



Rochester Sweeps Festival

SATURDAY MONDAY
30 APRIL – 2 MAY

Festival highlights
include:

- ★ Over 40 Morris sides
- ★ Outdoor music stages
- ★ Musical instrument fair
- ★ Record fair
- ★ Artisan produce fair
- ★ Folk art fair
- ★ Jack-in-the-Green

Enjoy one of the largest May Day celebrations of its kind

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Welcome

Welcome to the 40th edition of Rochester Sweeps Festival.

This international celebration of folk music and dance has become one of the largest May Day celebrations of its kind in the world. For three days, historic Rochester is transformed into a riot of colour and sound with the best musicians and bands on the folk circuit and hundreds of Morris dancers from across the country clattering their clogs and clashing their sticks up and down the high street.

Rochester Sweeps Festival is steeped in tradition, brilliantly unique, truly unforgettable, and ever so quirky...and we love it!

Thank you to Gordon Newton, the founder of this festival who revived it in 1981 and is still heavily involved today as the Dance Director, and our brilliant Music Director, Doug Hudson. Thank you to all the teams and artists involved in the weekend too.



C Ceilidh bands	FR Folk rock	B Bluegrass
OF Original folk	FC Folk comedy	P Percussion
TG Traditional and harmony groups	CB Celtic bands	TD Traditional dance
WR World roots	S Singers/songwriters	CF Contemporary folk
	IF Indie folk	

Friday, 29 April

9pm Gordon House Hotel Pre-festival event with Sur Les Docks

Saturday, 30 April

10.45am	Guildhall Museum Forecourt: The Mayor of Medway will officially open the festival, which will be followed by a dance showcase.	
11am	Castle Gardens Stage	WR Thomas Abrahams
	Star Hill Stage	CF Songwriters' Den on the Road
11.30am	Boley Hill Stage	S Paul Corcoran
11.45am	City Wall Wine Bar	OF Capella
12pm	Castle Gardens Stage	FC The Fabulous Fezheads
	Boley Hill Stage	S Rachel Lowrie
	Cathedral Crypt	OF And One Red Mitten
12.15pm	City Wall Wine Bar Stage	WR The Caramellos
12.30pm	Gordon House Hotel	FR The Bounty Hounds
	Three Sheets to the Wind	WR Tangled Elbow
	Eagle Tavern	TG Skinners Rats
	Coopers Arms	TG Ian Petrie & Sue Hudson
	Granville Arms	WR The Beard Conspiracy
1pm	Castle Gardens Stage	S Gabriel Moreno & The Quivering Poets
	Boley Stage	TD Kitka
	Ye Arrow	C Swing The Bridge
	City Wall Wine Bar Stage	WR Jumbo Gumbo
1.15pm	Boley Hill Stage	TG Milton Hide
1.30pm	City Wall Wine Bar Stage	S Lemon & Paice
2pm	Boley Hill Stage	TD Kitka
	Oliver's Bar & Restaurant	CF Deavin, Feist and Langsdale
	City Wall Wine Bar Stage	CF CJ & Dave Reay
2.15pm	Castle Gardens Stage	B The Lowly Strung
	Boley Hill Stage	S Bob Kenward
2.45pm	Boley Hill Stage	WR The Caramellos
3pm	City Wall Wine Bar Stage	S Paul Corcoran
3.15pm	Castle Gardens Stage	TG Kimber's Men
	Boley Hill Stage	TG Pytchwood



3.45pm	Boley Hill Stage	S	Lemon & Paice
	City Wall Wine Bar Stage	TG	Milton Hide
4pm	Castle Gardens Stage	FR	Sur Les Docks
	Eagle Tavern	FC	Thee Scarecrows
	Ye Arrow	FC	The Fabulous Fezheads
4.30pm	Boley Hill Stage	OF	Luke Daniels
5pm	Oliver's Bar & Restaurant	WR	Thomas Abrahams
8pm	Gordon House Hotel	B	The Lowly Strung plus Sur Les Docks
8.30pm	Three Sheets to the Wind	FR	The Dredgermen
	Coopers Arms	WR	Tangled Elbow
	Two Brewers	TG	Ian Petrie Band
	Granville Arms	FR	The Bounty Hounds

