



Toft Village Calendar

Produced and Distributed by St. Andrew's Parish Church

December 2021



DIARY DATES

MONTHLY COFFEE MORNING



No Coffee Morning this month, but you can always pop along to the Community Café any Wednesday..

TOFT FRIENDSHIP CLUB

[Over 50s Club]. **Wednesday, 8th December 2.30 pm**
Christmas meeting: with special tea, Christmas carols with Mike & Jeanne and friends, and the chocolate raffle. Visitors always welcome

Please bring chocolate (anything you like, of any value, but wrapped, and it will be part of the raffle.

Sewing, Knit and Natter are having a break in December. For the date when the group will meet again in the new year ring 262144.

The Parish Council - The next PC meeting is on **6th December at 7.00 pm**. It will be held in The People's Hall. All welcome subject to prevailing restrictions.

The Internet Club

The internet club will meet on 6th and 20th December from 2pm to 4pm at the village hall. Drop in any time to see us, especially if you have any techy problems. Any computer buffs will also be welcome. We serve tea and biscuits as an incentive!

EDITORIAL

We have the builders in.

They're a hardy, resourceful and resilient bunch of characters and, as such, there has been a bit of a cultural clash with the indigenous occupants, who are soft, clueless and much taken to wandering about what remains of the manse with one hand over their eyes and asking timorous questions, such as 'Umm...sorry, but why is this radiator in the garden?'. The lads are only too ready to give us an easy-to-understand, jargon-free layman's answer: 'Because', they say, like someone addressing a particularly mutton-headed two-year old, 'it was in the way.' Thus reassured, we retreat into the one remaining habitable room we still have on the ground floor and try to console ourselves with the thought of all that dosh we're saving by not being able to run a heating system. Or a lighting system. Or an oven. Or a bath. I think the phone might still be working but as there is an insurmountable pile of breeze-block and plaster between me and it, I haven't been able to test this theory. Still, we have all four walls still standing in the kitchen, if nowhere else, and a ready supply of cool, refreshing water, some of it from the tap rather than yet another mysterious cascade from the ceiling, so we really shouldn't complain, I guess.

Right now, it's a three-way contest to see which will disintegrate first: The house, our morale or our by now microscopic bank balance. My money - if I still had any - would be on a photo-finish between the lot of them and probably in a new record time. At one point, I wondered if it might be an idea to just decamp and leave the chaps to get on with it. After all, what could be nicer than December spent on an obliging friend's zed-bed, or holed-up in a Premier Inn, spending the day gazing out at the bleak concrete opposite? But when I imagined the carnage they might wreak without even the tiny amount of supervision they'd condescended to endure so far, I quickly thought better of it.

Just yesterday, the head man tapped me on the shoulder. "Cheer up, chief," he counselled, encouragingly. "Come Christmas, you won't recognise this place." He's a fit-looking party so, resisting the urge to hand him a bunch of fives, I nodded meekly. I was about to say that I hadn't actually recognised the place for about two months now when I heard the rest of the gang ululating shrilly in the garden. Ploughing through the drifts of sawdust and aggregate that constitute the ground floor, I cocked a concerned ear. What new, complex, structural engineering conundrum had now manifested? I needn't have worried. "Oi! Alexa!" I over-heard. "This in't Radio One, is it, you pile-a-junk." Priorities, you see - these guys have a lorry-load of them; sadly, none concerning building.

At this point, the person with whom I share the burden of occupancy shouldered her way through the rubble. Briefly, she surveyed the vista of shattered joists, fag-ends, coffee-cups, twisted cables and brickbats before her and then emitted a deep sigh. "The phone does still work" she announced. "I've just answered it." "Anyone interesting?" I asked. "Not really" she said. "But if one more person tells me this will all be worth it in the end I shall - I shall - " "Hand them a bunch of fives?" I suggested. She looked grateful. "That would do nicely."

Toft is looking for a Gritting Volunteer

This valuable role involves gritting the main footpaths in the village with a small gritter to provide safe routes for residents on the main thoroughfares in snowy or frosty conditions.

A gritter, grit, instructions and suitable clothing are supplied by the County Council.

Please contact Martin Yeadon, Martin.Yeadon@gmail.com if you are interested or require more information

A date for your diary.
THE BIG BREAKFAST
will be on **Sunday 27th February** from 9 to noon.

