

St John's Church

serving Stanborough, Lemsford, Cromer Hyde



June / July 2026

£1



Photos from the Fete



Minus the headphones...

My usual early morning dog walk with Molly took nearly twice as long as normal today. Not because Molly was particularly contemplative, but because I kept bumping into people!

A few months ago, on some cold January morning with sideways rain and me stomping around in waterproofs questioning my life choices, I was often the only person foolish enough to be out. But at this time of year everything changes. The lighter mornings and warmer weather seem to draw people back outside again. Suddenly the woods, paths and fields around the area are full of life.

Most people I met on my walk had headphones in. I suspect that — like me — they were enjoying a podcast or an audiobook. I find there's something comforting about having voices and stories with me as I walk — especially if accompanied by a decent coffee. A good podcast with a hot drink in hand can make a walk fly by.



Yet alongside the playlists and podcasts, I've also recently committed to going on at least a few walks a week without headphones.

Many of us are not very good at quiet anymore. We rush to fill every gap — another song, another episode, another scroll.

But every now and then there is something surprisingly restorative

(Continued on page 2)

Opposite: Photos from the Lemsford Fete

Cover Photo: Maypole Dancing at the Lemsford Fete

Page 8: Confirmation Photos of Clair Gethin and Evie at St Albans Cathedral with Bishop and Revd Kathryn

Vicar's Message - *continued*

(Continued from page 1)

about simply listening instead. Birdsong. Wind through the trees. Crunching footsteps on a path. Our own thoughts finally catching up with us.

In the Christian faith, walking has long been connected with prayer and reflection. Many of the important conversations in the Gospels happen while people are on the road together. Not in polished or perfect moments, but in ordinary life as it unfolds. Questions being asked. Confusion being shared. Gradually, somewhere along the journey, things becoming a little clearer.

As summer unfolds there will be lots of busier moments. Our new

curate, Revd Dan, will arrive for a big celebratory service on 12 July — and we can't wait to welcome him. There will be the mixed emotions of end-of-school services, and many of you will be heading off on holidays or exciting days out.

But perhaps alongside all of that there is also a quieter invitation this summer. To sometimes slow down a little. To notice what is around you. And perhaps, every now and then, to walk — or simply sit in the garden or park — without distractions for a while, and just see what turns up.

With love

Revd Kathryn

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Jazz on the Island - Sat 4th July

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Doors open at 4:15pm, concert starts at 5:30pm

More info: www.welwyngcrotary.org.uk

[Editor's note: These events are popular and can

sell out fast]

LEMSFORD FETE

Monday May 4th* 2026
12-4pm

Ticket prices:
Adults £2
Seniors £1
Children free

Free parking



Sorry, only guide and assistance dogs allowed.

No smoking or vaping.

*The Wars fancy dress encouraged

lemsford Village AL8 7TL

www.lemfordfete.co.uk

Lemsford Fete (held on 4th May)

The weather was kind this year and we had record numbers of visitors. Thanks to everyone: Church, School and Locals who made this possible and everyone who came along and enjoyed themselves. See Paul & Gina Butler's article on Page 5 for more.

RIP Betty Mitchell - longstanding teacher at St John's Lemsford

We received a notice from Chris Mitchell, Betty's son that Betty had passed away. Her funeral was held on Friday 8th May but sadly arrived too late for us to inform you in time. Our thoughts are with her family. [If you'd like to contact Chris, please send an email to me - Ed.]

Welcome to Dan Ide - St John's new Assistant Curate

You'll see in Revd Kathryn's column and a couple of other places that the big news at St John's Church is the imminent arrival of Dan Ide. Dan himself writes a bit about himself and his journey to this point - see page 9.



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The Lemsford Fete - by Paul & Gina Butler

May the 4th Be With You: A Fete Full of Fun, Community Spirit... and a Touch of the Force

We may not have spotted Darth Vader or Yoda wandering around on May the 4th, but the stars certainly aligned for us this year. Despite the gloomy forecast, the rain held off—clearly someone was quietly using their Jedi powers to keep the clouds at bay.

