

TOFT VILLAGE CALENDAR

August 2026

EDITORIAL

As this delightful/worrying summer winds languidly onwards and as we all get used to breathing in what feels like warm soup* and worse, sleeping in it too, you may wonder where, if anywhere, to go for a spot of top-notch, expert advice on how to keep both our cool and actually cool at the same time. Forget Google, forget Copilot, ChatGPT and the rest. Because right here in good old Blighty, an organisation that is so much a part of the fabric of the country that it goes almost unnoticed has come up with all the answers that you'll ever need. And as you lie, gently poaching in your favourite chair or bed, prepare for a shock, for it is none other than the good old Red Cross. Yep, the body you thought was there to dole out tea, sympathy and humanitarian miracles (not necessarily in that order) has decided to diversify and has published its very own list of top tips to help sweltering Brits cope.

Putting aside an instinctive distrust of anyone claiming to be an expert on pretty much anything, I fell on this information with a whoop. And to save you the job of wading through it yourself, I can reveal that it would be better titled 'The Complete Thicko's Guide to Not Being Very Hot'. It breezes into its stride by telling us that parts of Britain may be hotter than Barbados on some days this summer. I'm pretty sure you could knock on almost any door in this village and demand to know how hot it is in Barbados right now without getting a necessarily precise answer. It's just a feeling I have. But no need to worry too much. After all, we might not be one of the 'parts of Britain' they mean. You never know, and the Red Cross isn't going to enlighten you, either. Why would they when they have so much more ground-breaking research to share? Did you know, for example, that you could cool down by 'drinking cold water' - and more of it than usual? And if that fails, why not try washing your face or avoiding hot, spicy food? Long shots, I know, but desperate times call for desperate measures. The Red Cross may, I suppose, have heard the nostrum that if you treat people like the remedial infants' class, then sooner or later they will start behaving that way but they have clearly decided it's just some old wives' tale. Because if their next knock-me-down-with-a-feather idea (have a cold shower) doesn't work, they have one last, simply-can't-fail recommendation. Want to know what it is? Brace yourself: Turn Down Your Central Heating. Yep - really. Now that you know, it's so simple, isn't it? Be honest - aren't you just a teeny bit ashamed you didn't think of that yourself? And they say Britain's broken. I'm not so sure. Whilst we have wizards like these amongst us, I reckon Britannia can sleep sound.

*Don't worry - we'll be back to breathing in cold drizzle before you know it.



DIARY DATES

The Parish Council

No meeting in August.
The next meeting is on
7th September at
7.00pm in The People's
Hall. All welcome.

Toft Friendship Club

12th August
A demonstration of
flower arranging
2.30pm at
Toft People's Hall

The Club

The Annual
Club Barbeque is on
Saturday 8th August
8pm at The People's
Hall. Tickets on sale at
the club.

Save the date!

The Toft Beer & Cider
Festival approaches!
This will take place over
the weekend of
4th to 6th September at
The People's Hall

Toft Sports

The fun kicked off with the costume race, men versus women. The women were the victors. There were three legged, skipping, flat, and egg & spoon races for all ages. No one won the slow bicycle race as all contestants were disqualified.

The evens won the tug of war, on account of there being very few in Toft who live in odd numbered houses. Perhaps there is a flaw there that needs to be fixed.

Tom Preece had a spectacular win in the round the village race. Adam Smith won the bale tossing and Lawrence Smith the welly wang. Harvey Mee won the coveted shield. (photo right)

Well done to the winners and to all those who enthusiastically took part.

The afternoon ended with a barbecue and those who still had any energy made their way to watch the England v Norway World Cup match.

Don't miss out next year when it will all happen again (not the football though).



THE CHURCH IN TOFT

St Andrew's Parish Church This church extends a warm ecumenical welcome to all.

Lay Minister	Mrs Barbara Preece 263466
Churchwardens	Mrs Ann Mitchell 262516 Mrs Elizabeth Dolman 262574
Deputy Warden	Jean Verney 263028

SERVICES OF WORSHIP

2nd August

8.30am Holy Communion (BCP)

Revd Prof. Michael Reiss

11.00am Morning Worship

9th August

11.00 am Holy Communion

16th August

8.30am Holy Communion (BCP)

Revd Prof. Michael Reiss

11.00am Morning Worship

Revd Robert Dolman

23rd August

11.00am Holy Communion

Revd Priscilla Slusar

30th August

8.30am Holy Communion (BCP)

Revd Prof. Michael Reiss

10.30am Team Service – Holy Communion – Barton

Revd Charles Fraser & Revd Claire Robertson

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 on Sundays.

Journeys

In May Toft Choir sang evensong one calm, cool Sunday evening. With all these hot days evening has been a blessing and the skies often magnificent.

