



Dates for your Diary

Hothfield Parish Council next meeting 7pm Wednesday 13 Sep at the Bluebells Centre

Ride & Stride 9th September (see page 8)

Nine Oaks Yoga/Pilates Class 21 September (see page 2)

Scarecrow Saturday St Margarets Church 30 September (see page 8)

Fun Race Night 11 November 7pm Hothfield Village Hall

Nine Oaks Vineyard – September Update

2



August has been perhaps the busiest month we've had yet at Nine Oaks. Martyn has been busily mowing and weeding around the vineyard, and we've had a team on site weeding by hand, stripping off excess crop and thinning the leaves around the fruit to maximise sun exposure and support ripening. With the sun finally back in the sky we are beginning to see the first signs of veraison – a key step in the ripening process which sees both the red and white grapes change colour and swell. The Greensands Way on the top plot passes through the chardonnay vines, where the grapes are beginning to turn a warm gold. On the bottom plot it passes through the Pinot Noir – on their way to a deep purple.



We had our second pair of open-air theatre events on Sunday 20 August and what a wonderful afternoon and evening we had! Quantum Theatre presented Peter Rabbit to a wonderful crown of families for a matinee, followed by A Midsummer Night's Dream as the sun went down in the evening. It was wonderful to see some of the local community out to share the event with us – thank you as ever for your



support. We hope you will agree the theatre has been a great success and we hope to do something very similar next year.



In the meantime though we have other exciting events planned. Firstly, on 21 September Hattie Oliver will be leading two yoga/pilates fusion classes at Nine Oaks, to be followed by a light lunch or supper. These events are a pilot concept for a series of 'Unwined' events, and it would be wonderful to see members of the Hothfield community involved. Tickets can be booked at www.nine-oaks.co.uk

Last but by no means least – the onset of Autumn means that harvest is drawing near. This year we will be harvesting

grapes from across the entire site. We are anticipating something in the region of 12 tonnes of grapes and again this year we are looking for volunteer pickers. Volunteers need to be aged 18 or over at the time of harvest. Please email info@nine-oaks.co.uk to register your interest and join our mailing list, letting us know your availability for the weekends 7-8, 14-15 and 21-22 October.

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

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([smartsurvey.co.uk](https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk))

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New Kent Police Neighbourhood Policing Model

New Beat Officer ~ PC Natalie Faiers

New Supervisor ~ Sergeant Richard Batten

Police Station, Church Road, Ashford, Kent, TN23 1BT

Email : csu.ashford@kent.police.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.

Hothfield Village Hall

Bookings via
www.hothfieldvillagehall.co.uk

Regular weekly events

Mondays @ 16:30

Target Shooting School

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 @ 18.30

Bowls Club

Fridays @ 18.30

Contact: John 07492 862974

HOTHFIELD HEATHLANDS IN SEPTEMBER

Beavers and Adonis Blues, a day away from Hothfield Heathlands

On a proper sunny August day Ian Rickards took some of the hard-working Ashford volunteer team to visit two very different Kent Wildlife Trust reserves in the East of Kent: Ham Fen, the last surviving ancient fen in Kent, just west of Sandwich and Coombe Down in Dover.

At Ham Fen, long-time volunteer cattle-checker Roland (works at Pegwell Bay on Wednesdays, goes fishing on Thursday) gently moved the glossy black Aberdeen Angus cattle and three water buffalo on as we took the marshy path through tall swathes of wild flowers to the fen. This is where the beavers have for the last 22 years been re-engineering this landscape of deep peat and running water. They slow the water flow, build dams to raise the water level and create deep pools around their lodges, making other pools and marshes in the process. The dams are built of logs they fell and drag to the dam site, packing it solid with mud. If they hear water trickling, they block it with new wood or scoops of mud. The beavers' lodge, also built of branches, bark and mud, is now several metres in diameter and height and barely visible, topped with hemp agrimony, reeds and giant hogweed. The lodge entrance is underwater, with sticks of willow stuck in the bed outside the lodge so they can access fresh food if the surface freezes in winter. The beaver pool is quiet and secluded, a favourite spot for the kingfisher, surrounded by head-high flowers tangled with hops and the hawthorns that the beaver seem to leave alone. Mature oaks standing in water have died, providing safe perches for the turtle doves who now breed here. Beaver are nocturnal and dislike the hot sun so we saw none. There is no public access, but the evening safaris run by KWT are the best way of getting a glimpse of these reclusive animals. <https://www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/safaris> KWT were the first to re-introduce European beaver into a contained reserve in this country and the initial three kits and a pair have thrived and bred. Beavers can now be observed on the River Stour, including from the Sainsbury's car park in Canterbury, and at Conningbrook Lakes in Ashford where pointed-pencil stumps left by their tree felling are very evident.



