

# Colourful Margate



L to R: Roy Mussell with daughter Sky, and Michael Mikkelsen

Dane Park will experience its second season of delicate pink blossom this spring, thanks to Colourful Margate and a swathe of enthusiastic volunteers.

Colourful Margate is the brainchild of Stephanie Nsom and her husband. The plan is to promote projects that help greening and add colour to Thanet, whilst focusing on bringing generations together to enhance the environment, protect wildlife, nurture reading, revive public spaces and help create street art. The inspiration for creating a cherry blossom destination came to Stephanie, who once lived in Washington DC, where the gift from Japan of 3000 cherry trees brought annual happiness and joy for visitors, thronging to enjoy picnics and walks amongst the splendid blossoms. They saw first-hand how it brought communities together and reduced antisocial behaviour – benefits they knew could be applied to Dane Park.

In the absence of council budget, they formed a small committee and began fundraising. "The Open Space Team at TDC was amazing and supportive, quickly helping us agree on the location of the trees," recalls Stephanie. "Community Champions, such as Margate Civic Society and Dane Valley Woods, also connected us to their networks and helped with fundraising." Sixteen trees were planted in 2018, and tree stump woodcarvings commissioned, designed to appeal to young children. In January 2020, 300 local volunteers planted Japanese flower cherry trees, already 3m to 4m high, which will bloom in March and April this year. "The community spirit was incredible," says Stephanie. "Families, grandparents, elderly people and young girls used words like 'epic' and 'heart-warming' to describe the experience. Even community police officers pitched in. It was beautiful."

And it doesn't stop there: Colourful Margate has joined forces with Dane Valley Woods, Sunken Gardens and Thanet Community Forest School in a successful grant application to plant over 1200 trees over five sites under the Urban Tree Challenge Fund, with Dane Park one of those



Stephanie Nsom

sites. "The next planting day will engage with schools, so all students can experience how it feels to plant a tree," says Stephanie. It's not only my vision any more, it is our reality. Under the Isle of Thanet Trees and Woods Initiative (ITTWI), the objective is to re-green Thanet over time, and we warmly welcome people to get in touch!"

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## New ways to escape

Margate escape rooms CTRL ALT ESC launched 'The Undefusable Bomb' in February (perfect for puzzle enthusiasts or as an introduction to the escape room world) and will add 'Ghosts on the Go' this summer. An exciting outdoor detective game takes you and your team around Margate to hunt down clues and solve local mysteries before they disappear in front of your very eyes!

**4 Cliff Terrace, Margate CT9 1RU**  
**0303 030 0000**  
**ctrlaltesc.co.uk**



## MARGATE CAVES

Originally an 18th century chalk mine, then rescued and reopened last year, this huge space is accessed down a 15m tunnel and boasts vibrant murals from the late 1700s to the 1980s. "Like a church underground!" is a regular comment. Shop, café, rentable rooms, Crafty Weekends for children, exhibitions and much more.

**1 Northdown Rd, Margate, CT91FG**  
**(only blue badge parking on site)**  
**[margatecaves.co.uk](http://margatecaves.co.uk)**





## In Step with Pugin

Ramsgate Town Team and the Pugin Society have been working with students from Royal Harbour Academy (Year 8) and Chatham & Clarendon Grammar (Year 9), who have researched Pugin's life and work, and designed tiles that now adorn the Kent Steps, creating a corridor of colour - a fitting tribute to the famous architect. The tiles, which were praised by Helen Spencer, Historic England's local heritage education manager, will become part of the Pugin Trail.

In total, 90 designs were created, 25 of which were selected to be transferred onto porcelain tiles. The judges were extremely impressed by how much the students had considered Pugin's life and taken inspiration from his local architectural masterpieces, St Augustine's Church and The Grange, his family home. The designs portray patterns, flowers, birds, stained glass window shapes and his love of the sea.

Ramsgate was designated a HAZ (one of twenty Heritage Action Zones) by Historic England in March 2017 - part of a five-year project aimed to capitalise on Ramsgate's rich heritage. This initiative from Historic England breathes new life into old places that are rich in heritage and full of promise - unlocking their potential and making them more attractive to residents, businesses, tourists and investors. Historic England is working with partners from Thanet District Council and Ramsgate Coastal Community Team to deliver a variety of projects aimed at engaging the local community, as well as increasing understanding of the town's rich local heritage - including its exciting maritime story.

[historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/heritage-action-zones/ramsgate/](http://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/heritage-action-zones/ramsgate/)



## OPERATION DYNAMO: 80TH CELEBRATION

Marking the momentous rescue of troops from Dunkirk in WWII, 150 boats (77 original Little Ships with Royal Navy vessels) will gather in Ramsgate Royal Harbour to create the largest Dunkirk flotilla for 30 years. The Royal Navy has honoured this 'end of an era' event with Category 1 status, so a Flag Officer or member of the Royal Family will be in attendance, as well as 11 Dunkirk veterans, the sole remaining survivors of Operation Dynamo.

Celebrations over the bank holiday weekend, **23 - 25 May**, include trade stands and side events. The Medway Queen, a veteran paddle steamer, arrives **1 May** on the slipway and is open to the public at Commercial Quay between **21 and 25 May** (donations collected for a new engine).

An historic 1940s atmosphere will permeate the seafront aided by reenactors. "People in WWII uniform and ladies dressed in 1940s, pushing prams," says Clive Richards of *Battles for Victory*. "Even vintage tractors, because during the rescue farmers helped with transport."

A lone piper at the end of the pier will accompany the flotilla on its return, when the public can gather on the east and west pier or cliff top to wave flags and cheer the boats home.

Monday 18 May: The Little Ships will start to arrive in Ramsgate.

Thursday 21 May: Leave for Dunkirk

Monday 25 May: Arrive back in Ramsgate around midday

[Operation Dynamo 2020](#)

**DREAMLAND**  
MARGATE



1920 - 2020

## Dreamland 100

Dreamland has entertained visitors since 1920 - with the iconic Grade II listed Scenic Railway (the oldest wooden rollercoaster in the country) as its centrepiece. The rollercoaster officially turns 100 this summer.

Expect a jam-packed calendar of celebrations to delight people of all ages, and big names to top the events and music programme.

49-51 Marine Terrace, Margate

[dreamland.co.uk](http://dreamland.co.uk)



## Feline Fiasco!

In the intriguing Feline Fiasco! (Real Life Games, Ramsgate), your team of rookie pet detectives has much to prove and learn. When reports of missing cats come in, you have to try and restore balance by finding and rescuing them all - or it could descend into a 'Feline Fiasco!'

**3a Broad Street, Ramsgate CT11 8NQ**  
[reallifegames.co.uk](http://reallifegames.co.uk)