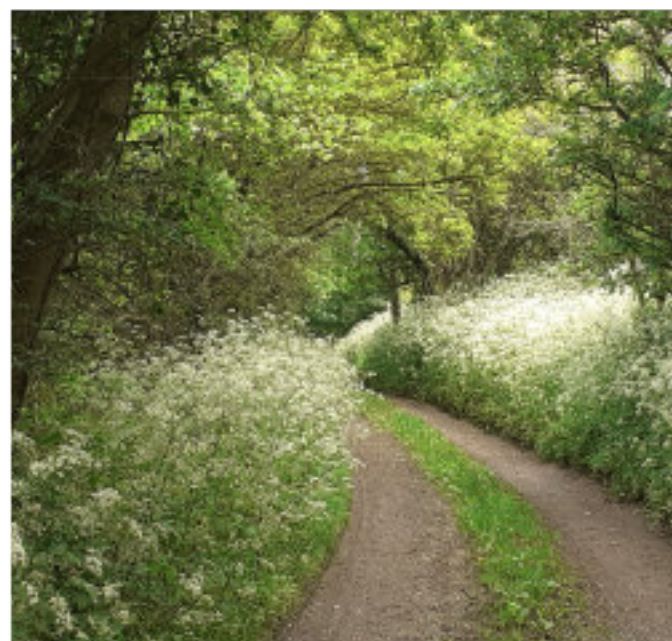
The concert spoke to us of journeys and of late a number of our best-known friends, Toft dwellers, have taken their last journey. In evensong we say, or sing, *Lord now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace*, taken from Luke Chapter 2. Simeon recognises the child Jesus as the saviour sent from God so can depart this world in peace.

We are blessed living in Toft, in such a peaceful place with so many beautiful walks, full of wildlife but also full of activity and creative life. Well done to the Social Club team who won not once but twice. They so magnificently take us from art to gin, from barbecue to quiz, from beer to food (of all sorts), from fun to helping others.

What a great place to live and be thankful.

Concert 28th June St Andrew's Church

Toft Choir and Toft Session gave another wonderful performance, taking us on musical journeys, enjoying a composition by Jake Tebbit. Then after leaving on a jet plane, we took in all manner of journeys with solos, readings, reminders of childhood and songs of our youth. As ever, Janet Tanburn and Toft Session had put together a delightful programme, demonstrating a mix of talents. The concert finished with a glass of Pimms and was free, but the requested donations for the restoration of St Andrew's East Window were generous – thank you. AM





THE CHURCH IN TOFT



The official announcement of our new Team Vicar



The Bishop of Ely is pleased to announce that The Revd Dr Jonathan Richard Kimber, currently Interim Chaplain at King's College, Cambridge, is to be Team Vicar in The Lordsbridge Team.

Jonathan will be licensed by the Bishop of Ely on 8 December 2026.

Jonathan, and his wife Lynne, will be joining us just before Christmas. He will be working part-time and we will be 'sharing' him with Comberton, as well as any contribution he will make to the Lordsbridge Team as a whole. We look forward to them becoming a part of our community

Friendship CLUB

12th August A demonstration of flower arranging by Barbara Tones, 2.30 Toft People's Hall. Not just for ladies!
At our Annual Meeting new appointments were: Barbara Tones - Chairman, Caroline White - Treasurer, Liz Tones - Secretary

The Friendship club is for over 50s. We meet every month on the 2nd Wednesday at 2.30pm at Toft People's Hall; programme followed by tea and biscuits. All welcome.

Death notice

It is with great sadness that we record the death on 16th July of Mrs Lucy Allen of Maple Autumn, High Street - a long-time resident of Toft with her husband Pete and daughters Kirsten and Natasha. She was Brown Owl of 1st Toft Brownies for generations of Brownies, the most beautiful seamstress and a big part of our community. There will be a full obituary next month.



R. JOHN QUENBY 1944 – 2026

John was born the second son of Thomas and Kathleen Quenby. He went to school in Bedford and then went on to Exeter College Oxford, where he read geography. He met and kept life-long friends from school and college.

In 1985 he married Margaret and they had two children, Thomas and Sophia. They celebrated their 40th Ruby wedding last year with friends who had attended their wedding.

When he had to give up full-time farming, Mike Tebbit came to his rescue and has been looking after Wood Barn Farm and Frogs Hall Farm land fantastically well ever since. John worked in the Estates team at Long Road Sixth Form College, where his skill at keeping things mended, his willingness and his cheerful approach made him many friends.

