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MEOPHAM AS IT IS TODAY

MEOPHAM is a large rural parish, with a population of approximately 9,000. The village extends nearly 7½ miles from north to south and is said to be the longest in England. Until the 1970s it was largely an agricultural community, but with the development of a number of small estates, a commuting population arrived, working either locally or in London.

Nestling on the North Downs and surrounded by areas of outstanding natural beauty, the parish is five miles north of Goswold and the River Thames. It is essentially made up of five populated areas: Hook Green and Narstead, Meopham Green, the Camer Area, Calverstone and Hazel. There is a wealth of historic buildings, many of them listed. As well as the three large village greens, there are several smaller ones. The parish boasts a country park at Camer and there is also an extensive network of well maintained rights of way and footpaths, looked after by the Meopham & District Footpaths Group.

Linking the A202 to the north, with the M26/M20020 to the south is the Wrotham Road (A227), which runs the entire length of the parish. This allows drivers easy access to Gatwick Airport in 45 minutes, Stansted Airport via the Dartford Crossing, and Heathrow via the M25. A regular bus service links Meopham to Bleanwater via Goswold and Sevenoaks via Borough Green. There is also a community bus which runs twice weekly to Goswold. The fastest train takes 34 minutes to London Victoria, and also serves Rochester, the Midway Tavern and the Kent coast.

Highfleet International Station, which is seven miles away, is served by Eurostar trains to Lille, Paris and Brussels and can whisk you to London St Pancras in just 17 minutes.

When entering the parish from the north, travellers come first to the small hamlet of Narstead. It features a Manor House built in the 14th century which is the venue for an annual Horse Show, well attended by national and local riders. Alongside is the church of St Mildred in its very rural setting. Across the main road is an extensive allotment site which is run by the Meopham & District Allotment Association offering over 100 plots.



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to both residents of Meopham and those living in the surrounding district.

A little further along the A227 is the railway station and a small parade of shops and a public house, which border the first conservation area, Hook Green. Travelling further, we come to a large restaurant and opposite this is the entrance to Judson's Recreation Ground which was gifted to the parish in 1950. It is home to a local youth football team and has a play area for young children, a pavilion and an adjacent bar where Cubs and Scouts meet. From Hook Green, more modern housing continues up to Carter Parade, the main shopping centre for Meopham.

Nearby Carter Country Park, off Green Lane, offers a large open space, with a children's play area, snack bar and toilet facilities. It is very popular with villagers and visitors alike. Just past Carter Parade are Meopham Primary School and the Helen Allison Special Educational Needs School run by the National Artistic Society.

The continuation of our journey along the A227 changes character again, as the parish church, St John the Baptist, is approached, and the second conservation area begins. There are more details of this part of the village in the section on Conservation Areas. Here again the old blurb with the new as modern dwellings give way to newer housing estates, and the secondary school campus which encompasses a fitness centre, a medical centre, a library and a nursery which serves the whole Parish, as well as surrounding villages such as Colham, Luddlesden and Longfield. The secondary school was built in 1975 and holds Sports Foundation status. This achievement has given it recognition not only for its academic achievements but also for its sporting prowess. On the first Sunday of each month, there is a farmers' market on this site and this has proved a very popular attraction.



St Mildred's Church, Swarwood



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Moving on from this area of the Parish, it events back to its original village appearance with the third conservation area less than half a mile away, Meopham Green. Before reaching Meopham Green, there is Meopham Village Hall which offers a wide range of activities which include dance groups, flower arranging, the Women's Institute, retirement associations, a gardening club and an accordion club. The popular "Meopham Players", an amateur theatre company are also based at the Village Hall. Located to the east of the Village Hall is the Country Club (with facilities for Snooker and Table Tennis) and Meopham Lawn Tennis Club.



Meopham Green and the Cricket Facilities

At the southern end of the largest village green, Meopham Green, is the War Memorial. Meopham Green is home to the Meopham Cricket Club, founded in 1776. Cricket has been played every summer since that time. Dominating the scene over the Green is the Windmill, built in the early 19th Century and now one of the few restored mills in Kent and open to the public on Sunday afternoons between May and September.