This year's fete embraced a gentle Star Wars theme in honour of the date. Families enjoyed a themed treasure hunt, and both the music and the school singing included playful nods to the galaxy far, far away. It added a lovely sense of fun and adventure to the day.

We were delighted to host a full programme of performances across all three arenas, including the church. It was wonderful to welcome so many local musicians and performers, spanning a wide range of ages. Particularly uplifting was the strong presence of youth groups and younger performers. The opening rock act in the main arena, from Stanborough School, set the tone brilliantly—especially impressive given they've only been playing together since last September.

As part of this year's planning, we took the opportunity to refresh our food offerings. This included relo-



cating one of the food stalls away from the main arena to create more space, as well as introducing a new supplier for the BBQ. The extra room allowed us to set out more tables and chairs, giving people the chance to enjoy their food while listening to the music—a small change that made a big difference to the atmosphere. Also, for the first time we offered scones with jam and cream alongside the usual tea and cake. We hope these additions were enjoyed and helped improve the flow and comfort of the day.

We also added several new vehicle displays, which proved very popular. A vintage Ferrari—complete with the chance to sit inside for a photo—drew plenty of admirers, as did a beautiful line-up of Morgans. The ambulance display was another

(Continued on page 6)

The Lemsford Fete – Continued

(Continued from page 5)

welcome addition, giving visitors the chance to chat with staff and practise first aid and CPR skills. A valuable opportunity, and one we hope to continue offering.

Thanks to the generosity of the public, the support of our sponsors, and the tireless work of our volunteers and helpers, we are delighted to report that we have once again raised a very pleasing surplus for the school PTA and the church to use in support of their activities.

If you have any thoughts or suggestions about the event, we would love to hear from you. It's always helpful to know whether we're getting things right. You can contact us directly or via the fete website's contact page, <https://lemsfordfete.co.uk/contact-us/>. And if you'd like to get involved, we are always happy to welcome new faces to the organising group when planning begins in November—hint, hint.

Otherwise, we look forward to seeing you on 3rd May 2027. Until then, may the force be with you.

Paul Butler

Lemsford Fete Committee

Behind the Scenes at This Year's Fete: A Few Moments That Made Us Smile

Well, that was the formal part but like any good film, now's the time for a few blooper moments:

The Great Bin Saga

An unplanned moment of entertainment arrived before the fete had even begun with a lovely sunrise on Saturday morning with no large bins or recycling wheelie bins we'd ordered anywhere in sight! Cue Richard—ever resourceful—making phone calls before finally driving to the WGC recycling centre in search of answers and more importantly bins.

When this approach failed, he tracked down a local councillor for help, who in turn phoned the Chief Executive. (Yes, apparently our rubbish/recycling situation was important enough to reach the top) We were assured the bins would arrive at 5am on Monday morning.

Monday morning arrived, but the bins did not, aargh!

With only a handful of small bins available, the prospect loomed of someone (yes – you Richard) spending the entire day bin diving and carrying rubbish sacks loomed large. It was then that fate or “the force” intervened. A school parent appeared, an-

(Continued on page 7)

The Lemsford Fete! – Concluded

(Continued from page 6)

nounced he “knew someone who knew someone”, and made a few calls. At 11:30am - just as we were preparing to open, a large lorry rumbled onto the field carrying our long-awaited bins.

Paul and Richard were soon spotted triumphantly building the wheelie bins and pushing them up the hill into the school car park, grinning like conquering heroes. Crisis averted.

The Lemonade Lottery and prize ‘mugging’

As the afternoon unfolded, supplies began to dwindle, oh if only we could travel at warp speed, then or teleport. Instead, we had to dispatch Carrie to our nearest planetary supermarket for cheese slices, only to discover we’d also run out of ketchup and crucially, lemonade for the bar. Meanwhile,

poor Daisy was having to fend off mildly tutting guests from the bar who couldn’t have their hopes for Pimms and lemonade.