Ride and Stride 2021

Peter Johnson thanks all those who sponsored his walk around the Cambridge Churches and Chapels. He raised £855 which is due to the very generous contributions that everybody gave. Although after the 2019 Ride and Stride he talked about retiring from this annual event he has carried on and may do the same thing next year.

MINISTRY TEAM**THE CHURCH IN TOFT**

St. Andrew's Parish Church

Team Vicar:

Rev David Newton 01223 665654

Lay Minister: Barbara Preece Tel: 263466

Churchwardens:

Ann Mitchell 262516

John Quenby 263949

Methodist Church

Minister: Rev Alison Walker

01223 872862

alison.walker@methodist.org.uk

Stewards:

Diana Tebbit 01223 263557

Stephen Acklam 264055

Mrs Pat Morton 264010

*The Church in Toft***SERVICES OF WORSHIP***5th December* 8.30am Holy Communion - Rev Prof Michael Reiss

11.00am Holy Communion, Methodist Church - Rev Alison Walker

3.00pm As part of the Christmas Tree Festival (see below) Christingles and gifts in the churchyard

12th December 11.00am Festival of Lessons and Carols at St. Andrew's,

followed by refreshments

19th December 8.30am Holy Communion – Rev Prof Michael Reiss

4.00pm Firelight and Starlight (see opposite)

24th December – CHRISTMAS EVE – 11.30 pm Holy Communion at St Andrews – Rev David Newton*25th December* – CHRISTMAS DAY – 9.30am A short Christmas Day service at the Methodist Church

– Rev Alison Walker

There will be **no service in Toft on 26th** December (though available in Dry Drayton and Haslingfield) or on Wednesday 29th

Wednesday morning prayers will be said at St. Andrew's on 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd December.

Also on Wednesday evenings at 8.00pm, via zoom a service of compline: ID: 899 215 191 or follow the link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/899215191>

Zoom services available at 11.00am first three Sundays and Christmas day:

MEETING ID: 823 1147 3640

* ** Please see Page three for details

Dear Friends

Lights are reappearing outside our houses. It feels as if the inhabitants of the houses, although snug inside, are expressing their desire to reach out, shining into the darkness to light our way and remind us that although for a while we retreat from the cold we are still ready for the warmth of human connection.

Thinking back to last Christmas, I don't remember the stress of who can see whom, but I remember that sense of connection with one another as people came together outdoors, in churchyards and on doorsteps.

The hard-hitting truth of human and earth connectedness has hit home during the COP26 negotiations – we cannot evade the reality that how we live here has repercussions around the globe and reaching forward into our shared future. How might we celebrate Christmas differently if we take seriously our commitment and connection with people and planet? What do we treasure most and how do we protect what we most value? I'm sure the answer is not that we would miss the endless pressure to buy buy buy, but we would miss the presence of others.

The Christian faith is deeply expressed in the Christmas desire for connection. God so desired connection with the world, that he sent his son Jesus to live here, with us and for us. God reached out and took shape as a baby, reliant on human nurture, to show us that we need each other, that we need God and that God too, in some sense, needs us.

Richard Zaghari-Ratcliffe ended his hunger strike, undertaken to ask the UK government to act and end the imprisonment of his wife, Nazanin, in Iran, by holding a sign outside the Foreign Office that said "Love is a verb, not a noun." Love is known in the actions that strengthen our bonds as people, that protects the links that join us with all living creatures and with the earth. Love may lead us to sacrifice as Richard has done, or to protest, as thousands have done for the world and for human rights. Love led God to be born and to live in our world, connected with all people through the child in the manger.

May this Christmastime bring you close to those you love, give you peace with those with whom you struggle and renew joy in you and may "God bless us, everyone!" (Tiny Tim in A Christmas Carol)

- Alison

Sewing, Knit and Natter

Having decorated the outside and inside of the Chapel with poppies for Remembrance the Sewing Group are now busy making decorations for their Christmas tree and then will have a break in December. For the date when the group will meet again in the new year ring 262144.



THE CHURCH IN TOFT DIARY

4th - 5TH DECEMBER Christmas Tree Festival
at St Andrew's.