Continuing south from Meopham Green, the A227 road passes some ribbon development and open countryside, including Hope Hill Scout Camp, before reaching Calverstone Green. The oldest property there is Oak Castle, a 15th century timber framed house. This is the centre of the largest growing community in the Parish, where the undulating topography has given rise to the growth of houses from converted chales to modern housing as in the Calverstone Valley. Calverstone has its own primary school, community centre, a small supermarket and a service station providing the only fuel in the parish and also a small general store.

To the east of Calverstone is the most rural part of the Parish, the village of Harvel, which is an attractive and

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excluded settlement. It features its own village hall, village green, a duck pond, a public house and a cricket ground, which is home to another leading local cricket team. There is a farm shop, providing local meat and related products. With its own conservation area, there are a number of older properties which add to its rural charm. The route back to Meopham, along picturesque country lanes, passes through glorious countryside from Priestedon or along the high road with Dean Lane overlooking Deane Manor and the two valleys on either side, arriving back eventually at Camer Country Park. Here stand the original 13th century settlement and the site is now enhanced by Camer House built in 1716.

Meopham today has much to offer to both residents and visitors alike, who come to enjoy the beautiful countryside, eat at one of the local bistros or just enjoy the tranquillity of the open spaces.

THE HISTORY OF MEOPHAM

This present parish of Meopham comprises the original parish with its small neighbour Nurstead since 1961. Bear Vige Village which had been part of the Parish gained its own parish status in 2008.

The written history of Meopham covers a period of nearly 1,200 years so only some of the events can be mentioned here.

Meopham was anciently known as Meopaham because it was the home of Meopa, who who was probably a Saxon chieftain. When King Alfred divided the country into "Counties", "Lords", "Hundreds" and "Tithings" Meopham was one of six parishes forming the "Hundreds of Tollingstone" having to collect 100 men for battle.

King Athelstan, grandson of King Alfred, in a charter dated AD939 conceded land in Meopaham to "my faithful servant Eadolph". At a time when only the best was given to "Holy Church", Athelstan's widow Queen Edith – mother of Kings Edmund and Eadred – in AD961 gave Meopaham to Chichester Cathedral "for the health of my soul".

Soon after, Birtick a rich and powerful Saxon – Lord of this and other parishes – who lived in Meopaham Court, further increased the possessions of the church. His will, made jointly with his wife Ethelthra, is the oldest of its kind in the British Museum, and from this we learn of a Saxon church here, and also the name of the priest – Wita.

Through the ages the men of Meopaham have distinguished themselves in various ways. Alan De Trewham of Deane Manor was present with Richard I on the crusades, when he no doubt "suffed flesh" with the relics of local. The Huntingfields of Dodmore Manor were great warriors – two of the family being knighted in battle. Sir Peter de Huntingfield became Sheriff of the County in the reign of Edward I.

Meopaham Court remained in the occupation of Monks from Canterbury until the time of the Dissolution by Henry VIII, and it was here that Simon de Meopaham, a local boy, received his early education.

Born in 1272 he matriculated at Merton College, Oxford in 1290 and was ordained in 1297. He received very rapid promotion in the Church and was elected Archbishop of Canterbury in 1328, proving himself a man of sturdy character and independence. In 1325 he built the parish church on the site of the earlier Saxon edifice.

The "Black Death" took a big toll from this parish in 1348 – 49, when more than half the population were victims. All the male members of the knightly Huntingfield family died. Meopaham suffered a further calamity on 21 May 1382, when all the dwellings were destroyed and the church very badly damaged by an earthquake. Dodmore Manor was so badly damaged that it was never restored. Portions of one of the walls were still standing until early in the last century, however, on the current site of the Meopaham garage, opposite The George Inn.

During the English Civil War, Roundhead troops under the command of General Monk were quartered in the



War Memorial

"George" Inn, Meopham's oldest hostelry. Some may also have stayed at the "Kings Arms". They were on route from a skirmish at Northfleet to engage in battle with the Royalist army at Aylesford. The story goes that they stabled their horses in the Parish Church.

The British Army in the Napoleonic Wars followed Colonel Mudge's map, which passed through Meopham along Steele's Lane. A ghost of a French woman has been seen who was seeking the soldier who fathered her child in more modern times. Meopham is reputed to be the most haunted village in Kent, as many other sightings were reported of other apparitions which were investigated prior to the Second World War.

The recorded history of Narnstead goes back to 1024 and Narnstead Court, our oldest continuously inhabited house, dates from 1320. The Edmondes family have owned the Narnstead Court estate since 1767.