But once again, Obi Wan was smiling on us.

At that very moment, a friend of ours decided to try her luck at the bottle tombola. She won, marvellous! But instead of wine or Baileys, her prize was... a bottle of lemonade.

Paul spotted her walking away, lemonade under her arm, and asked, “Do you want that?” She admitted she didn’t really drink it, and within minutes the bottle was whisked off to the bar. Daisy was back in business, and the Pimm’s queue began to move once more.

We definitely owe her a replacement bottle—preferably something a little more exciting.

100 Club March, April & May Results

Thanks to everyone, parishioners and friends, who are supporting the '100 Club'. If you'd like to join contact Nigel Johnson - see directory

| Month | 1st Prize | 2nd Prize | 3rd Prize |
|-------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| March | No. 26 - £91.80 | No. 102 - £55.08 | No. 93 - £36.72 |
| April | No. 18 - £92.70 | No. 7 - £55.62 | No. 115 - £37.08 |
| May | No. 23 - £91.80 | No. 16 - £55.08 | No. 78 - £36.72 |

Claire and Evie's Confirmation at St Albans Cathedral



Claire Gethin (Middle Left) and Evie (Bottom Left) at their confirmation service at St Albans Cathedral on 23rd May. Pictured top left with Bishop Jane

A Big Hello from Dan Ide

Hello! My name is Dan, and I am the new assistant curate at St John's Lemsford. As I prepare to begin my curacy at St John's and St Michael & All Angels, I feel a real sense of excitement. Firstly, I'm looking forward to meeting all of you who worship at St John's and call it home. I'm eager to hear your stories, learn about the journey the church has been on, and discover together where God may be leading us in the years ahead. I'm also excited to get out and about in the parish, meeting people beyond the church, getting to know the local community, and becoming part of the life of this wonderful area.

My own journey towards ordained ministry began when I was fourteen years old. While sitting in my living room, I felt God drawing me towards serving the Church, something I was becoming increasingly passionate about. After my A levels, I moved to Watford to spend ten months on a church internship, where I was able to put that passion into practice. I then studied theology at St Mellitus, a theological college in London, before working in secondary schools in St Albans as a behaviour coordinator. During that time, I also went through the Church of England's process of exploring and testing a vocation to ordained ministry. After being recommended



for training, I began a postgraduate degree in theology at Ridley Hall, a theological college in Cambridge.

I hope that during my three years here I will not only learn from you what it means to follow God together but also encourage and support you in your own faith and everyday lives. I am grateful for the opportunity to join you and look forward to getting to know many of you in the months ahead. If you see me around the parish, please do come and say hello, I would love to meet you!

Dan

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SUNDAY CLUB

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Children and Young People at St John's by Jo Brooks

Can you believe we're nearly at the end of another school year? The next few weeks will be full of plays and parties, sports days, trips, leavers' assemblies and, and maybe some learning too! It's a season of change: saying goodbye to familiar faces and routines; getting ready for whatever September brings. For some children that feels exciting; for others it may bring sadness or anxiety.



It feels especially fitting just after Pentecost, when we remember Jesus' friends facing a big new beginning. Jesus has just returned to his Father in heaven, and the friends are left anxious and uncertain about the future. But Jesus had promised they would not be left alone – he would send a helper, the Holy Spirit. The promised gift they received then, is ours too today, and whatever changes lie ahead, we need never step into them on our own.

We've had such a lovely year in Sunday Club – playing, crafting, listening to music, dressing up, acting out Bible stories and chatting together about our amazing God.

We have one more **Sunday Club session on 14th June, then on 12th July** we'll join the whole church

family for a special service to welcome our new curate, Dan, and celebrate the end of term. There'll be plenty for children to join in with, followed by a picnic and party. After that, we'll take a summer break and be back with Sunday Club on 14th September.