THE CHURCH WILL BE OPEN

SATURDAY, 4th 10 – 6 pm

refreshments 11.00-1.00 & 3.00 – 5.00

SUNDAY 5TH 10 – 5.00 PM

refreshments 11.00-1.00 & 3.00 – 5.00



For you to come and see the trees, have a cup of something and bring your gifts for the Women's Refuge

We, the Church in Toft, have collected presents for the Women's Refuge for a good many years now. They can be for the children and young people or the mothers, or for use during their Christmas festivities. They do not need wrapping but if they are they should have a removable label describing the contents so they can go to the right recipient. We will collect them under the big parish tree and deliver them on the 6th

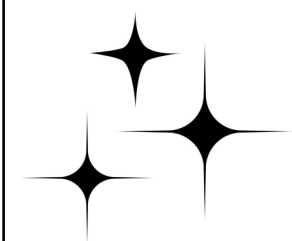
AT 3.00pm ON SUNDAY in the churchyard

We invite you to join us to create Christingles, to sing carols and to enjoy a drink and mince pie. Our Christmas Tree week-end is always a wonderful start to Christmas, so we look forward to you joining us.



SUNDAY, 19TH DECEMBER 4.00 pm

FIRELIGHT AND STARLIGHT



Led by Barbara Preece and Cathy Michel, In the Churchyard, we will sing carols, listen to stories around a fire, members of the brass band will play with, we hope, stars overhead!

On Saturday 11th December , at 4.00pm

Toft Choir at St. Andrews

A short, about 45 minutes, concert of Christmas music to which you are invited. It's **free** of charge but **you must have a ticket**, obtainable from the shop or Barbara Preece.





TOFT SOCIAL CLUB NEWS

December promises to be a pretty packed month at The Club!

Food on Friday in November was very popular – we were treated to slow cooked Pork, which was a huge hit! There will not be a Food on Friday in December as we have the famous **TSC Christmas Dinner** on the 11th December. Please check out the website to see if there are any tickets left. Food on Friday will return in January, on Friday 7th.

Also in November we welcomed Mitch Benn to Toft – it was an absolutely brilliant gig; Mitch was on good form and had the audience in stitches as he gave us 10 songs to save the world. We hope to get him back to Toft again in the future – be sure not to miss him!

For December, on Saturday 18th, the **Film Club** is lightening the mood, and showing the Oscar winning, Pixar production “UP” – this animated film tells the story of 78-year-old Carl Fredricksen who travels to Paradise Falls in his house equipped with balloons, inadvertently taking a young stowaway. Doors open at 8pm and the film starts promptly at 8:20. Film Club membership is £10 a year, or evening membership is £2.50.

On Thursday December 16th we are holding a “**Music Night**” – which will be an informal evening of music, poems and humour, with just a hint of Christmas, featuring some well known local talent! This will be a fun evening – with some sing-along to get everyone in the Christmas mood. Free entry!

And later in December, we are hoping to get a **local brass band** along to serenade

The December Quiz will be on Thursday 2nd December – and we promise it will only have a slight Christmas theme! All welcome in teams of up to 6, just £1 per team member. Doors open at 8pm.

The very popular **Art Class** continues on Thursday 9th December and the final Bingo of the year is on Thursday 23rd.

The **Annual Christmas Draw** is now underway – please see the board at the Bar. There are lots of prizes to be won, and the Draw will take place on Christmas Eve. We will be open from 8pm on Christmas Eve, so why not come along and welcome in Christmas.

We will be open on Thursday 30th December – see the website for details.... Then we will be welcoming in 2022 with a New Year's Eve Party – full details on the website.

Finally, we would like to wish you all a very **Merry Christmas and Happy New Year**.

Don't forget - we are open every Thursday and Friday evening from 8pm. Keep up to date here:

Website: <https://toftsocialclub.org.uk>

Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ToftSocial/>

Your Committee is: : Martin Sebborn (Acting Chairman), Roger Thorogood (Acting Vice Chairman), Gill Collett (Treasurer), Paul Hercus (Secretary), Koran Collett, Sonia Cox, Ron Gouldstone, Liz Tomes, Brian Roberts and Angela Unsworth.

www.toftsocialclub.org.uk

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/ToftSocial/>

Toft Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs Gail Stoehr (clerk@tpc.toft.org.uk)

30 West Drive

Highfields Caldecote

Cambridge, CB23 7NY Tel: 01954 210241

Councillors	Phone	E-mail
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Chairman:

Martin Yeadon	263663	cllr.yeadon@tpc.toft.org.uk
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James Howells		cllr.lhowells@tpc.toft.org.uk
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Elaine Miles	262255	cllr.miles@tpc.toft.org.uk
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Tricia Ellis-Evans	263477	cllr.ellis-evans@tpc.toft.org.uk
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Andy Tall	07984796273	cllr.tall@tpc.toft.org.uk
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Lluis Borrell	264611	cllr.borrell@toft.org.uk
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Kaushik Popat		cllr.popat@tpc.toft.org.uk
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The Council is your locally elected Council at the first tier of local government. Meetings are open to the public and are usually held on the first Monday of each month (excepting August) at the Toft People's Hall in School Lane starting at 7.00pm.