Agriculture and its associated activities was the main occupation for several centuries. The first official census of England and Wales in March 1801 recorded the population of Meopham as 748. Change occurred in 1825 by the arrival of a turnpike on the main road, and in 1861 Meopham Railway Station was built, which led to a building programme: large houses, such as the White House on Hook Green, then some cottage type properties, and later modern housing estates. Now a large proportion of residents work outside the Parish.

The Governance of the Parishes was for centuries in the hands of the Lords of the Manor, whose powers and duties were gradually eroded and replaced by the Vestry. This body, controlled by incumbents, became responsible for such matters as highways, poor relief, and the work house as well as ecclesiastical matters. This continued until 1894, when the civil business was transferred to the newly formed Parish Council.



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The Church ownership of Meopham prevented the creation of any vast estates, and it was not until the policy of letting the land came into force that estates began to emerge. The largest was Canons, where there had been a farmstead since the 13th Century and reached its peak in the 18th and 19th centuries under the Smith-Masters.

Meopham Court was also important with about 600 acres in the 17th Century and by the 19th century had grown to about 1400 acres.

The number of land owners is now too difficult to determine.

In 1949 the Parish Council purchased the manorial rights and freehold of the village greens from the Church Commissioners, thus breaking the last remaining link with Queen Edith's gift, and becoming Lord of the Manor of Meopham.

Among the splendours of Canterbury Cathedral can be seen a very simple plaque 'In Memory of Queen Edith - She Loved our Village'. We hope you will too.

MEOPHAM OR MEPPAM?

THE present spelling "Meopham" and pronunciation "Meppam" have survived but both have had many variations in the past:

AD788)	Old document	MEOPHAM	AD1296)	Papal	MEPEHAM
AD999)	British Museum	MEOPHAM	AD1344)		MEYPPHAM
AD995)		MEOPHAM	AD1345)		MEPPHAM
				AD1348)		MEEPPHAM
AD1086)	Domesday	MEPPHAM	AD1367)	Canterbury	MEPPAM
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THE VILLAGE SIGN

THE village sign designed by local artist Mr Eric Bagg stands proudly on Hook Green. It was erected in 1998 to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of Meopham Historical Society and was presented to the Parish Council. It features a bishop's mitre (representing Simon de Meopham), the Windmill, cricket stumps, bat and ball (symbolising the cricket played on the green since 1776), church and the "Tridentennial" plant.



Meopham Village Sign

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MEOPHAM WINDMILL

ALTHOUGH water mills were common in Kent in Anglo Saxon times – no fewer than 351 being recorded in the Domesday survey of the county – it was not until AD1191 that there is reliable evidence of the existence of a windmill anywhere in England – this was at a monastery in Bury St Edmunds. Most of the early mills were monastic property and were of the tripod post type. The first mill in Meopham was probably built in the late 13th or early 14th century and is mentioned in the Canterbury records; this was situated in a field near Shipley Hill Road, still known as Millfield.

One can only imagine the pleasure of the Meopham inhabitants in 1801, when three brothers named KILICK,

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all millers and mill wrights, all occupations, built the present mill with local timber at Meopham Green. All the timbers used came from an old wooden battleship being broken up at Chatham Dockyard. No longer did locals have to make tedious journeys to other mills for their supplies of flour and to get their corn ground. The last flour was milled in 1914.

The mill remained in the possession of the Killick family for two generations, when it was bought by Mr John Norton and remained in the possession of the family until the Deed of Gift to Kent County Council.

For many years before the electricity company brought their supplies to Meopham in 1923, the mill was generating its own supply. It was used as an observation post during two world wars. The Windmill was restored in 1962 by Messrs E. Hale and Son of Burgess Hill, Sussex at a cost of £4,375. The Windmill Trust bought the lease of the mill and freehold on the surrounding land in 1966 for £3,500 from Kent County Council and it opened to the public in 1971. In 1979, following replacement of stocks, sails and other necessary parts, the sails on Meopham windmill turned under their own power for the first time in 70 years.



Meopham Windmill

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The famous architect, the late Sir Herbert Baker, acquired millstones from Meopham Windmill to construct the forecourt of the Bank of England.

In the distant past the sails were repositioned at the five minutes to 12 position to indicate mourning and sadness when a miller died instead of the usual St Andrew's cross. They would then be seen by the miller on the next hilltop who would put his own sails in the same position and the message was passed on from one mill to the next around the countryside conveying the message of a miller's death. The sails were repositioned in 2009 to mark the passing of Mr Jim Carley, a local historian.