In 2016, having been a member of the PCC, he became a churchwarden and took responsibility for the maintenance of the church fabric and churchyard. Amongst many other tasks, he dealt with the vandalised windows, the south aisle roof, digging numerous holes for the burial of ashes, strimming and so on but his great achievement was the churchyard wall! Not just its rebuilding, but the sense of getting out and doing it gave to a group of people immediately after lockdown, AND this saved many thousands of pounds. Lighting bonfires, moving tables and chairs, serving drinks for concerts - with any job he was always there, cheerfully lending a hand. He was also a major contributor to Toft Historical Society and its bi-annual exhibitions, assisting both with boards and setting up and with skilled research. He will be missed on so many levels.

TOFT PARISH COUNCIL *Who is on the Council?*

The Parish Council is comprised of a Chair and Deputy Chair and up to five other councillors, all of whom are volunteers. Currently these members are:

Chair: Martin Yeadon

01223 263663

cllr.yeadon@tpc.toft.org.uk

Deputy: Elaine Miles

01223262255

cllr.miles@tpc.toft.org.uk

Avril Coghlan

cllr.coghlan@tpc.toft.org.uk

Emma Darbyshire

07763 463234

cllr.darbyshire@tpc.toft.org.uk

William Howling

Contact details to come

Clerk: Ben Stoeher

01954 210241

clerk@tpc.toft.org.uk

The Parish Council represents the residents of Toft and aims to support the welfare and interests of its residents and businesses. Each council member takes responsibilities for specific areas covering Highways, Health and Safety, Footpaths, Lot Meadow, The Recreation and Playground area, The Allotments, Climate Change, The People's Hall, the Defibrillator and Welcome Packs.

If you have a concern, it is far better to come to the meetings to raise it so you get the best advice with more councillors present to advise and the issue is also officially recorded. Residents can raise an issue at the beginning of the meeting, after which they are not obliged to stay for the whole meeting, though they are welcome to do so.

The Council met on Monday 6th July 2026 in The People's Hall.

Next Meeting: As there is no meeting in August, the next meeting will be Monday 7th September at 7.00pm in The People's Hall. All welcome. (Please note: Following the resignation of three members of the Parish Council, we are now short of members. If you are interested in joining the council, please contact a member of the PC to have an informal chat.)

(This summary can be found on the Parish Council website: <https://tpc.toft.org.uk>)

A resident enquired about the progress of the Speed watch group. Cllr Yeadon explained that it had been recently re-formed and was managed by Nick Coles and Andrew Tones. Initially, a request had been made to the police for a speed watch van to be strategically positioned in the village, but the police informed us that they would do this only

when we had acquired evidence to warrant it. The PC, therefore, bought a speed watch gun in order to record speeds, which are sent to the police co-ordinator after each session. THE SPEEDWATCH TEAM WOULD WELCOME MORE VOLUNTEERS SO IF YOU CAN SPARE THE ODD HOUR, PLEASE CONTACT NICK (csw.toft@outlook.com) .

Another resident informed the meeting that there were overgrown weeds on the footpath which runs from School Lane by the side of the car park to the High Street. It was explained that this should have been dealt with by the grass cutters and the Clerk was instructed to contact them.

It was also pointed out by a resident that he had received a letter informing him that School Lane was to be closed between 11th and 13th August but was not given a reason for this, though it was thought to be linked to work being done by Anglia Water to sort out the water problem outside Beldam's Close.

There were no declarations of interest or written requests for dispensations.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

Matters arising

The Chair introduced William Howling, who had sent in an application to join Toft Parish Council, which the PC unanimously agreed indicated a strong commitment to community matters and a wealth of relevant qualifications and experience. The PC was, therefore, extremely pleased to welcome him as a new councillor on the PC. (There is still capacity on the PC for other applications, which would be most welcome.)

The District Councillor, Catherine Hubbard, was in attendance and receipt of her report, which had been sent prior to the meeting, was acknowledged by PC councillors. In her report she had highlighted some of the wider issues occurring in South Cambridgeshire. One was the announcement of the formation of the Greater Cambridge Development Corporation. This will cover the entire area of South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City, amounting to more than 94,000 Hectares. Five out of nine Directors will be government appointments with the minority made of local council leaders and the Peterborough and Cambridgeshire Mayor. All medium to large planning schemes will be handled by Development Corp. More detail will be announced in July. She also flagged that in July the outcome of the consultation on the constitution of the planned unitary authorities expected in Peterborough and Cambridge will be published. Both the City and South Cambridgeshire hope for Option B, which would be coterminous with the Development Corporation. Additionally, there was information about the Local Plan for South Cambridgeshire and the Environmental report for the ward of Hardwick and Toft.