Notices of meetings and agendas are published on the Parish Council Noticeboard near the bus shelter together with minutes, which can also be viewed at www.toft.org.uk. Among other things, the Council considers local planning applications for the planning authority, the South Cambridgeshire District Council; provides the local recreation area, the People's Hall, litter bins, dog waste bins and the bus shelter; arranges for local verge cutting on behalf of the Cambridgeshire County Council and works with that authority to ensure the maintenance of local footpaths.

Next Meeting: Monday 6th December, 7.00 pm in The People's Hall . All welcome subject to social-distancing guidelines

The Parish Council met on 1st Nov 2021.

The PC was very pleased to welcome James Howells onto the Council as a new Councillor. The Council is now up to full strength. (Although we already know that there will be vacancies come the end of the current term of office in May 2022).

The PC discussed the state of the verges and a possible parking area outside St Andrew's Church. Any changes to the verge need to be agreed with, and led by, the County Council. An initial fee of £500 would be charged by the CC to carry out a survey and to provide a costing for the works. It was agreed that the PC would fund this jointly with the St Andrew's PCC. It was agreed that Cllr Tall would progress this.

The Cambridge Local Plan First Proposals is now up for consultation. This is the stage following the

initial "call for sites" after which the planners considered the sites listed and drastically reduced them to match the housing needs and the policies about development. This consultation ends 13th December. The PC agreed to discuss it at the next meeting and to prepare their response at that meeting. The consultation is open to all residents and can be found on the SCDC web site. (www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/localplan) As well as the comprehensive response form there is a straightforward, quick response form on the site and residents are encouraged to respond.

2nd June 2022 marks the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and the PC have been asked whether Toft would be taking part in the lighting of beacons throughout the land. The PC agreed that it would be involved. It also agreed to discuss what other activities may be considered to record this momentous occasion at the next meeting.

As previously reported, there is a vacancy for a Gritting Volunteer in the village. It was agreed that the PC would put an advert in the Calendar to try to fill the position.

A planning application was considered.

Cllr Tall reported that a number of highway issues had been reported onto the CC reporting website by residents as well as those reported by the PC. The PC noted that this was pleasing and reflected the fact that it is a straightforward process to report issues directly to the CC via this method.

The Toft Speed Watch team have been without a camera for sometime as it is shared with Hardwick team and it has been reported as not working. The Toft Speed Watch team have now taken ownership of the camera to see if it can be repaired.

Although not reported at the meeting Cllr Ellis-Evans organised a very successful working party gathering on Lot Meadow during the month with 14 volunteers spending a couple of hours tidying up the area for the winter. Thanks go to all the volunteers.

Please see the official Minutes of the Meeting for the definitive outcomes of the meeting.



Meridian Primary School

Learning for life – striving for excellence

Greetings Neighbours,

We had two wonderful Harvest assemblies before half term and Reverend David Newton (from St Mary's Church) joined us for one of the assemblies and shared a message with the school. Children read poems, prayers and the recorder group played. We would like to thank our school community for all the food (three car boot loads) that was donated for Jimmy's Shelter in Cambridge.

For Remembrance this year, classes made poppies to display in their classroom windows, we displayed the fallen soldier in the front foyer and we held a special Remembrance Assembly on Thursday 11th November. We learned about the life of Walter Tull who was both a great footballer and soldier who died in 1918.

During November, we held 'anti-bullying week'. The children focussed on many different aspects of bullying with an 'odd sock day' to celebrate individuality and diversity. The children created handprints with captions which are now all around the school and the older children helped to write a child friendly page for our new anti-bullying policy which will be ready soon.

Thank you for your generous donations to support us in funding a new reflective space for the children outside. This project has been lead by the children. Donations can be made on our PTA Just Giving page <https://www.justgiving.com/meridianpta> or directly to the PTA/School.

Just before half term, we held an Open Morning for prospective parents for 2022. If you are keen to learn about our school for a reception place and are new to the area, do make contact with us.

Christmas is fast approaching and we have lots of fun and exciting things coming up for the children. We will be holding a KS2 Christmas Service at St Mary's Church, a Christmas Dinner for the children with class party games during the day and there will also be a Christmas Jumper day with a 'Santa Dash' fun run within the school grounds.