Sunday, 1 May

11am	Star Hill Stage	CF	Songwriters' Den on the Road
	Castle Gardens Stage	TG	Kimber's Men
	Boley Hill Stage	OF	Medway Folk
	City Wall Wine Bar Stage	S	The Treehuggers
11.30am	City Wall Wine Bar Stage	CF	CJ & Dave Reay
11.45am	Boley Hill Stage	OF	Capella
12pm	Castle Gardens Stage	WR	The Hot Rats
	City Wall Wine Bar Stage	TG	Morrigan
12.30pm	Gordon House Hotel	TG	The Silver Darlings plus Kimber's Men
	Three Sheets to the Wind	TG	The Hartley Morris Singers
	Eagle Tavern	C	Swing the Bridge
	Coopers Arms	TG	Skinner's Rats
	Boley Hill Stage	TD	The Tribal Banshees
	Granville Arms	C	Foot Down
1pm	Boley Hill Stage	P	Ryebellion Drummers
	City Wall Wine Bar Stage	WR	Jumbo Gumbo
	Ye Arrow	FR	The Bounty Hounds
1.15pm	Castle Gardens Stage	FC	The Fabulous Fezheads
2pm	Oliver's Bar & Restaurant	TG	Morrigan
	City Wall Wine Bar Stage	OF	Jonica Love
2.15pm	Boley Hill Stage	OF	Capella



2.30pm	Castle Gardens Stage	FR	Sur Les Docks
	City Wall Wine Bar Stage	TD	The Tribal Banshees
3pm	City Wall Wine Bar Stage	OF	Medway Folk
	Boley Hill Stage	S	The Treehuggers
3.30pm	Boley Hill Stage	TG	The Silver Darlings
	Gordon House Hotel	TD	McManigan Academy of Irish Dancers
3.45pm	City Wall Wine Bar Stage	TG	Pytchwood
4pm	Three Sheets to the Wind	P	Ryebellion Drummers
	Eagle Tavern	TG	Triality
	Ye Arrow	TG	Skinner's Rats
4.15pm	Castle Gardens Stage	IF	Hobo & The Hippies
4.30pm	City Wall Wine Bar	FC	Pretending People
	Boley Hill Stage	C	Foot Down
5pm	Oliver's Bar & Restaurant	IF	The Flowing
5.30pm	Granville Arms	TG	The Silver Darlings
8.30pm	Gordon House Hotel	IF	Hobo & The Hippies plus Davey Malone
	Three Sheets to the Wind	WR	Gypskazz
	Coopers Arms	CB	Bellibone Rig
	Two Brewers	TG	Triality
	Granville Arms	FC	The Washed Up Jug Band

Monday, 2 May

11am	Castle Gardens Stage	FR	The Bounty Hounds
	Boley Hill Stage	TG	Hog Eye Men
	City Wall Wine Bar Stage	CF	It's Complicated
	Star Hill Stage	CF	Songwriters' Den on the Road
	Cathedral Crypt	TG	Kimber's Men
11.45am	Boley Hill Stage	OF	Henry Sparks
12pm	Castle Gardens Stage	OF	The Old Country Crows
	City Wall Wine Bar Stage	S	Ruby & Ríos
	Cathedral Crypt	OF	Helen North
12.30pm	Gordon House Hotel	WR	The Hot Rats
	Three Sheets to the Wind	TG	The Hog Eye Men
	Eagle Tavern	WR	The Beard Conspiracy
	Granville Arms	TG	Skinner's Rats
	Coopers Arms	S	Bruise

1pm	Castle Gardens Stage	C	Foot Down
	Ye Arrow	TG	Ian Petrie Band
1.15pm	Boley Hill Stage	FC	Pretending People
1.30pm	City Wall Wine Bar Stage	OF	Open Water
2pm	Castle Gardens Stage	OF	Davey Malone & The Longtails
	Oliver's Bar & Restaurant	CB	Bellibone Rig
	Boley Hill Stage	OF	Helen North
2.30pm	Boley Hill Stage	S	Ruby & Ríos
	City Wall Wine Bar Stage	TG	Pytchwood
2.45pm	SWEEPS PROCESSION - starts from Star Hill		
	Castle Gardens Stage	WR	Gypskazz
3pm	City Wall Wine Bar Stage	S	Rachel Lowrie
	Boley Hill Stage	OF	Open Water
3.45pm	City Wall Wine Bar Stage	OF	The Old Country Crows
4pm	Castle Gardens Stage	OF	Track Dogs
4.30pm	City Wall Wine Bar	CF	CJ & Dave Reay
	Boley Hill Stage	OF	Luke Daniels