We also have **All Together Worship on 7th June and 5th July**, plus more **'Wild Worship' for summer at St John's @ 3 on Sunday 28th June.**

Sunday Club is for children of all ages, meeting during the morning service on the second Sunday of the month. You don't need to be a church member, or have any church background – everyone is very welcome. Do get in touch if you'd like to know more. Contact: joholifield@gmail.com | revkathrynalford@gmail.com





Photos from - St John's School

News from St John's C of E Primary School, Lemsford

I am actually writing this article while on holiday in Cornwall at the end of a very busy half term. I was born and bred in Cornwall and coming back down is always like returning home! So, I will try to focus on the task in hand rather than consider where best to buy a pasty or which beach we will visit tomorrow!

As I said the first half of the summer term has been a busy one. The children have taken part in a wide range of experiences including on-line county Maths challenges and golfing sessions at Brocket Hall.

Three of our classes have been on their class trips. Our youngest class, Robins, visited Mill Green for a day of lovely experiences including making bread rolls. Back at school they enjoyed writing about and drawing their experiences. Starlings (years 1 and 2) and Kingfishers class (years 3 and 4) visited the Hertfordshire Zoo. They loved seeing the animals and took part in workshops relating to their Science topics.

Of course, the biggest event was the Lemsford Fete. It was a fabulous celebration of all things 'Lemsford' and we are so grateful to Paul Butler and his team for organising it. As always, the children's singing and dancing was a highlight, much enjoyed by the huge audience who gathered to see the performances. The money raised has gone towards our Mission 26:26 project which , when



combined with a donation from Ramblers Worldwide, has brought us very close to succeeding in our missions of raising £26,000 by the end of 2026, funds which we will use to replace our school play equipment.

The second half of the summer term will be busy as well with year 6 preparing for their move to secondary school as well as participating in all the end of year celebrations. We will have performances of the year 5 and 6 production of Alice in Wonderland as well as Sports Day and Governors' treat day for children achieving their Governors' award.

We have so much to be grateful for!
Best wishes, have a lovely summer.

Michelle Boylan

Head of St John's Church of England School

Services

June 2026

| | | | |
|-------------|------------------|-------|-------------------------------------------|
| 7th | Trinity 1 | 8 am | Quiet Communion (BCP) |
| | | 11am | All Together Holy Communion with Baptism* |
| 14th | Trinity 2 | 11 am | Holy Communion with Sunday Club* |
| 21st | Trinity 3 | 8 am | Quiet Communion (BCP) |
| | (Fathers Day) | 11 am | Reflective Worship |
| 28th | Trinity 4 | 11 am | Holy Communion |
| | | 3pm | St John's@3 Wild Summer Worship |

July 2026

| | | | |
|-------------|------------------|-------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5th | Trinity 5 | 8 am | Quiet Communion (BCP) |
| | | 11 am | All Together Worship* |
| 12th | Trinity 6 | 11 am | Joint Celebratory Service with St Michaels (at St John's) to welcome our new curate Dan Ide - Holy Communion* |
| | | 12 pm | Followed by a celebration bring and share lunch for Dan's arrival |
| 19th | Trinity 7 | 8 am | Quiet Communion (BCP) |
| | | 11 am | Reflective Worship |
| 26th | Trinity 8 | 11 am | Holy Communion with Sunday Club* |

** Children are welcome at all our services, but these services and events are especially suitable for families and children (as well as people of all other ages!). BCP Book of Common Prayer; CW Common Worship. **NB Kathryn's day off is Friday each week***

Don't let your email address hold you hostage

A friend of mine left Virgin Media and carried on using his old email address quite happily for months. Then one day he was simply cut off from it. No mailbox, no old emails, no easy fix.

That's the risk with addresses like ntlworld.com, btinternet.com, virgin.net, btinternet.com or plus.com. They feel permanent, especially if you've used them for years. But they may still be linked to your broadband provider.

So when a better broadband deal

comes along, you can feel stuck. You might want to move, but then remember that your bank, shopping accounts, friends, family and half the known universe still use your old email address.