The next site we visited, Coombe Down, one of the very steep hills in Dover, was bought by KWT in 2017 to link with Old Park Hill and Nemo Down.. Badly degraded, Coombe Down is also being restored to a mosaic of woods, scrub and chalk downland, Europe's version of the rainforest with up to 40 species of flowering plants in just one square metre. 2.5% of the UK's chalk grassland is found just around Dover. A slope above Crabble Athletic football ground that was cleared of trees and scrub last winter is now covered in flowers, primarily mignonette, after the July rains. More clearance with heavy plant is planned for next winter. We hiked on up through scrubby woodland and huge banks of brambles (sun-warmed blackberries, mmm) to the crown of the hill with open sward spangled with flowers and butterflies, to the top of a steep slope of glorious flower-rich chalk downland, maintained by grazing, with a view to the Channel, ferries and France, and a KWT team working on Nemo Down opposite. Joy in discovering among all delights the harebells, autumn ladies' tresses, centaury, dainty skeletons of quaking grass, and many Adonis blue butterflies, the emblem of the Kent Wildlife Trust.

It was great to catch up with everyone and impressive to see sites at such different stages of development, representing years of paid and voluntary work, massive fund-raising, vision and planning. I've no room to list the birds, insects, butterflies, day-flying moths and myriad flowers we saw. But at both sites everyone lamented the paucity of butterfly and moth species that should have been feeding on the banquets of flowers. As Roland said, 'for many species it's been a bad year.' Margery Thomas

Dogs on Leads: Hothfield Heathlands

The end of August marks the end of bird breeding season. We will be removing the requirement for dogs on leads but will continue to ask visitors and dogs to remain on main paths and dogs to be always under control. Thank-you to everyone who has been helping the wildlife at Hothfield by keeping their dogs on leads over the last few months.

Works coming up

Our Precious Peatlands project is coming to an end this year. The project has provided us with funding to help restore the valuable habitats across the site. We will be carrying out scrub removal, especially around the wet areas, where the trees are in danger of sucking out the water that is the life blood for the bogs and fens. There is more information on the project here <https://www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk/hothfield-heathlands/precious-peatlands>

You can also contact me to find out more information ian.rickards@kentwildlife.org.uk



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****Offer runs from 1st-30th September 2023 - Available Monday-Saturday****

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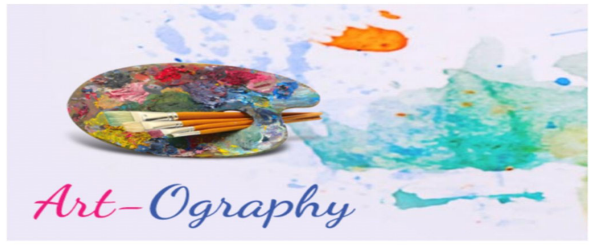


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HOTHFIELD NEWS
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Email: ian.lloyd@hothfield.org.uk

Letters and articles for publication are always welcome, deadline for inclusion is 20th Monthly. Advertising is free to businesses working in, or for, the Parish of Hothfield. Email the Editor for information on advertising prices for outside companies.

Hothfield Village Produce and Craft Show – Report

The first annual Hothfield Produce and Craft Show took place on 5 August and was a huge success! We had over 120 entries across the show and it was truly wonderful to see the range of skills and produce on display.