MEOPHAM RESIDENTS OF SOME RENOWN

SIMON DE MEOPHAM was born in the Parish in 1272. After a distinguished ecclesiastical career he became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1328. It was during this time that the Parish Church of St John The Baptist was built. He died in Mayfield, Sussex in 1332 but his parents are buried here in Meopham.

Horticulturalist John Tradescant the elder was born in about 1570, probably in Suffolk, although his family was of Dutch origin. In 1607 he married Elizabeth Day in Meopham and his son John was born there in 1608. At the time the family occupied a cottage which stood on the site of Pitfield House, Meopham Green. He reportedly planted four Mulberry trees in Meopham, the longest surviving being in the garden of the limes, part of the grounds of Pitfield House. He travelled widely, and is credited with introducing various plant varieties to Britain, including scarlet runner beans, apricots and poppies. By 1630 Tradescant was working directly for Charles I as "Keeper of his Majesty's Gardens, Vines and Silkworms" at Cranlands Palace, Surrey. He died in 1638 and his son, also John, continued with his father's work.

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In the 1840s, the artist Ford Madox Brown painted a number of portraits of his Bromley relations while staying with them in Meopham and married his first wife Elizabeth Bromley in St John's Church in 1841.

The more modern artists, Spencer Frederick and Frederick Gore have also featured Meopham in their works. The former's mother (and wife of the sportsman Spencer William Gore) Amy Margaret Gore of the Ballif's House, Meopham died in 1944. A grandson of Amy Gore, the landscape painter Sir Roger de Grey is buried in St Mildred's churchyard. He had a studio beside his dwelling in Canon Street and his wife Flora Irwin – Lady de Grey – who died in 2009, was also an artist and member of the Royal Academy. The author and historian Donald Adamson resides here and is also Lord of the Manor of Dodmore. Another literary connection is the children's author Jeremy Strong, who was head-teacher at Calverstone Primary School in the 1980s.

The survey of the gravestones of St John's Church reveals the distinguished military careers of many of the residents of Meopham, most notably among members of the Edmonstone family of Naxos and the Elwyn family. Similarly, many memorials refer to those who have achieved prominence in public affairs. Most notable among these are Sir John Bayley the eminent lawyer and Peity Councillor to King William IV, William Smith-Masters of Canon who was High Sheriff of Kent in 1848 and Florence Elham Edwards who became Keeper of the Peity Park to Queen Victoria in 1895. In earlier times Sir Peter de Huntingfield, whose family owned the manor of Dodmore was also High Sheriff of Kent in the reign of King Edward I. Huntingfield Road is named after the family. The memorial in the church to Ralph



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Hart Toddall of Meopham Court makes no reference to his claim to fame. He was a civil engineer and invented the Hydraulic Tube Fixer and both a stationary and a portable hydraulic riveter. He twice received the John Scott Award (Philadelphia) for his work in hydraulics and was a member of the Royal Society of Arts. Sir Sydney Waterhouse of Trosley Towers was MP for Dealines, Maidstone and Gravesend and Lord Mayor of London. Rear Admiral Sir Edmund G. Irving ran a consultant hydrography practice from his home in Camer Street after his retirement from the Royal Navy. He was Chief Admiralty Hydrographer from 1959-1965 and President of the Royal Geographical Society from 1969 to 1971. He was knighted in the 1986 New Year Honours. Arthur Missy Shaffington lived at the old vicarage in Meopham. He was a Labour MP for many years, a Parliamentary Secretary first for the Ministry of Land and later Housing, and represented anxiety societies on Public Inquiries.

While living close to Meopham Green in 1908 the Short Brothers, Oswald, Horace and Eustace started the first aircraft manufacturing company in the world. They constructed the Sunderland flying boats during the 1930s and 1940s which were famous for their part as anti-submarine bombers during World War II.

The distinguished surgeon and avid duck collector Carlbert Hilton Goding Bird lived for many years in Meopham and it perhaps better known locally for his histories of Meopham written during his retirement (*The Story of Old Meopham* 1918 and *The History of Meopham* 1934-revised 1990) and for being churchwarden at St John's Church where he is buried.