Nearer to home, she has been working with Cllrs Miles and Darbyshire to urge Highways to make significant improvements to the cycle path/ pedestrian way between Toft and Comberton. Despite writing to the landowner and many reports and complaints from Toft PC, Highways have been very reluctant to address this issue but we are now in a position to meet at the site with Mr Tom Tolliday from CCC in the next week or two to show him how dangerous and unacceptable this is as a pedestrian/ cycle pathway.

Cllr Yeadon reported that the Methodist Chapel had been purchased at auction by the Plymouth Brethren, a Christian church. It is hoped that they will be willing for the building to be used by Toft residents for community events but this is yet to be discussed.

Cllr Miles was happy to announce that she had received the required number of responses in favour of the Finding Fitness climbing wall and she will now work with the company to progress this exciting addition to the children's playground.

The RoSPA report was examined at the last meeting and Cllr Yeadon confirmed that the repairs that had been highlighted were either completed or underway.

Regarding repairs and renovations listed during the Assets Walk, these are being organised and will be carried out over the next few weeks.

Following discussions with Tricia Ellis-Evans, who manages Lot Meadow, a suitable picnic table design has been chosen that will be appropriate for this rural setting. It was decided that the two replacement picnic tables would be constructed from recycled plastic, as are those outside TPH, thus making good use of discarded plastic and providing cost-effective and durable replacements to the current dilapidated ones.

The new website and emails, which have had to be commissioned for the PC due to new security regulations issued by the Government, are almost ready and will become live in the next few weeks.

Correspondence

It was confirmed that information received last month regarding the Greater Cambridge Urban Development Corporation (UDC) was noted and no response will be made by Toft PC.

Finance, Procedure and Risk Assessment

The finance report was considered and the payment of bills was approved.

Cllr Miles reported that at the entrance on the public footpath side of the south western gate entering the long field owned by the Harrises, the brambles have become so overgrown that the pathway was now extremely narrow and, as it is bordered by a ditch, dangerous. This is not the responsibility of the Harrises but of the landowner of the field beyond and the Clerk has been instructed

to contact them with a view to radically cutting back the hedge.

Cllr Miles also reported that the footpath in the field leading from the bridge on the B1046 towards Kingston was almost obliterated by vegetation and the Clerk will be writing to Kingston PC.

There were no other matters regarding members' items. However, Cllr Miles raised the suggestion from a resident of a zebra crossing being positioned outside the children's play area. Cllr Darbyshire informed the meeting that zebra crossings had been discussed with Highways in the past and that the High Street did not meet the criteria as a zebra crossing needs to be extremely visible to drivers – which means along a straight road with no bends or parked cars in the vicinity.

Cllr Darbyshire is continuing to pursue with Highways the replacement of various signs around the village, some of which have already been replaced, and the cutting back of hedges such as near the bus shelter and on the bend of Brookside and Church Road.

The meeting closed at 8.50pm.

Free to a Good Home

There are approximately forty chairs, formerly used in the Methodist Chapel, available to anyone who wants them. They can be disposed of either as a lot or individually. These are comfortable, sturdy, upholstered chairs (see illustration) beech-framed (we think). However, they do not stack and if they were to be used in a public arena would need treating with a fire-retardant spray.

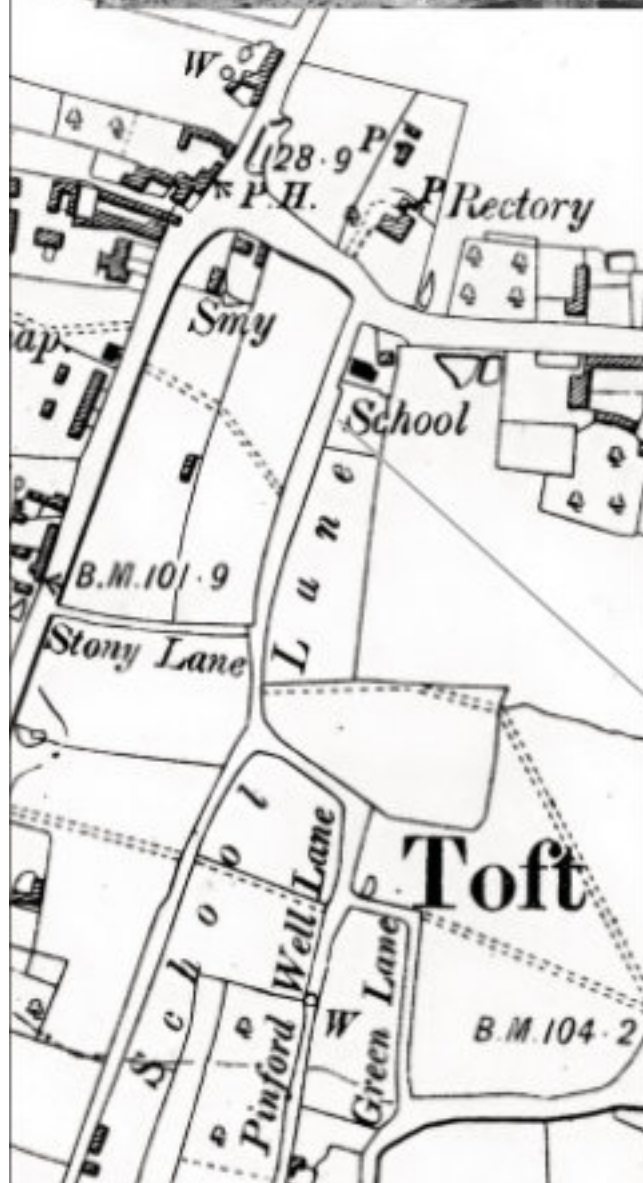
Contact Ann Mitchell (ann@mitchella.ndonet.com or 262516) or Jean Verney (263028) if interested.