This programme is subject to change without warning

Morris sides

Anderida Border Morris - East Sussex	Motley Morris - Kent
Baldock Midnight Morris - Hertfordshire	Mythago Border Morris - West Sussex
Bishop Gundulf Morris - Kent	New Moon Morris - Buckinghamshire
Bishop Gundulf Morris Novices - Kent	Offcumduns Border Morris - Kent
Bishop Gundulf Long Sword - Kent	Old Palace Clog – Surrey Pump House Clog - Hertfordshire
Brixton Tatterjacks Morris - London	Pretty Grim Morris - Essex
Cockle Shell Clog - Essex	Rising Larks - Suffolk
Dacre Cotswold Morris - London	Rumford Morris - Essex
Dark Horse Border Morris - Essex	St Clement Clogs - Kent
Dead Horse Morris - Kent	Slack Ma Girdle - Cambridgeshire
The Broom Dashers - Kent	The Wild Hunt - Surrey
The Fabulous Fezheads - Kentish Sanddance	Ragged Phoenix - Sussex
Gong Scourers - Kent	Royal Liberty Morris - Essex
Green Dragon Morris - Norfolk	Sheppey Beavers - Kent
Greenwich Morris - London	Steampunk Morris - Kent
Hands Around - Essex	Westrefelda - Suffolk
Hartley Morris Men - Kent	West Hill Morris - Kent
Hemlock Morris - Bedfordshire	Wolfshead & Vixen - Kent
Hugin & Muninn - London	Widdershin Witches - Kent
Leading Lights - Suffolk	Witchmen - Northants
Loose Women - Kent	
Hook Eagle Morris - Hampshire	
Invicta Morris - Kent	
Maybe Morris - Sussex	
Morena Slovak Dance Co - London	



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Rochester Sweeps Festival

- Baby changing and feeding, NCT
- Toilets - all have disabled and baby change facilities
- Cash point
- First Aid point
- Morris dancing
- Stage
- Parking
- Coach drop-off
- Music stalls and record fair
- Local produce market

Pubs

- 1 - Coopers Arms
- 2 - Ye Arrow
- 3 - Gordon House Hotel
- 4 - Two Brewers
- 5 - City Wall Wine Bar
- 6 - Eagle Tavern
- 7 - Oliver's
- 8 - Three Sheets to the wind
- 9 - The Granville

There's so much more going on:
visitmedway.org/sweepsfestival



Biographies

CEILIDH BANDS **C**

Swing The Bridge - Energetic and professional five-piece folk/rock Ceilidh band.

Foot Down - Great young band producing superb music from West Kent. Whistles, guitars, melodeons and percussion.

ORIGINAL FOLK **OF**

Track Dogs - The Madrid based quartet arrived at Sweeps just a few years ago and started a journey that has seen them star at Cropredy Festival and many others. They fly in from Spain to begin a tour with Show of Hands and insisted on coming straight to Rochester for their first UK performance on this trip.

The Old Country Crows - Another favourite of Sweeps, their countrified folk sound has always gone down well with audiences in Kent. Plenty of original songs too.

Davey Malone & The Longtails - Davey's song writing abilities come to the fore with classy backing instrumental.

Henry Sparks - Singer/songwriter from the Canterbury scene, continuing to perform his own songs.

Jonica Love - Up and coming female singer/songwriter.

And One Red Mitten - Vicky also fronts this song cycle written by the late lamented Chris Broderick of the Singing Loins. This is the premier of the work about the personal effects of Catherine Eddowes, one of the victims of the Whitechapel murders.

Medway Folk - Formerly known as Esperantza, this fiddle-based group explore many different genres of international folk music.

Helen North - One of the county's finest female performers, Helen has a terrific voice and accompanies herself on guitar.

Open Water - This classy trio features the songwriting and singing skills of Richard Rozze with the clear vocals of singer Joanne Doolan, matched with some intricate instrumental backing. Their new album will also be available to buy.

Luke Daniels - Luke Daniels will be running our new Penny Whistle sessions. He is a virtuoso musician and singer who performs his own versions of classic folk songs alongside traditional tunes on the melodeon. Luke has been touring since the mid 1990s as a session musician with Riverdance, De Danaan and Cara Dillon.