The founder of the Meopham Historical Society was Jim Carley who wrote over 120 booklets about Meopham. He was passionate in his research into its history and his books will be a valuable resource for future generations. The history of the Meopham Cricket Club and the Cricketers Inn has also been well documented by William Gwynne, secretary, local historian and publisher.

Dr Hader practised in Meopham for 40 years and set up a library for young people living in Meopham who wished to further their education. Working alongside him for many years was Dr Jowman, who combined his medical activities with working in the Home Guard and annually playing Father Christmas to the residents of Holywell Park Residential Care Home. Nurse Jean Collie arrived in Meopham about 1950, as a brief



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Wrotham Road
Culverstone
Meopham, Kent DA13 8BF
office@culverstone-green.kent.sch.uk







stand-in as the District Nurse. She was a larger than life personality, with a broad Scottish accent, who supervised the home delivery of a large proportion of the babies born in Meopham over the next decade.

Meopham has also made its contribution to the world of sport. Valentine Romney the eminent Kent cricketer of the 1740s was born in Meopham. As captain of the Kent XI, he is immortalised in a poem by James Love "Cricket, an Heroic Poem" which commemorates the famous match between Kent and All England at the Artillery Ground, Finchley Circus 1744. His wife was buried in Meopham churchyard, sadly in a pauper's grave. Thomas Noddish, who was born in Meopham, also played for Kent and in 1818 for England.

Other Meopham players who played for Kent in the heyday of Meopham cricket club in the first half of the eighteenth century were Henry Noddish, Alfred Myers, Joshua Lee, Robert Hills and William Smith-Masters. Lord Paul Dutton, a former Minister of State for Strategic Defence Acquisition Reform, grew up in Meopham and combined his political career with being a top flight racing driver. Lewis Woodhead Lewis, vicar of Meopham from 1875 to 1908, regularly played chess for Kent, (so did his wife) and a cup in his honour is still played for in county matches. Footballer Alexander Rae who played for Millwall, Sunderland, Wolverhampton Wanderers and Glasgow Rangers and Kevin O'Callaghan who played for Republic of Ireland, Portsmouth and Millwall lived in Meopham for a time. Another footballer who lived in Meopham and was involved in the founding of the Meopham Sports and Leisure Centre was David Young. He played for Newcastle, Sunderland and Charlton.

In the field of entertainment and media, Meopham also has connections. On 10 March 1996 Harry Price, a psychic researcher, made the first "live" broadcast investigation into a haunting from Dean Manor. During the opening scene featuring a cricket match, Meopham Windmill appeared in an episode of *The Prisoner* filmed in 1967 "The Girl Who Was Dead". "The Coffin", one of Meopham's pubs of the past, was used as the setting for some of the scenes in Russell Thorndike's *Dr Syn* novels. The comedy actor and TV game show host, Hughie Green lived in Meopham after serving as a pilot in the Second World War for the Royal Canadian Air Force. The acclaimed actor and sports car enthusiast, Michael Gambon, currently lives here. A

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long term resident of Meopham and former chairman of the Parish Council, John Palfreyman, was a great lover of jazz and was instrumental in establishing jazz at Meopham School and organised concerts in the 1980s to raise thousands of pounds for charity. His memorial service was featured on the BBC News and involved a New Orleans-style jazz band leading a 200 strong procession between the Meopham School and St John's Church.

MEOPHAM PUBS – PAST AND PRESENT

STARTING at the north end of the village we have the "Railway Tavern" – one time famous for its range of whiskies – at one point offering more than 150 brands. It was a staging post for the Mail Service between Garswood and Maidstone and pre-dates the building of the railway station in 1861.

Journeying further along the Westham Road a pub that once stood on or very near to Hook Green was "The Neville Arms" – exact location unknown – possibly on the site of The White House or Hook Green Farm.

The next public house was "The Fox and Hounds", first mentioned in 1896, with the present building built in 1924, now "Bartiller", a licensed restaurant.

We now have a longer journey before we reach



Westham Road and the "George" Inn

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"The George Inn". This was the original centre of the village where the church wardens met, where the first village school was established and the site of the village stocks and pillory (what a deterrent this would be to vandals and others guilty of anti-social behaviour!). The earliest mention of The George is 1598 and originally called "The Market Cross" (i.e. Cross). The present sign is that of an 18th Century Hanoverian King.