Toft 1895

PART 6

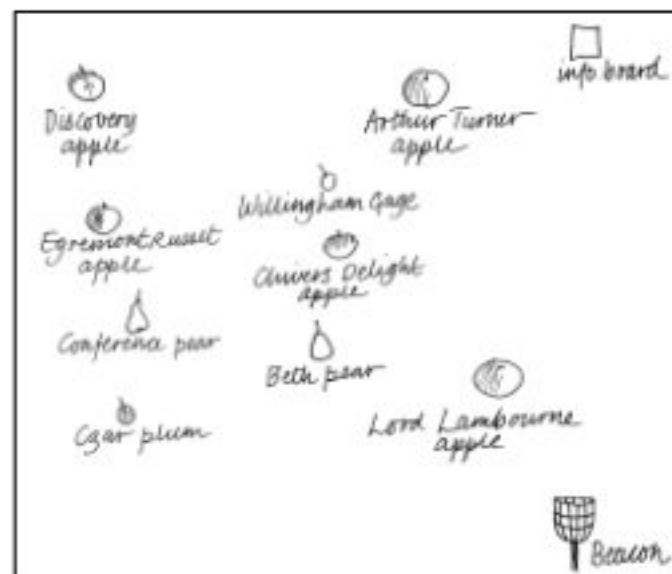
We continue our serialised extracts from May Creek's handwritten memoir of Toft as it was in 1895. This month's extract takes us to Comberton Road and the old rectory, the schoolhouse (now the People's Hall) and the Toft Institute, which used to stand at the beginning of School Lane.



Now is the rectory, which was built before I went to school. On going to see it under construction with an aunt and uncle from London. The one thing that impressed me was the number of bells hanging on the kitchen wall. The first rector in the new house was a Reverend Robinson, a young couple with a tiny baby, who did not stay long for health reasons (T.B. I think). Then there was the Reverend Shaw, who was very popular with the Methodists. He was in those days very low church and had prayer meetings in the school as he was not allowed to take a service in the Chapel. Then in my early school days, the church welcomed the Reverend Orbell; here for the non-conformists was trouble. The rest is another tale. In the schoolhouse, Miss Veall, a Cornish woman, an excellent school mistress but she was sharp. I was scared stiff of her for many years. It was only after two years with her at the Chapel (Toft British School) that I realised her value as a teacher and as a friend. The teacher under Miss Veall in those days was Betsy. She was a dear, so kind to the little ones and with her handicap. She had a cork leg and walked with the aid of a stick. I suppose she was grateful for this addition to her income for she was paid five shillings a week. Toft school was a church school. There were no houses in this part of School Lane; they were built in the early 1900s. There was the Institute, built from a trust left to be administered by the church. Meetings were often controlled, what type of meeting could be held in the institute, by the views of the rector.



RIPENING FRUIT IN LOT MEADOW



Lot Meadow Orchard Layout (not to scale)

This year's weather has resulted in some of the fruit ripening early. Below is a guide.

Discovery – ripe in August but doesn't keep so should be picked and eaten.

Egremont Russet – usually ripe in October.

Conference Pear – usually in October/November.

Czar – ripening as this goes to press.

Willingham Gage – ripens in August but no fruit this year.

Chivers Delight – This tree is laden with fruit but not usually ready to pick until October.

Beth – ripe by end of August but not much fruit on it this year.

Arthur Turner – ripe late August to early November. A sweet cooker which requires little sugar.

Lord Lambourne – ripe mid-September.