We wish you all a very happy and safe Christmas.

Please do have a good, restful and enjoyable season.

Kind regards,

Mrs C. Etchie, Headteacher

Save Bourn Mill!

CPPF write: In the last month, thanks to very generous supporters we have reached our appeal target of £10,000 to protect the mill and prevent its collapse. The race is now on to raise just over £100,000 to restore and reopen Bourn wind mill including a further £15,000 from public donations. We are very grateful to all the donors who have gifted and supported financially and with gifts in kind.

Excitingly, this week the project has been acknowledged by one of the UK's most famous and talented architects, Lord Norman Foster, who studied and drew the mill in 1958. He said: "Bourn Mill is something that, in my view, should be repaired and preserved at whatever cost. Dating from 1636, it is one of only 50 trestle post mills left surviving in the UK and is an important legacy of our innovative past. In an age when we are reminded that innovation and design are key to reduce the effects of climate change, it is only right that we are afforded the ability to look back to an age when we were undoubted leaders in such innovation."

If you agree with Lord Foster please consider giving a donation to Save Bourn Mill:

<https://www.cambridgeppf.org/Appeal/save-bourn-windmill-appeal>



Climate Change Working Group

Save every drop ...

*IMAGINE ... all the water you need for your household today has to be collected from a point up to 10 km away from your house. You must walk there, then carry it home in a 20 litre container, weighing 20 kilograms (equal to 20 large bags of sugar). To do this you carry it on your head. Could you do that? Almost certainly not – but it's what tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of women and girls around the world are obliged to do **every day**.*

So in Toft, how lucky are we? We can turn on a tap and clean, drinkable water flows from it. But our region of the UK is already running out of this vital resource – as indeed are many countries worldwide. None of us should take water for granted, ever. It's imperative that we, as individuals, families and communities, do everything possible to limit the water we use – and at the same time reduce this ever rising cost in the household budget.

- Here are just a few ways we might all do this – every drop counts:
- Don't flush the WC every time – only when really necessary.
- Washing hands (as we all must do regularly): leave the plug in place and re-use the water.
- Turn off the tap while brushing your teeth. And fix any leaky taps immediately.
- Spend less time in the shower.
- Hand washing dishes/cutlery: allow them to stack up and wash up only once a day, or when you run out of clean items!
- Only run the washing machine and dishwasher when you have a full load.
- Don't let the tap run while you clean vegetables. Rinse them in a bowl or sink full of clean water.
- Steam your food to cut water usage and retain more of the natural nutrients. Use any leftover 'boil' water as stock for soups, or let it cool and use it to water plants.
- Cut down on meat and dairy products and eat seasonal vegetables – this all helps to conserve water.
- Keep bottles of drinking water in the refrigerator so that you don't run the tap to cool it for drinking.
- Install as many water-butts around your house as possible.
- Water outdoor plants in the early morning or at the end of the day to stop water immediately evaporating in sunlight and heat.

For more ideas, check out these websites:

www.cambridge-water.co.uk

<https://friendsoftheearth.uk/sustainable-living/13-best-ways-save-water>

www.ourbreathingplanet.com/how-to-save-water/

www.projectwater.info/100-ways-to-conserve-water.html

Each time you reach for the tap...

THINK about that woman who has to carry every drop of water her family consumes.



Bedfordshire Cambridgeshire Northamptonshire

Wildlife Trust West Cambridgeshire Hundreds Update: Dec 2021

During lockdown, our nature reserves received a large increase in visitors, and these numbers have remained higher than usual. This has added to a general upward trend, which has been building for several years. Climate change has meant winters have been getting warmer and wetter in recent times, and last winter was the wettest for many years. Our ancient woodland reserves in the West Cambs Hundreds area are on impermeable soils and get especially muddy. When large numbers of people walk on waterlogged paths, they become churned, and it can take years for them to recover. People also naturally try to walk around muddy areas and significantly increase the width of the path, damaging sensitive plants on the edges and compacting the soil. The wider rides are a habitat in themselves and are part of what makes the woods special; they are often managed like a meadow.

A large proportion of damage to our woodland happens in the winter. Our changing climate is already responsible for extra damage, and over the last few years we have seen trampled areas on paths get wider, and more vegetation lost. As time goes by, this is likely to get worse. We have also seen increasing problems during bluebell season when people and dogs stray off the paths.

Winter is the time when tree management is carried out. Over the next few years, more trees will need to be felled to keep the woods safe due to the spread of ash die-back disease and the prevalence of ash trees in our woodlands.

