

**Group Visits**



# Churchfields

**Farm • Food • Fun**

# Welcome to Churchfields!



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Farm • Food • Fun

## Background:

Churchfields Farm is a working beef and arable farm located in the village of Salwarpe which is just outside of Droitwich, Worcestershire.

The farm sits on 350 acres of undulating land made up of marl and a subsoil of marl and gravel.

It was bought over 100 years ago by Thomas Davies on 16th April 1913 when it was 20 Acres and home to 15 Dairy Shorthorns. All of the milk was delivered by horse and trap to the local town of Droitwich. Michael Davies, with his wife Felicity, took over the running of Churchfields from his mother in the 1970s, when he expanded the farm by buying adjoining land and taking it to the 350 acres that is still farmed today and milking over 150 Holstein Friesians.

The farm is still run today by three partners: Felicity Davies, Will and Gillian Kerton.

Gillian is the fourth generation and came home after university in 1997 when she joined the family partnership and worked with her parents. Churchfields then entered its period of diversification. This started with the first batch of Churchfields Ice Cream in 2004 and went on to open The Old Barn Café in 2015, the Maize Maze in 2017, the Fairy Trail in 2020 and Churchfields Fun Farm in 2022.

Will had a successful career in a national business and married Gillian in 2003. However in 2017 Michael started to persuade him that launching Droitwich Salt would be a good career move and after Michael's death in 2018 Will moved over to work at Churchfields full time.

The farm has changed in a number of ways over the past 10 years. Namely in selling the dairy herd, investing in solar and biomass, increasing the sustainability and diversifying further into the leisure industry.



# The Farm



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## Churchfields Cattle

The beef herd is currently comprised of about 30 Aberdeen Angus Cross and Shorthorn cattle but we are looking to transition to a herd of more local Hereford cattle.

The cattle are grazed out on the fields for most of the year but come into the barns in the winter months when they are fed with grass silage made on the farm in the summer.

## The Crops

We mainly grow grass on the farm as a crop to gather in and make silage with to feed the animals through the winter.

Maize is grown for the Maize Maze and now given to a local dairy farm for winter feed to feed their cattle.

100 acres of arable land planted in rotation with Winter Wheat, Oil Seed Rape and Barley and sold as a cash crop.

## Other Animals

We now have a range of other animals which can be seen on the Fun Farm. These include Highland cattle, Oxford & Sandy Black pigs, sheep, goats, ponies, donkeys and Missy the pot bellied pig!



# Environmental

## Farm Biodiversity

The farm is heavily committed to the Mid-Tier Stewardship Scheme.

We have increased biodiversity by:

- Orchard planting
- Hedgerow planting and management (hedge laying) to improve structure and longevity
- Field margins to reduce risk of potential pollutants to watercourses: 4-6m buffer strip on cultivated land, 12-24m watercourse buffer strips
- Providing food resources for birds and insects: Autumn sown BumbleBird mixes in fields, overwintering stubble
- Providing habitat and foraging sites for birds and invertebrates: Flower rich margins and plots
- Permanent grassland with very low inputs



## Sustainability

We have invested heavily in sustainable energy sources over the past few years.

Between the power needed for our cafes, holiday cottages, houses, salt production and our very large ice cream freezers—Churchfields requires a lot of energy!

**Solar:** Having invested in two small solar panel systems on the houses, in 2014 we decided to go further and build a 120Kw system to help reduce our increasing electricity costs. These are floor mounted panels and cover about 1.5 acres.

**Biomass:** In 2016 we installed a 850Kw Biomass Boiler which is fuelled by sustainable, locally sourced wood chip. The Biomass Boiler has helped us reduce our heating costs over the whole farm as we have been able reduce our reliance on four oil-fired boilers and the hot water is used in the ice cream dairy, salt production, the cafes and throughout all of houses and holiday cottages.





# Food Production



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## Churchfields Ice Cream

In 2004 Churchfields diversified into making ice cream using milk from the dairy herd. The first batch was our award-winning Vanilla which kick started our range of exciting flavours—we currently have about 30 flavours. All of our artisan ice cream is made on site in our purpose built production room and is handcrafted in small batches with only the finest ingredients. We also produce sorbets which are vegan and dairy free.

Churchfields Ice Cream is sold in local restaurants and visitor attraction (National Trust properties) and here at The Old Barn Café.

Although we don't have our own herd of dairy cows any more we buy our milk from another family farm: The Really Good Dairy.