Lot Meadow belongs to the village and so do the fruit trees. Several trees were completely cleared in one fell swoop last summer including our greengage tree. I received a number of complaints as this was the first year that this tree produced any fruit. We were waiting for the fruit to ripen and then it was suddenly all gone. Later in the season I encountered two small boys with a small wooden ladder and 2 buckets full of unripened fruit. This is not how we do things in Toft. Please help yourselves but do please leave some for other residents.

Tricia Ellis Evans

Toft Club News

We start the month on Saturday 1st with our **Slow Session Night**: an evening of informal music for beginners and experts alike. The evening starts with slower tunes for beginners and then moves up a pace for the remainder of the evening. It's a great night to take part in or come along and listen to. New players are always welcome.

Then it's the **Annual Club Barbeque** on Saturday 8th - enjoy a fabulous barbeque and dessert for just £12. This is always a very popular event so get your ticket early!



August film night is on Saturday 22nd, showing the film postponed from June: the 2026 Best Picture Oscar winner **One Battle After Another**, starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Sean Penn. Washed-up revolutionary Bob (DiCaprio) exists in a state of stoned paranoia, surviving off-grid with his spirited, self-reliant daughter, Willa. When his evil nemesis resurfaces after 16 years and she goes missing, the former radical scrambles to find her, father and daughter both battling the consequences of his past. Doors open at 7:30 and the film starts promptly at 8pm.

Toft Art takes a break in August but returns in September. Our other regular events continue this month with **Toft Quiz** on Thursday 13th and **Carpet Bowls** on Friday 14th. Our very popular monthly **Open Mic / Music Night** is on Saturday 15th.

A date for your diary: the **Toft Beer & Cider Festival** approaches! This will take place over the weekend of 4th to 6th September – expect all the usual delights of a range of beers and ciders, wonderful food, good music and great company.

The Club is always open every Thursday and Friday evening from 8pm, plus most Saturday evenings and there is always a warm welcome where you can meet up with friends and enjoy a drink.

Keep up to date here:

Website: <https://toft.club>

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

LALBAGH, BOURN

a bijou restaurant specialising in Bengali and Indian cuisine



The last time the eating-machine known as ForkTalk descended on Lalbagh, neighbouring Bourn's up-market curry house, it numbered among its ranks a heretic who - and here I quote - was 'not that fond of curry'. That this self-same recusant came away cooing encomiums to anyone who'd listen says much for the place and the dishes it serves. But that was a few years ago. Since when Lalbagh has garlanded itself with awards and honours and is now a 'curry house' in the same way that The Savoy is a flophouse. In truth, it's far better described as a bijou restaurant specialising in Bengali and Indian cuisine.

But that's all by-and-by. Be it never so fêted, would it continue to garner plaudits from the forensic tastebuds of our crack team? For those new to the area, or those who have criminally forgotten what we said last time, Lalbagh is easy enough to find and I'm guessing most readers will know where it is. If you don't, then just turn into Bourn from your preferred direction and keep driving down the main drag (Alms Hill) until you see it, perched on a small embankment and surrounded by nothing much. The car park - adequate but not huge - is immediately to your right as you approach the building. As you enter, you find yourself in the bar/reception area, beyond which is the dining section. Not huge; I'd say around a dozen tables, each sitting four comfortably, or maybe six at a pinch. In at least one regard, it hadn't changed a bit since our last visit: Lalbagh is very good at being pleased to see you. All the staff do spot-on impersonations of folks whose evening would have been ruined if you hadn't shown up. This costs them absolutely nothing but makes you feel you've made a shrewd, sophisticated move in choosing the place. It's a neat trick and a win-win manoeuvre - other

establishments, take note.

We'd booked a table and I suggest you do, too. The restaurant isn't huge and it doesn't take a vast tsunami of guests to fill it. Once you're seated, the staff are attentive without being intrusive and very happy to expound on the menu for us clueless types. I'm glad they did, too, because it prodded me out of my curry-comfort zone, away from the Jalfrezi and Rogan Goshts of yore and towards a dish featuring rhubarb with sea-bass which, when it appeared, was downright delicious. It isn't a combination that would have occurred to me in a dozen years and whether it originated as a happy accident or a flight of genius is not for me to say. But try it. I think you'll like it. The satisfied lip-smacking and the happy silence of folks concentrating on eating, not talking, from the rest of our little gang told me all I needed to know about the food. Back when we first reviewed Lalbagh, a rarely used epithet was applied to the grub here: Sublime. It was justified then and it still is today. This is the best curry you'll find in the neighbourhood by a country-mile.

Sure, they stick to tradition in some ways. You start with a tray of pickles and relishes and a few papadums to jab into them. And yes, the Kingfisher and Cobra lager pumps are all present and correct. But it's the food that makes or breaks any eatery and this place elevates even the humble naan bread into 'how-do-they-do-that?' territory. Now, all this comes at a price. Lalbagh is not cheap, nor would I expect it to be. But it's special food and it's worth the money. For guidance, four of us blew a hundred and seventy quid there. This did include drinks, but not a gratuity.