Our primary concerns are protecting precious places for wildlife, and engaging people with nature safely. We have a legal and moral responsibility to maintain these ancient woodlands in a safe, favourable and improving condition. In order to ensure these woods remain special for generations, the Trust may be restricting access during the winter and bluebell season.

We would like to thank everyone in advance for your understanding as we carry out this vital work and ensure our beautiful, and vitally important ancient woodlands are protected.

You can find out more about winter closures on our website www.wildlifebcn.org/reserves-access

You can contact me:

E-mail: rebecca.neal@wildlifebcn.org

Facebook: @BeccaBadgerWTBCN

BCN Facebook/Twitter: @wildlifebcn

Visit: www.wildlifebcn.org

The West Cambridgeshire Hundreds are a group of nature reserves owned and/or managed by the Wildlife Trust for Beds Cambs and Northants: Hardwick, Gamlingay, Hayley, and Waresley and Gransden Woods, Buff wood plus Cambourne Nature Reserve.

Toft care home welcomes new manager Leena Oni

Staff and residents at Home Meadow care home in Toft are extending a warm welcome to Leena Oni, who joins as its new manager. An experienced clinical and community care specialist, Leena is very keen to deepen links with the Toft community and to continue building Home Meadow's reputation for delivering excellent care.

She says, "My priority is firmly focused on the needs of those we care for and support here; I want everyone living at Home Meadow to be happy and have a fulfilling life.

"I'm really keen to grow our links with the local community: churches, schools, charities and other health and care providers. Obviously, we are limited by what we can do due to continuing COVID precautions but people in our communities need care solutions and need to know how we can help them."

Leena first started working in a care home as a summer job when she was a teenager in her native Finland. After qualifying as a nurse Leena was working in the field of neurology in London before having a career break to raise her two children.

Home Meadow is a residential home comprising 49 bedrooms and employing 39 people. As a significant employer in the Toft area, part of Leena's work will also focus on recruitment. Care homes like Home Meadow employ a wide range of skilled people from catering and care to maintenance and reception. Leena adds: "Home Meadow has a very friendly, family atmosphere and I have been made to feel so welcome by both the team and the residents here."



Comberton Library

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/library

Tel: 0345 045 5225

Monday: 10.00 am – 1.00 pm

Wednesday: 10.00 am – 1.00 pm and 2.00 – 5.00 pm

Friday: 2.00 – 5.00 pm

Saturday: 10.00 am – 1.00 pm

Help us to find Christmas!

Cambridgeshire Libraries are holding a **Treasure Hunt** for children and families in December – use your mobile phone to scan a barcode and get a video clue. Find all of our lost items and you'll get a certificate. Just ask library staff for the clue sheet and then scan the QR code to get you started. If you don't have a mobile phone don't worry, there's a paper version too.

In the midst of all the Christmas preparations, we hope that you may find time to relax with a good book. If you like a festive read, do come and browse the titles available in the library.

We have picture books and some longer chapter books for children and a range of adult fiction titles on display too. All are available to borrow.

We will also be holding a **big book sale** in the library from Monday 6th December, during library opening hours, where there will be a range of good quality second-hand adult and children's books to purchase at bargain prices.

You may find just the right book for yourself, or as a stocking filler present!

Just a quick reminder that we have now reverted to a three-week loan period, with up to three renewals permitted. Overdue charges have been re-introduced for late returns, but only for adult loans – there are no late charges for children's books. It now costs only £1 to borrow a DVD or audiobook for 3 weeks.

Free services are available if you are housebound or visually impaired. Do ask library staff for more information about our charges and concessions.

Comberton Library will be open as normal on Wednesday 22nd December and then closed for Christmas and New Year, re-opening on Wednesday 5th January.

We wish all our customers a joyful Christmas and a happy and healthy new year and look forward to welcoming you to the library very soon.

Many readers will remember Val and Clive Sinclair, who moved away from the village last year. Val writes to let us know how things went...

Sending warmest best wishes from the Sinclairs in Shropshire

It's hard to believe that almost a year has passed since we moved here. The first four months were spent in lockdown so, although it was difficult in many ways, it gave us the opportunity to get various jobs done in our new home.