The safer option is to use an email address that is separate from your internet company, such as fred-bloggs@gmail.com or fred-bloggs@outlook.com. Gmail is free, and Outlook is basically what Hotmail became.

(Continued on page 23)



ALL-TOGETHER CELEBRATION

With

St John's & St Michael's

**Join us on Sunday 12th July @ 11am
at St John's, Lemsford**

**St John's and St Michael's come together
for an all-age joint celebration service
followed by a bring and share picnic
and games!**

The Great North Road - Part 3: The Golden Age of Lemsford

In the last edition we reached the start of the reign of Queen Victoria in our series, now we continue. 'In the late 1820s early 1830s over 340 routes were licensed to travel to and from London. Most coaches had 4 passengers inside and 11 on the roof, nearly all had distinctive names and operated from inns in and around the City of London.

When the Great North Road went through Lemsford it is said there were as many as 150 coaches a day. Carriages and wagons would pass through the village daily. All the inns would have offered food and drink for the travellers. Accommodation would have been provided if required. Wheelwrights and blacksmiths were available to service the wagons and horses. Stabling for the horses would also have been provided.

Why was the 1800s the golden age? This was the time before the railways formed the principal transport to the North. The principal transport was the stagecoach. Once again if we take the year 1836, Hertfordshire had nearly 100 coaches passing through it every 24

hours, including 11 mail coaches which left London's general post office at 8,00pm. If you add the private wagons, you can imagine the hustle bustle of life in Lemsford. In our records we have time tables for the Post Office coaches to Leeds (took 20 hrs 52 minutes), The Glasgow coach (44 hours) as well as private companies, Express (Barton upon Humber) The Times (Bedford) The Perseverance (Boston) all of these coaches would leave the great inns of London such as Bull & Moth, St Martins le Grand, George



& Blue Boar, Holborn, (image above from London Past website) Kings Arms, Snow Hill Boar and Castle, Oxford Street and many more great inns of London.

The coach first entered the parish at The Bull in Stanborough. The

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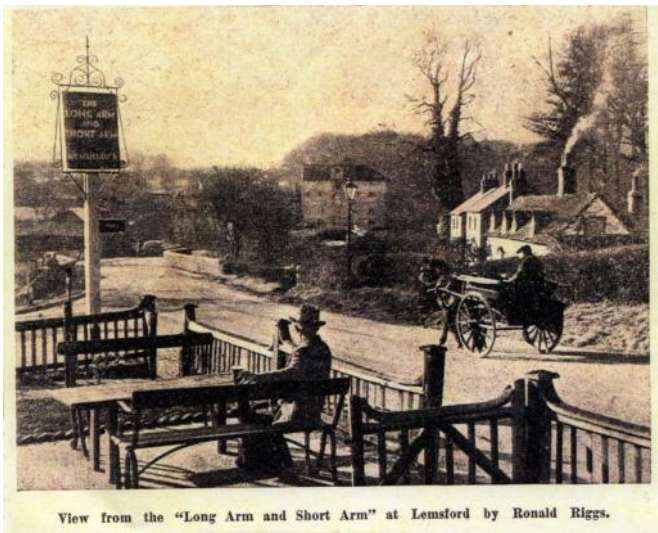
Lemsford Local History Group - *continued*

(Continued from page 16)

coaches would follow the road now known as Brocket Road and when they reached the Church [St John's] (built in 1859) you could stop at the Wagon and Horses which was located opposite St John's Church at the site now occupied by Gosmore House. We turn down past the church down the hill to the village. The next inn was a major stopping point for the stagecoaches, on the left is the Roebuck Inn. The Roebuck stood on the opposite side of the road to the present Roebuck Farmhouse (No 57). It was situated just down the hill from where the pair of cottages, Nos, 40 and 42, now stand and in the grounds of what is now Mill House (No 38). It is first mentioned in 1756. The Roebuck