The next pub on our journey would have been "The Swan" (originally called "The Leather Bottle" and later "The Chickens";) dating back to the 17th century but now a private residence. In 1798 it moved to its current location and at one time included amongst its activities feeding and watering of the inmates of the Village Lock Up situated on the Green. For a short time it was called "The Long Hay", but has now reverted to its original name.

Around the corner of the Green is "The Kings Arms", now a licensed restaurant but once known as "The Smiths Arms" which changed its name in the 1660s as a token of loyalty to the Green following the restoration of King Charles II after the Civil War and Commonwealth.

Beyond Meopham Green was "The Prince of Wales", now a private residence, presumably named after Queen Victoria's first child, later King Edward VII. This was built in front of an earlier public house, "The Coffee". Two more former public houses follow along the road: "The Two Brewers", presumably closed due to lack of trade in its relatively isolated position and "The Plough", burnt down at the end of the 19th century.

Entering Harvel we come to the "Amazon and Tiger" the original building now a private residence. The current building dates from 1914 and is distinctive in that it was built like a private house rather than a pub in deference to the wishes of the congregation of the Chapel held in the hall opposite – now the village hall. This is the last existing public house on our journey through the parish – a little further down the Harvel Road you come to a private residence which was previously "The White Horse". In heyday was in the early 1940s when it was the nearest pub to the large military training camp based in what is now Vigo Village. Trade dwindled and it closed in 1952. Another Harvel pub long gone is "The Rose", exact location unknown.

I hope you enjoyed our pub crawl around the parish.

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At Hook Green, to the north of Canon Parade, is a smaller group of shops and businesses ranging from the bakery providing fresh baked produce daily, a newsagent and post office, a gift shop and a pharmacy. Nearby are the Railway Tavern public house, hairdressers, pizza take-away and two estate agents and located at the station is an Indian restaurant.

Meopham Green has a number of businesses including the Meopham Valley Vineyard which produces its own award-winning wine. The Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Gris grapes were planted some 20 years ago and the sparkling wine made from them is in popular demand. Also around the Green are a cattery, five art shops, estate agents, fencing works and dental practice. Other premises nearby include a beauty salon, veterinary clinic and "pick your own" fruit farm.



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Culverstone has a supermarket with a post office while on the opposite side of Wrotham Road is the service and petrol station with a vehicle hire office. A short distance away is a fencing and wood yard. Some smaller but thriving businesses occupy several sites from the Railway Sidings to Lower Farm and at Canon Park Road.

The more rural Harvel boasts riding stables, the Amazon & Tiger Public House and a farm shop which is open on Fridays and Saturdays and offers a range of locally reared meat, game, cheese, eggs and home made pies, etc.

CONSERVATION AREAS WITHIN THE PARISH

THE Parish is fortunate enough to have four designated conservation areas. Moving from north to south along the A227, these provide a welcome visual break from modernity. Beginning at Hook Green, through to The Street, on to Meopham Green and, at the south eastern extremity, the village of Harvel together provide the settings for the oldest parts of the Parish. Originally, each of these was a separate hamlet, but through ribbon development (with the exception of Harvel) were joined into one village. They have, however, kept their own identities through the conservation area scheme.

Apart from The Street, the others are based around a village green, and with their numerous mature trees and open green spaces, they contribute to the rural nature of the parish. Altogether they contain many listed buildings, while many of the older buildings are of note and architectural merit, linking the villages to their agricultural past.

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All these listed buildings and older dwellings in the conservation areas display the range of materials and styles typical of south-east England. These include oak and elm timber framing, timber cladding (weather boards) and the use of flint for walls, particularly seen at The Street. Clay peg tiles, usually made locally, feature on many roofs but have been usurped by Welsh slate. Peg tiles are also seen often as wall hangings, while brown stock bricks feature in many 19th Century buildings with a softer red brick seen slightly later. Most of the older houses have large gardens.

Today, Hook Green hosts the Village Signs, and is mostly surrounded by modern developments. The main road, however, affords excellent views of some listed buildings, of which the Old Forge, which contains part of a 14th Century timber frame building, is the oldest.

