

Schools Pack



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: 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.

Packages Available



Independent Visit: £7.50 per child

- Self guided group entry to Churchfields Fun Farm
- Animal feed for each child
- Available on open days
- Use of facilities
- 1 accompanying adult free for every 5 pupils.

Educational Visit: £9.00 per child

- Guided tour of Churchfields Farm
- Choice of study topics
- Animal feed for each child
- Use of facilities
- Behind the scenes
- 1 accompanying adult free for every 5 pupils.

The story of “Cow to Cone”	Animal feeding and animal care
Ice Cream making	Farm and countryside related arts and crafts
Meet the chef—hear how the farm and kitchen work together	Meet the farmer —learn about a typical day on the farm
Droitwich Salt production	Producing food—growing crops
Fairy / nature trail	Sustainability—Biomass and Solar Panels
Play area	Conservation on the farm

Educational school visits are tailor made to learning objectives—please contact us for further information.

Additional information



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• Indoor or outdoor lunch space	• Pre-visits encouraged for teachers (please arrange this with us in advance)
• Risk assessments available for all activities	• £10,000,000 Public Liability Insurance
• Free car parking with space for coaches	• Available during Worcestershire Schools term times only
• Minimum 20 paying pupils	• Add a child scoop ice cream for £2.00 per person

- We have a limited number of funded Educational school visits through our Mid-Tier agreement. These visits must be over two hours and be for a maximum of 33 pupils and teachers. These will be on a first come, first served basis and you will be required to fill out an evaluation form.
- **Payment terms. A non-refundable deposit of £50 is required to secure the booking.**
- **Invoice will be raised on the day and must be paid in 30 days**
- **Minimum 20 paying pupils (10 for special needs schools)**

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

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www.churchfields.farm