was an inn and provided fresh horses, food and drink. In 1860 it was being run by John Chesher until it was closed down in about 1880. We leave the Roebuck and enter the centre of the village and on the right we find The Sun Inn, the best example of a classic English village pub and unchanged in appearance from the days of the

stagecoach The first time the Sun Inn is mentioned as an ale house is in 1717, the licensee was widow Ann Gilbert. From the mid 1700s it was known as a hostelry and for some of the time as a butcher's shop. From 1780 to 1850 it was the family home of the Clarks. In 1855 it was acquired by the Hatfield Brewery. During this time, it had stables and like the Roebuck was an inn providing similar services. Next



stop was the Long Arm and Short Arm (see image above), originally a cottage and blacksmith's shop and dates from 1734. In 1853 the buildings were described in an auction catalogue as a brick built and tiled beer house, baker's and grocer's shop, bake house and premises. McMullens the present

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Lemsford Local History Group - *Continued*

(Continued from page 17)

owners acquired the property before 1900. The Great North Road went up the hill by the side of the L & S to go past The Waggoners at Ayot Green. We leave the parish and go by the Red Lion. This inn was established in 1715 as the Shoulder of Lam but was renamed The Red Lion in 1746. Onward to old Stevenage and the North.

The Great North Road which passed in front of The Red Lion, had been a turnpike road since 1725 when the Welwyn Turnpike

reluctance and were intended to pay for maintenance and improvement of the road. On the night of the 1st of November 1877 the duties of the Welwyn Turnpike Trust were taken over by the Highway Board and toll gates were removed allowing the traffic to pass along the road free of charge. The toll house coming into the parish was located at the site of Warren Stables (slightly run down building) opposite Tesco's.

In 1833 Lemsford village was bypassed with the Great North Road we know and love today.

Not the 4 lane tarmac road we know today but a smaller dirt track road.

Having written about The Great North Road's past history in this article I am pleased to report a future development.

In the 1980s I remember a cobblers in a small



Trust was set up. There were many toll gates, at Brickwall, Ayot Green and Welwyn, where toll charges were collected from road users. (See Ayot Toll and Pump above). The charges were generally paid with great

unit between the Volvo Garage and the 1927 bridge that straddles the river Lea. I welcomed the new business, Pedal Lounge, to Lemsford Parish and asked them

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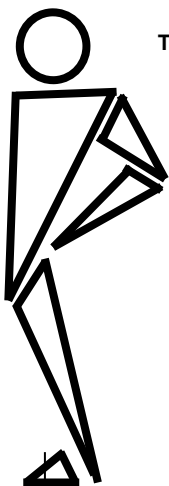
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LLHG - Know the past to understand the future

(Continued from page 19)

to inform the community who they are and their plans for the future.

Below is an article from Melanie:

About Pedal Lounge Ltd

Pedal Lounge is a new cycle repair space and café in Welwyn Garden City /Lemsford area, opened at the end of January 2026.



The premises have a long and varied local history, having previously been home to Lemmy Lemsford Kath, Electrical Wholesalers, Boiler Hub, a cobbler, a building company, and even a high-security office. Now, the space has been

transformed into Pedal Lounge — a welcoming place built around expert cycle repairs, excellent coffee, delicious cake, and community.

*With **40 years of experience in the bike industry**, our mechanic offers trusted, knowledgeable repairs and practical advice for all types of bikes.*

*Pedal Lounge is more than a workshop. It is also a friendly neighborhood café where people can relax, meet, and feel at home. We serve **excellent coffee and delicious cake** in a warm, informal setting.*

*Everyone is welcome — **cyclists, children, walkers, dog walkers, and***
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Lemsford Local History Group - *Continued*

(Continued from page 21)

local residents alike. Whether you are dropping off a bike, stopping for a coffee, or meeting friends for cake, Pedal Lounge is designed to be a true community hub.