Huge thanks to our wonderful judges for their incredible commitment to the task. Thanks too to everyone who entered the competition, and supported the event during the day, the team at Hothfield Village Hall and to Hothfield Parish Council for making the even possible. A full list of category winners is below – congratulations to everyone. Special mention and congratulations to Sharon for her stunning dahlia, awarded best in show.

A number of people mentioned thinking about entering but worrying items weren't good enough, or things weren't quite ready. We will release a date for next year's event as soon as possible to give everyone a chance to plan, and would encourage anyone to enter anything they have made or grown – it is wonderful to see anything the village would like to share! We look forward to holding the event again next year, we know it will be even bigger and better.

Helen and Martyn

Category A – Flowers

A perfect, lonely flower in a vase – Pamela H

3 perennials, stemmed in a vase – Sharon

Pot plant – Peter G-M

Tallest sunflower – Makenna M-P

Category B – Vegetables

White potatoes – Sharon

Onions – Louise L

Runner beans – Sharon

French beans – Louise L

Tomatoes – Caroline W

Vegetable marrow – Peter G-M

Courgettes - Sharon

Cucumber - Sharon

Lettuce with root – Louise L

Collection of six soft fruits – Sharon

Cooking apples – Sharon

Eating apples – Louise L

Plums - Sharon

Spray of culinary herbs – Peter G-M

Category C – Preserves and Cooking

Three eggs – Les H

Marmalade – Karen B

Jam – Nick

Category C – Preserves and Cooking

Lemon curd – Helen M-P

Chutney – Caroline W

Loaf of bread – Jonathan W

Scones – Katherine W

Cake or pie (combined categories) – Philippa T

Biscuits with recipe – Pamela H

Victoria Sponge – Katherine W

Category D – Alcohol

Country spirit – Colin M

Category E – Handicrafts and Art

Artwork – Colin M

Handicraft – Colin M

Category F- Flower Arrangement

A jug of flowers - Sharon

Category G – Arts and Crafts (Age 10 and under)

Model – William H

Artwork (4 and under) – Angus M-P

Artwork (6 and under) – Makenna M-P

Artwork (8+) – Charlie H

Category I – Cookery (Age 10 and under)

Chocolate brownies – Makenna and Angus M-P

Category K – Photography

Combined categories – Sharon with honourable mentions to Colin M and Sheila F.

Saint Margaret's Church

For weddings, baptisms, etc. contact the Parish Office calehillpcc@gmail.com 07395 910317

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

Services in September
 Sunday 3rd 1100am The Eucharist
 Sunday 17th 1100am BCP Matins

For services in our other churches, see www.calehill-westwell.uk

Scarecrow Saturday

On September 30th 2023 at
 St Margarets Church TN26 1EL

Please make a scarecrow using anything you like. Use all those odds and ends that get taken to the shed or garage! Bring to the church on Friday September 29th



The church will be open on Saturday 30th September from 10:00

to 16:30 for everyone to admire your scarecrow. The Friends of St. Margaret will have their usual wonderful selection of home made snacks and cakes. There will be a Raffle, Home Produce Stalls and a Prize for best Scarecrow. Also I hope your sunflowers are growing well for the sunflower competition. Take a photo, measure it and bring along on the Friday to go on our display board. Prizes for the Tallest Sunflower

For more information email Karen or Pamela at fsmhothfield@gmail.com



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23/09



Do you write little notes?

When I was growing up, my Mum occasionally left little notes in my lunch box, sometimes in my pocket or a bag which said things like 'Enjoy your day', 'Missing you', 'Good luck' or simply 'Love you'!

They really lifted my spirits and made me smile. It was such a sweet thing to do, I started doing the same. I would write a note in my Dad's work diary for him to find. My brother also left notes, particularly when he was going back to America where he studied. He would leave a note in his bed that Mum would find when she went into his room.

Cerys kindly wrote a little note for everyone at work recently, and it reminded me how a little note can boost your mood and make you smile.

Give it a go and make someone's day! Love, Georgia x