The Street conservation area encompasses a wide stretch of land on either side of Wrotham Road, (A127) which includes the Parish Church of St John The Baptist. Adjacent to it but unseen from the road is the former Manor House of Meopham Court. This area is believed to be the oldest part of the Parish, thought to have been settled in the 8th century by Meapa. Iron Age and Roman remains have also been found nearby. This conservation area contains seven more listed buildings including the George Public House and the former Post Office and Village shop, both now closed. They would have formed a focal point of this original hamlet, where there was once an Open Market. In modern times, the Farmers' Market can be found regularly



Harvest Pond



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Head Teacher: Mrs Karen Gardner

School Business Manager: Mrs Linda Howland

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We are keen to share our excitement about learning and our school with you and would invite prospective parents to come and visit the school to meet both staff and pupils. If you would like to telephone or e-mail we can arrange a visit at a time suitable to you.



in the nearby School campus – a link with the past brought up to date. The Street remains architecturally very interesting, despite the heavy traffic along this very narrow stretch of the A227 main road.

Meopham Green lies about three-quarters of a mile further to the south and is the third conservation area outside Wrotham Road (A227) and the approach faces the Village War memorial. On the far side of the Green stands the fine listed crock Windmill which was built in 1801. There are several buildings of historical note that appear on the local list of importance, including the two restaurants The Cuckooes and The Kings Arms, Mill House, Wellington House, Beeper Cottage, Oak Farm and Fifield Lodge, but only Barvoide at the northern end is currently listed.

Finally, Harvel conservation area, while relatively small, provides a haven of tranquillity away from the A227 and its constant flow of traffic. Alongside Harvel Green is an attractive duck pond, within the conservation area are three 16th century timber frame hall houses, three are Pease Cottage, Cickfield Farm and Old Pond Farm and there is a traditional Kent Oak house nearby. The Tithe Map of 1840 shows the area surrounding Harvel Green much as it is today.

In addition, a large area to the east of Meopham is included in the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



Meopham Green

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Norwood Lane
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NURSTEAD COURT
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Shipley Hills Road
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WELL HOUSE
DOBRINGTON COTTAGE
ELIZABETH HOUSE

Wooham Road
ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH
IVY HOUSE
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OLD FORGE COTTAGE
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Mrs Sarah Lacey-Johns – Deputy Clerk
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THE Parish Council is looking to attain Quality Parish Status. Having put forward the Clerk for CILCA qualification and met the other criteria needed, Meopham Parish Council will seek to gain quality parish status which will enhance the standing of the Council and give it certain autonomous rights.

MEOPHAM WEBSITE (www.meopham.org)

MEOPHAM has had its own website for a number of years, thanks to its development as a millennium project by Claude Bartle, a local resident. It was updated in 2005 by Beynon Brames.

The website now provides regularly updated information on over 100 organisations, societies and clubs, ranging from local sports and social clubs to schools, churches, medical services and places to eat out. The Local Information section gives details of local events, both regular and one-off and is free of charge to the user.

The main Meopham section records information on village history, local landmarks and famous past residents. The website is managed by the Parish Council, and gives information regarding the details of Parish Councillors, dates of Council meetings along with their agendas and approved minutes. There is also a full listing of the progress of planning applications, which are in the region of 150 a year, on which the Parish Council is consulted by Gravesham Borough Council.

Please do visit the website at www.meopham.org for more in depth details.

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PCSOs 366011

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Community Safety Unit 357528

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AMENITIES AND SERVICES

Meopham Library (open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday 9am-5pm, closed Wednesday, Saturday 9am-1pm)	814636
Mobile Library (Thursdays Harvel Village Hall 12.05-12.50 pm; Chisney Coast 1.50 pm-2.05 pm and Barwell 2.10-2.25 pm)	01622 752344
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Calverstone Post Office	01732 823233



Meopham Secondary School

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Calverstone Community Centre	01732 823232/824737
Harvel Village Hall	814763
Meopham Scout Hut	814955

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SCHOOLS

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MEOPHAM PARISH GUIDE

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NW KENT Federation of Women's Institutes	01622 754507

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Meopham Gardening Association	328994

SPORT & LEISURE

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Harvel Cricket Club	835432
Meopham Cricket Club	833567
Narwood Cricket Club	833993
Meopham Cubs Football Club	07958 560143
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Narwood Football Club	01732 820151
Meopham Tennis Club	815997/01732 824145
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Meopham Ladies Hockey Club	834794
Short Mat Bowling, Calverstone	01732 825516
Table tennis, Calverstone	01732 824737
Vigo Rugby Club	833133
Harvel Hall House Harrier	834934
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