Butterfly Bonanza

This summer's heatwave may be driving us all indoors to escape the searing heat but outside in the sweltering garden there's a profusion of colour and activity dancing before our eyes. Butterflies. Have you ever seen so many?

Butterflies start appearing in the late spring. The first are the dainty **orange tips** and the male **brimstones** roaring around the garden searching out hidden females. They are the pathfinders.

Now it's July and in the uninterrupted sunshine we have a proliferation. The dominant butterfly in our garden is the ubiquitous **meadow brown**. Clusters of them feed on the lavender and other summer flowers. Not a colourful butterfly but their upper wing patch eye is distinctive and, I guess, a warning to predators. Interspersed with the meadow browns you have the smaller, duller **ringlets**, the vibrant **skippers**, **blues** and of course plenty of **small whites**. Not to be outdone there's a hatch of **gatekeepers**, like meadow browns but smaller and more brightly coloured.

Interspersed among all these browns who will lay their eggs on grasses, you have some more colourful specimens like the magnificently garbed **peacock** and the more common **small tortoiseshell** and even the resplendent **red admiral**. This year, for the first time in these parts I have seen a few **marbled whites**. We are on the edge of their normal territory.

But pride of place must go to the exquisitely beautiful **painted lady**. He or she has come all the way from North Africa to drink of our garden's nectar. Almost impossible to imagine such a dainty insect flying 2,000 miles over mountains and seas for its next meal! But see them on the wing, such strong fliers, and it's not a surprise.

This summer's heat may be unbearable for us humans but for other little people in God's creation, it's heaven!

Jocelyn Waller Toft, 11 July 2026



British Garden Butterflies Of The UK Identification Print



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**

Fire service highlights dangers of open water

It's every parent's worst nightmare: a phone call to say their child is missing in water.

Statistics show that child drowning deaths in England have doubled since 2019-20. Between April 2019 and March 2024, a total of 165 children lost their lives to drowning.

Our crews attended 38 water rescues last year (between April 2025 and March 2026). That compares with 32 the previous year and a five-year average of 34.

There were nine in-water deaths, compared with seven the previous year. Teenagers aged between 13 and 17 have the highest drowning rate of any age group.

Help keep your home and family fire safe – complete our online home safety check

Our online home safety check helps you carry out your own fire risk assessment and is a simple way to help reduce risks and keep your home safe from fire. It

takes you through some simple questions about you and your home, then provides an action plan that you can download and print. You can fill it in for yourself or a member of your family that might need help.

Visit https://bit.ly/Home_Safety_Check to find out more and start your online home safety check.

- Dispose of garden waste using either a local waste pick up service or take it to a local recycling centre.
- Do not light a bonfire!
- Ensure cigarettes are completely out.
- Do not leave glass bottles lying on the ground – the sun's rays reflect through the glass and can start a fire

If you are planning to have a BBQ:

- Use barbeques on a hard, flat surface away from grass, shrubs or fencing.
- Put disposable barbeques on bricks, do not place directly on grass.



Arthur Rank Hospice Charity

Summer Super Draw for Hospice Care

Each ticket costs just £2 and helps support patients and their families with comfort, dignity and specialist care. Join in (before Friday 28 August). **You can play online at arhc.org.uk/raffle or call 01223 675888 for paper tickets.**

Charity Walk around Cambridge colleges

Sunday 13 September: the 'Bridge the Gap' Walk around Cambridge colleges starting from Parkers Piece in Cambridge. **Book now at arhc.org.uk/btg or telephone 01223 676888.** Up to three under 16s are free with every paying adult.

Fill a Bag for £5 Event

We will be hosting another sale on **Friday 9 and Saturday 10 October** and would like to thank the 500 plus people who came along to the April event. Over £2,500 was raised. **Visit arhc.org.uk/fillabag for more information.**

Fair Funding for Hospice Care

CEO, Sharon Allen and Inpatient Unit Ward Manager, Jenny Oakes joined other hospice leaders in Westminster on 15 April to deliver a letter to the Prime Minister to call for fair funding for hospice care. Six in 10 hospices have or are planning service cuts and the current situation is not sustainable. It will cost over £14.7 million to run Arthur Rank Hospice services in 2026/27. Contracted services from the NHS are budgeted at £7.4 million. They need to raise a further £7.3 million. They are extremely grateful to everyone who demonstrates their dedication, commitment and generosity and helps protect their funding for the future. Visit arhc.org.uk/poc for more information.

Have you written your Will?