Capella - Capella have been enchanting audiences with their unique two part harmonies at clubs and festivals around the country since 1996.

Their songs are drawn from the British, Irish and American folk traditions and tell stories of love, war, murder, heroism and all the best and worst of humanity down through the centuries.

And One Red Mitten - The World Premier of late lamented Chris Broderick's song cycle takes place in the Crypt of Rochester Cathedral where Vicky Price sings about Whitechapel victim Catherine Eddowes to honour her spirit and redefine her memory. Instrumentation by Stu Turner and Nick Rice.

TRADITIONAL & HARMONY GROUPS **TG**

Kimber's Men - The best sea shanty group in the UK. They have appeared at many international festivals of the sea and maritime events around the world.

Hog Eye Men - The Hog Eye Men sing shanties as they used to be sung: simply, boldly and loudly.

Morrigan - A four piece acapella folk group.

Milton Hide - A husband and wife team who perform English traditional folk music.

Skinners Rats - Barry and Blossom (Fiddle and Accordion) form the core of the current line-up of Skinner's Rats - joined here by Richard West on bass.

Ian Petrie and Sue Hudson - Ian will be at the festival in a number of guises with his own band and in this duo with Sue where they will perform a range of Americana numbers and other songs in harmony.

Pytchwood - A duo that take inspiration from rhythm, melody, harmony and improvisation.

The Silver Darlings - All female shanty group from Southend who sing with gusto, expression and great harmonies.

The Hartley Morris Singers - Dancers who sing. After many a Morris stand, Hartley have always retired to the pub for a good old fashioned sing song of the best in traditional chorus songs.

Triality - Three brothers who have been around the folk scene for many years delighting audiences with their high volume traditional folk songs on trumpet, accordion and bass guitar. Definite crowd pleasers and the festival is glad to see them back in action.



WORLD ROOTS **WR**

The Hot Rats - Featuring 'Wicker Man' fiddler Ian Cutler, the band play a mixture of world rooted music and original compositions on violin, guitar, bass and vocals.

The Caramellos - Just about the best ukulele band around. Favourites of the Sweeps and guaranteed to uplift any audience.

Gypskazz - Uplifting music on a variety of instruments including saxophone, Gypskazz are a feel-good outfit who dominate the stage. Prepare to dance to their rhythms anchored on drums by the talented CJ.

Jumbo Gumbo - Cajun music with accordion, French vocals and a very danceable beat.

Thomas Abrahams - Supreme guitarist and entertainer who captivated the Castle Gardens crowd with his solo performance at the last Sweeps Festival in 2019. He can play all styles but is particularly adept at Gypsy jazz in the style of Django Reinhardt.

Tangled Elbow - The band has sprung from the group that used to play for the Tanglefoot Appalachian dance group. Viv Bonney is a vastly experienced accordion player who has been around the Kentish folk scene for many years.

The Beard Conspiracy - Everything from Shostakovich to Britney Spears via Klezmer tango, classical and Eastern European themes on accordion, tuba, guitar and vocals.

FOLK ROCK **FR**

Bounty Hounds - The Suffolk based folk/rock band have been regular guests and supporters of the Sweeps Festival.

HEADLINE ACT

Sur Les Docks - A return for the French favourites of Sweeps who have taken the Castle Gardens by storm on their last appearances. They play original songs and tunes in the style of a 'Gallic' Pogues and their performances are full of vigour, excitement and musical talent.

The Dredgermen - Play a mixture of traditional folk, sea shanties and music hall rhythms in that Medway sound that recalls Singing Loins, Billy Bragg and the Pogues influences.

FOLK COMEDY **FC**

Fabulous Fezheads - In demand in the Middle East and other hot spots, you can't really describe the Fezheads. Be prepared for magical trickery, sand dances and audience participation, willing and unwilling.

Thee Scarecrows - Unique blend of twisted hillbilly rock 'n' roll.

Pretending People - Local group of talented musicians and audience grabbing personalities. In addition to their street entertainment act, they play a variety of instruments on stage.

CELTIC BANDS **CB**

Bellibone Rig - A new group featuring Sur Les Docks fiddle player, Graham Knibbs. Guitar, vocals and percussion with some great foot tapping tunes.

