have been agreed. Initial results mean that the waste should be able to be removed to a non-hazardous permitted landfill. As soon as the waste sampling report/results have been finalised the report will be available for the public on request.
- 3) In-depth ecological and arboriculture surveys were taking place across several days last week to get baseline data on the site and make a further assessment of which trees may need to be removed during the waste removal and what legally protected species are present. We expect these reports at the end of January 2025.
- 4) We have continued water quality sampling from the streams around the site and up and downstream of the site from the River Beult. There has been no water quality impact noted in the River Beult to date but with heavier winter rainfall the flow of leachate into the streams in the wood has increased.
- 5) We are developing a landowner agreement with the neighbouring farmer to use his land (opposite the site entrance) to build a compound for the duration of the main works. This will be quicker and less constrained than building the compound in the woods, where Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) mitigation will be needed, protected species are more prevalent and health and safety risks greater. The plan for the compound has been developed and it has been confirmed with Ashford Borough Council that we do not need planning permission for this temporary development.
- 6) We have held very constructive meetings with Kent County Council (KCC) Highways teams on the authorisations needed for phases 2, 3 and 4. We have started working on the relevant authorisations with KCC Highways to enable the compound to be accessed from the road alongside traffic management plans. This includes bridging the ditch to the field and discussions around potential road closures during the works.
- 7) A monitoring camera has been installed which will remain in place for 2 years. This allows the site to be remotely monitored and is needed as part of the overall site security measures.
- 8) Since the meeting in November 2024 the programme of works has been sub-divided into 5 main phases (1-5) and a demobilisation phase. This will allow the team to get onto site as quickly as possible by focussing on the current and next phases rather than the whole project plan at once. The dates we are giving for each phase are our best estimate as this stage of the project and may be subject to change dependent on factors such as weather conditions. Phase 1 completed, Phase 2 starting March 2025, Phase 5 Autumn 2025.



# 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 February

Sunday 2nd 11.00am The Eucharist

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

### *The Arts Society brings people together through a shared curiosity for the arts*

We meet at Egerton Millennium Hall on the second Wednesday of each month at 2.30 p.m. (doors open from 2.00). Our next lecture will be:



**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> February at 2.30 pm: Canaletto and Samuel Scott in England.**

His lecture tells of how Canaletto, who came to England in 1746, influenced Scott, a self-taught artist, and of their paintings of boats and bridges on the Thames.

**Lecturer Nicholas Reed:** author, art historian and archaeologist, Nicholas lectures extensively and is also a member of The

### *Arts Society Egerton*

Visitors are always very welcome at £6 (just turn up and pay on the door), refunded if you join.

Membership is £40.

For further information please contact Christine Willis, our Membership Secretary via [cmwillis75@gmail.com](mailto:cmwillis75@gmail.com) or 01233 756377.



[www.theartsocietyegerton.org.uk](http://www.theartsocietyegerton.org.uk)

### **HOTHFIELD NEWS**

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