Melanie

I wish Melanie, Tony and Mark all the success they deserve. Having visited the Pedal Lounge a few times the cakes look 'naughty but nice', the coffee smells great and the workshop is a one stop cycle repair service. Well worth a visit. As local history tells us, 'Use it or lose it'.

If you have any questions about Lemsford parish History or want to share Memories email us at info@lemsfordhistory.co.uk or go to the website www.llemsfordhistory.co.uk

Don't let your email address hold you hostage - *pt2*

(Continued from page 15)

Yes, changing email address is a nuisance. You have to tell people and update banks, shops, utilities, subscriptions and logins. But it is much better to do it gradually while your old email still works than after it suddenly disappears.

And why put this in a parish magazine? Because loving our neighbour is not only about big, dramatic things. Sometimes it is just sharing a small warning that might save

someone a lot of stress later.

Jesus told us to love our neighbour as ourselves. In this case, that might simply mean saying: "Before you change broadband, check what happens to your email."

So, if your email address belongs to your broadband company, it may be worth setting up an independent one now. A little admin today could save a lot of trouble tomorrow.

Ed.



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BATHROOMS**

**I ALSO COVER MANY
ASPECTS OF PROPERTY MAINTENANCE**

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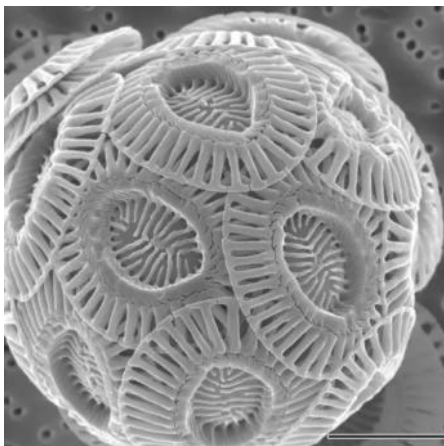
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There is no such thing as bad weather, apparently, as long as one is dressed appropriately. On a Saturday morning in early Spring I went on a tour of Panshanger Park, through which the river Mimran flows, looking into its geology. It was a fascinating tour, only I had chosen woefully inadequate clothing which proved no defence against an icy north wind. Our guide seemed to pick the most exposed spots to halt the group for her lectures. However a picture she showed us did make me temporarily forget the cold - it was an amazingly beautiful image of chalk taken with an electron microscope.

Chalk was laid down during the Cretaceous period, which ran roughly from 145 million to 66 million years ago. Temperatures then were high with little or no polar ice. Sea levels were therefore also high, creating shallow inland seas, one of which covered much of south and east England.

Near the surface of these seas floated microscopic, single celled plankton. Some types had a remarkable ability: to take in calcium, carbon and oxygen from sea water and using the energy from sunlight turn these into calcium carbonate with which they constructed encircling protective plates. No one knows why but it could have been to foil predators or viruses. When the plankton died the protective shells fell to the bottom and were crushed together to form chalk.

But what has this to do with Nature today? England has many chalk



streams. Their pure, clear, constant water from underground chalk aquifers and springs, flowing across flinty gravel beds, (such as Panshanger which has been a major source of gravel) make them perfect sources of clean water – and ideal for lots of wild creatures to breed and thrive. We're lucky because the majority of the world's chalk streams are found in England.

The River Lea running through Lemsford is another example; its pure water coupled with its proximity to London made it an ideal place to grow water cress for sale in the capital.

Who would have thought that this was entirely due to a microscopic plankton living millions of years ago which manufactured incredibly intricate shells around itself? Nature really is wonderful.

You can read all Geoffrey's Nature Notes at <https://geoffreyhollis.com/nature-notes>



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Prayer for Summer

Dear God, we thank You for the gift of summer, a season of warmth and light. Fill our hearts with joy as we enjoy the beauty of Your creation. May our spirits be uplifted by the laughter of loved ones and the wonders of nature.

Psalm 16:11 “You make known to me the path of life; You will fill me with joy in Your presence, with eternal pleasures at Your right hand.”

And finally A flight of fancy



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