We live in Pontesbury, near Shrewsbury, (we are a kilometre up Pontesbury Hill Road), and the walking from our doorstep leads us into the 'Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty', where the views are breathtaking and the landscape studded with Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Medieval and Industrial features, it's history is fascinating, but too much to write here. Autumn in Shropshire is absolutely stunning and the area is a photographer's dream. It's a very different way of life though, far simpler than we're used to - we're mainly surrounded by sheep and I was stunned when a local counsellor told me that road cameras are shortly to be introduced on the main road, not just to note speeding traffic but also to help the police detect sheep rustling! Apparently 39 went missing in one go recently!

Very surprisingly there are many people living nearby who have moved here from Cambridge, it's quite extraordinary, and Clive recently met someone who moved here from The Valley in Comberton. My hairdresser lived in Lolworth, so we almost feel at home.

The village has a lot of amenities and I'm able to slog my way down the hill to the local butcher/baker (an amazing place where you can take your bottle to fill with milk from a tank direct from the farm). Then on to an incredibly efficient pharmacy, GP, library etc, a post office also operating as a cafe and DIY shop, and then slog the kilometre back up to our home. So, coming from a bungalow into a house with stairs, then hills either side, it's been a very fast 'get fit' experience. Clive is like a goat though and had climbed nearby Earl's Hill within days of arriving, something not many local people achieve, including me!

There are many support groups here, covering every situation, probably because people seem to have more time to devote to volunteering. I've been 'volunteered' to oversee the big musical event being held here next June for the Platinum Jubilee Celebrations! Clive has already been involved in bird surveys, attends

backgammon in Shrewsbury and the local art class.

The most amazing event I attended was the DarkFest in nearby Cardingmill Valley, where the most beautiful and artistic light trail led up the valley into the hills. It was a surreal experience climbing so high in the dark, following the trail and hearing a choir echoing as you walked. While there I attended the night photography event 'painting with light'. From there, the drive was up the Burway, not for nervous drivers in the dark, with its sheer drop on one side, and incredibly high, but the view down into the valley with the light trail was just stunning. We ended up right on the top in a fabulous cottage garden, beautifully lit as part of the DarkFest, sitting around a massive fire for storytelling by a lady called Sal Tonge. I'd never experienced anything like it and can't wait for next year!

We've also finally seen our children. James has been twice from Ireland as we are so much nearer the Holyhead ferry now and the girls and grandchildren are only an hour either side. We had everyone here for Clive's birthday and it was so good seeing all of them together, they hadn't seen each other for almost 3 years. The girls can just 'pop over' now, it really is lovely.

Lockdown enabled me to write the song 'Dawn in Costa Rica', following my visit there a couple of years ago. I wrote it with our talented guitarist Gerry Prusiewicz, and the singer Cathy Matthews also worked on it, (you might remember them from the open music evenings in the People's Hall), and we are thrilled to have it played on the airways here now. I also, finally, played my first concert in 18 months in Devon and it was so good to be performing to a live audience.

I need to say though that we really do miss our Toft neighbours and friends SO much - it really has been the hardest and most difficult part of the move. We've therefore been delighted to welcome friends who have already visited us and will continue to offer warm hospitality to those who hopefully come next year.

We send our love and warm wishes for a very Happy Christmas and a healthy and peaceful 2022.

Val and Clive xx

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What do we do?

For those of you who were unable to make the very enjoyable recent Open Day at the People's Hall, we thought we would give you a summary of our display.

Toft Historical Society aims to record, archive and understand both the history of our village and its place in the life of the Bourn Valley. Archaeological records indicate occupation of the Valley since prehistoric times and the village goes back around 1000 years.

Much information has been assembled on the history of Toft and we are committed to expanding our knowledge of every period up to the present day. We are fortunate in still having several historic buildings, a remarkable set of church records, parish maps dating back hundreds of years and both family photographs and interviews documenting the lives of village residents over much of the past century.

Through census, parish and military records we established that Toft is one of very few Thankful Villages in England (everyone who enlisted for the First World War returned safely). Other history projects have included an archaeological excavation with Cambridge University in 2013 (The Big Dig) where many villagers helped in digging test pits in various parts of the village. These yielded artefacts that helped locate the likely location of the mediaeval village. This, and other THS projects, have led to major themed exhibitions, covering topics such as Toft School, Toft at War and Agriculture in Toft. Our long running oral history activities have recorded village residents speaking of everyday life in Toft over the decades. Some of these recordings and a video of the Big Dig are available as DVDs.

Smaller exhibitions have been organised as part of the Spring Feast, often in conjunction with public history lectures. Talks for both the Feast and other occasions are always well attended and have covered topics such as John Bunyan (who visited Toft on several occasions), the Home Front during World War One, An Evening with the Vikings and Richard III – the king under the car park.