SINGER/SONGWRITERS **S**

HEADLINE ACT

Gabriel Moreno & The Quivering Poets - Featuring the poetic work of Gibraltarian songster Gabriel. His superb backing musicians are mainly London based and include Adam Beattie and Fiona Bevan

Rachel Lowrie - Her songs are sketches of her local community, past and present. But more than that, as a singer, she's the local scene's world class voice.

Bob Kenward - A songwriter whose songs have been absorbed into the traditional music of Kent.

Paul Corcoran (Lo Fi Waves) - Highly respected Medway singer and songwriter

Ruby & Ríos - Talented singer/songwriter Ruby is joined by virtuoso guitarist Ríos for a couple of original sets on the stages. Her last appearance at Sweeps was support to Wings/Moody Blues star Denny Laine in the Castle Gardens concert marquee.

Bruise - This unique duo brings an authentic and original take on progressive folk music with stunning voices, well-crafted songs and exceptional arrangements.

Lemon & Paice - Skilled songsmiths who can tell a tale with conviction with lyrics that can inspire the imagination.

INDIE FOLK **IF**

Hobo and the Hippies - Five piece alt-folk, country band hailing from the west of Kent.

The Flowing - Original material and well-crafted songs from this trio who include vocals and French horn playing Vicky Price, also our MC for the Castle Gardens stage.

HEADLINE ACT

BLUEGRASS **B**

The Lowly Strung - Great bluegrass music from the Maidstone based band who sprung from Wheeler Street some years ago.

CONTEMPORARY FOLK **CF**

Songwriters' Den on the Road - Kent's finest singer/songwriters as solos, duo and bands come together to celebrate their music.

CJ - Also will be hosting the City Wall Wine Bar Stage and performing in any gaps solo and with guitarist Dave Reay and with Jumbo Gumbo. CJ is also a capped England Women's cricketer and no mean goalkeeper and runs highly successful sing-arounds around the Canterbury area.

It's Complicated - Ukulele trio who have performed at Sweeps and at the Margate Ukulele festival.



Entangled Realms 15 Years of Printmaking by Jane Furst

Friday, 29 April – Saturday, 16 July 2022

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Deavin, Feist and Langsdale -

Talented trio with folk standards on guitar, harmonica and double bass.

PERCUSSION **P**

Ryebellion Drummers - They are the drumming group of the Rye and District Bonfire Society who perform each year for that event and also at others around the south east. This is their first visit to Rochester.

TRADITIONAL DANCE **TD**

Tribal Banshees -

A well-established tribal bellydance group from Gillingham, with a distinctive dance style, led by The Lady Charlotte.

Kitka - A Bulgarian dance group with international members who have performed at many festivals.

Jack-in-the-Green awakening ceremony

The awakening ceremony found Morris dancers and sweeps bringing Jack to life at the crack of dawn. Join us at Bluebell Hill picnic area on Sunday, 1 May at 5.31am.



The Leaves of the Trees

The Leaves of the Trees is a touring artwork installation by Peter Walker taking place at Rochester Cathedral over the weekend. It was created as a reflective memorial to the effects of the Coronavirus pandemic. A simple but moving artwork creating a moment of connection and calm.

Saturday and Monday, 10am-3pm, Sunday 1pm-3pm, no need to book. Free entry. Last admission – 30 minutes before published times.

Folk Instrument Tasters and Penny Whistle Sessions Saturday-Monday, 10am-4pm, The Moat

Drop-in instrument sessions for children. Come and learn technical skills and gain musical understanding of the fiddle, melodeon, accordion, harp, mandolin and bodhran. Plus pre-book a 40-minute focussed penny whistle session. Available on the hour from 11am.

Walking tours

Taking place everyday over the festival, starting at the Visitor Information Centre at 10.45am and 2.15pm. The 10.45am tours will take 45 minutes and the 2.15pm tours 90 minutes. Tours are free but donations to The City of Rochester Society are always welcome.

Don't forget to browse the range of stalls in the castle grounds including beauty products, wellness and food, drink and lifestyle fair, plus a record and musical fair on Boley Hill.

Rochester High Street is categorised as an Alcohol Control Zone.



However, close working partnership between Medway Council, Kent Police and Pub Landlords has allowed drinking in outdoor areas within the festival area between the hours of 10am and 6pm only. Drinking restrictions will revert back to normal regulations from 6pm onwards each day of the festival.



We look forward to seeing you next year
Saturday, 29 April - Monday, 1 May 2023

For our future events, visit:
visitmedway.org/sweepsfestival
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