## Droitwich Salt

Churchfields Farm is also the home of Droitwich Salt which is the only brine spring salt made in the UK. This heritage salt was an internationally valuable resource in Roman, Anglo Saxon and Norman Times. In 1215, King John granted the town of Droitwich Spa a Royal Charter based on the importance of this brine. This Royal Charter allowed the salt industry to develop in Droitwich and shaped the town's history for hundreds of years. Subsequently, Droitwich Spa became one of England's most prosperous towns in Medieval Times right through to the 20th Century. However, because of the rising costs of production and the decline in the demand for salt, production of Droitwich Salt ceased in 1922.

In Autumn 2017 we partnered with Wychavon District Council and gained the exclusive rights to produce this historic product again.

Today we collect the brine from Tower Hill in Droitwich and transport it back to the farm. The brine is pumped onto the salt beds where the process of crystallisation occurs using heat from the sun and the Biomass Boiler. The Salt is sold in a range of flavours and is multi-award winning. It is available in over 100 stockists across the UK including many farm shops, delis and even Selfridges!

# Diversification



## The Old Barn Café

After two years of restoration, the Grade II listed Old Barn Café opened in 2015 and served its first ice cream and coffee.

It was the first time that we had sold anything from the farm gate other than milk or crops and took the giant step of inviting the public onto our family farm.

We pride ourselves on our “field to fork” menus, made with ingredients from the farm and using local suppliers where possible.

Farm produced: Ice cream, home reared beef and pork, Droitwich Salt.

Local suppliers: The Really Good Dairy, Method Coffee, Pershore Produce, The Butcheress, Quality Crust Bakery.

## Maize Maze

2017 saw us open our first Maize Maze.

It worked well with the farm as we grew maize for the dairy cattle to eat over the winter.

We have run it every year since and it was particularly popular in the “covid” years as it was outdoor entertainment for all the family.

The maize is kept until after October half term when it is then harvested by a local dairy farm for winter cattle feed.



## Churchfields Fun Farm

The Fairy Trail opened at the end of the first lock down in June 2020 and was a pre-booked, timed walk around the fields and woodland.

This was extended in 2022 with the addition of grant funded play equipment (Air bouncers, Go Karts, tractor role play, sand pit) and animal paddocks which formed the basis of the Fun Farm. Events also form a big part of the Fun Farm including Lambing Live, Easter Egg-stravagansa, Jurassic Farm, Pumpkin Festival and Farmer Christmas.

This year (2023) sees the addition of a brand new adventure play ground and more camping/glamping.

# Group visits



## Your visit to Churchfields

There are numerous reasons to visit Churchfields and we offer a memorable day out for your group party.

From a farm walk about sustainability and conservation to a guided tour of our salt production, each tour lasts about an hour and is led by a member of the Churchfields team.

<b>The story of “Cow to Cone”</b>	<b>Animal feeding and animal care</b>
<b>Ice Cream making</b>	<b>Conservation on the farm</b>
<b>Meet the chef—hear how the farm and kitchen</b>	<b>Meet the farmer —learn about a typical day on the</b>
<b>Droitwich Salt production</b>	<b>Producing food—growing crops</b>
<b>Fairy / nature trail</b>	<b>Sustainability—Biomass and Solar Panels</b>

Set in a Grade II listed barn, The Old Barn Café provides the perfect place to take a break and get together after your tour. It has a delicious range of mid-morning coffee and cake, delicious home cooked meals, traditional afternoon teas or, of course, Churchfields Ice Cream which can be chosen as part of your tour package.

We require a minimum of 15 paying guests for group visits.

Group visits are available on week days during the Worcestershire school term times only.

# Prices



After your tour head back to The Old Barn Café for your refreshments.

**Tour with Tea/Coffee and Cake: £15.00 per person**

**Tour with light lunch: £20.00 per person**

Selection of sandwiches, salad and crisps (served buffet style) including tea and filter coffee.

**Tour with Mini Afternoon Tea: £25.00 per person**

Selection of sandwiches, scone with clotted cream and jam, sweet treat including tea and filter coffee.

For large numbers this may have to be served on platters rather than individual stands.

- Gluten free, vegan and dietary options available on request but **must be pre-booked**.
- Minimum of 15 paying guests for our guided tours.
- A **non-refundable deposit of £50 is required at the time of booking** which will be deducted from the final invoice.
- **Final payment and group numbers is required 7 days before your tour.**





# Additional information



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- All tours are led by members of the Churchfields Team
- Risk assessments available for all activities
- Free car parking with space for coaches
- Available during Worcestershire Schools term times only
- Minimum of 15 paying customers for group tours



**For more information or to make a booking, please get in touch:**

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