For the Spring Feast various village traditions such as maypole dancing and Well dressing have been resurrected. Signs erected along the route of the annual Parish Walk help keep traditional field names in the village memory.

THS submits history articles to the Village Calendar each month and we have our own history website (www.tofthistory.org) which is well worth a visit. Our community activities have been restricted the past couple of years but 2022 should hopefully bring a return to normality. We welcome residents/non-residents of all ages to join and attend our future events.

We particularly encourage volunteers to help with collecting material, archiving (physical and online activities), interviewing, videoing and assisting with our events. There is still lots to learn about Toft and its community, past and present.

Wheelie Bin Collections For December

(N.B. This schedule may be subject to change)

Black Bin:

Weds 8th Dec

Weds 22nd Dec

Blue/Green Bin

Weds 1st Dec

Weds 15th Dec

Fri 31st Dec (Blue Only)

Notice to Advertisers

Advertisements are published quarterly. Copy for inclusion in the next available edition of the Calendar **must** reach us by 17th January 2022 at the *very latest*. Advertisements will **NOT** be published unless full payment has been received in advance. Please note: *We are currently unable to accept PDF file types*. Quarter-page adverts **MUST** be Portrait-style, half-page adverts **MUST** be Landscape-style. In the first instance, advertisers should contact **Pat Gouldstone** at: calendaradstoft@gmail.com to discuss their requirements.

✂ USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

Alcoholics Anonymous: 0845 769 7555
 Anglian Water (for sewage): 08457 145 145
 Ashcroft Veterinary Surgery: 01954 210250
 Bourn GPs' Surgery: 01954 719313
 Cambridge AIDS help-line: (01223) 508805
 Cambs County Council: 0345 045 5200
 Cambridge Dial a Ride 01223 506335
 Cambridge Water: 01223 706050
 Care Network Cambridgeshire 01954 211919.
 Citizens Advice Bureau: 0844 848 7979
 Comberton GPs' Surgery: 01223 262500
 Comberton Village College: 01223 262503
 Community Warden (Age UK CAP) 07812 495997
 County Councillor: 07402351821
 CVC Community Education: 01223 264721
 District Councillor: 01954 210040
 Household Waste/Pest Control: 0345 045 0063
 Lifespan Health Care, Family and Child Team: 01223 264460
 Member of Parliament: Phone 01223 830037
 Meridian Primary School: 01223 262423
 Police: 101 (Emergencies: 999)
 (Local Beat Officer is PCSO Sam Kennedy)
 Road/Pothole Reporting: 0345 045 5212
 Street Lighting: 0800 7838 247
 Street Cleaning: 03450 450 063
 South Cambs District Council: 03450 450 500
 South Cambs Fire and Rescue: 01480 444 500
 Toft Car Scheme: 262814. If no reply 262708
 Trading Standards: 0345 0455206
 UK Power Networks (Emergencies): 0800 31 63 105



Did you know that we have a book exchange at the village hall?

It is open when the hall is open and is free for us all to use.

Take a look and take a book next time you are there.

If you feel you would like to donate, there is a Barnardo's box on the bar.

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An organisation called '**Stop The Arc**' has asked us to give them a mention. I am guessing that their aims and objectives are fairly self-evident from their name.

They state that they are firmly apolitical (as indeed is this magazine) but clearly their immediate beef is with the current administration and its various proxies.

If you want to know more about them, you can find their website at:

<https://www.noexpressway.org>

**T**he Calendar is always pleased to receive contributions from readers, advertisers and fund raisers. We reserve the right to edit, amend, abridge or otherwise butcher any submissions to accord with technical or editorial requirements, or sometimes just on a whim. We do not normally accept anonymous contributions or those using pen-names.

Contributors are asked to note that all text formatting is removed from items on receipt. Consider **plain text files** as your first choice where possible. **Please avoid proprietary file types (e.g. PDF, PUB, DOCX, XLS etc) unless you feel it essential.** Graphics (if you must) are best submitted as **PNG files**. Many thanks.

*And, finally...*

Please remember that contributions for the next issue of the Calendar must reach the Editor, Michael Walker, **by 20th December**. Many thanks to all who contributed to this edition. Email: [calendareditor@toft.org.uk](mailto:calendareditor@toft.org.uk) Post: 33 Egremont Road, Hardwick, Cambridge CB23 7XR Telephone: 01954 211346