Arthur Rank Hospice Charity has paired with the National Free Farewills Network to make writing your Will easier. **For more information visit arhc.org.uk/GIW or telephone 01223 675881.**

Bereavement Support

Arthur Rank Hospice Charity hosts a 'Grief Kind Space' bereavement support group every Friday from 10am to midday in their Bistro. The session is open for anyone who would like to talk to someone about grief and meet others in similar situations. **For more information visit arhc.org.uk/griefkind or telephone 01223 675777.**

Seniors

Holiday Club



Butterflies
Wednesday 2nd Sept
10am - 4pm

£10 to include lunch and tea

Arts and crafts, wood work, board games, film club, bingo or just relax with a newspaper or a jigsaw

To include an interesting talk on butterflies. There will also be lunch, a short time of Christian worship and a tea.

Oasis takes place at Comberton Baptist Church, Green End

For details and booking call 07967 500134 or email oasis@c-b-c.org.uk

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Wildlife Trust for Beds, Cambs & Northants

Wildlife Trust BCN August Update

When our planet is handed over to the next generation, we need young people who are knowledgeable and passionate about local wildlife and sustainability. These people will ensure wildlife continues to thrive, for its own sake, and also for the role it has in human survival. We need wilder green spaces for our health, we need pollinators and functioning soil for our crops, shade from trees, clean water, and leaky dams and spongy soils to slow the flow. This year, our annual celebration of young people and conservation runs from Saturday 15th August to Sunday 23rd August 2026 and includes a mix of activities for 11–25-year-olds who love wildlife. Youth Week is an opportunity for young people to experience new activities, get outdoors, and meet like-minded people. Local events can be found on our website: wildlifebcn.org/events

Local enquiries

Rebecca.Neal@wildlifebcn.org

Facebook: @BeccaBadgerWTBCN

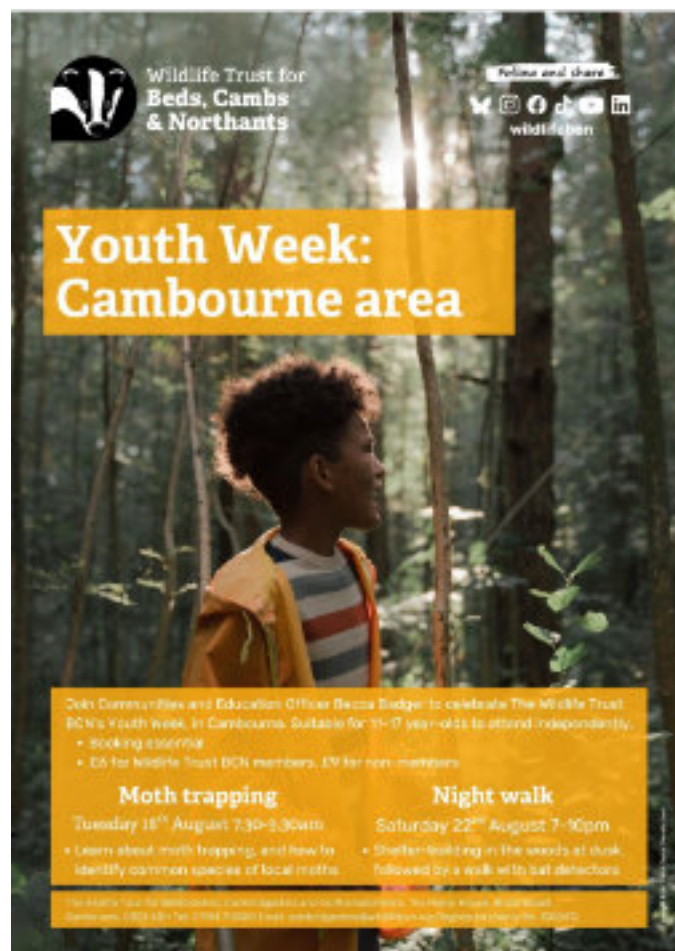
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www.wildlifebcn.org



**Wildlife Trust for
Beds, Cambs
& Northants**

Join Communities and Education Officer Becca Badger to celebrate The Wildlife Trust BCN's Youth Week, in Cambourne, suitable for 11–25 year-olds to attend independently.

- Looking for a challenge
- £5 for Wildlife Trust BCN members, £9 for non-members

Moth trapping	Night walk
Tuesday 18 th August 7.30–9.30am	Saturday 22 nd August 7–9pm
• Learn about moth trapping, and how to identify common species of local moths	• Shelter-building in the woods at dusk followed by a walk with bat detectors

Wildlife Trust for Beds, Cambs & Northants is a registered charity, No. 1045040. Registered office: 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

NATURE DIARY

Survival of the Fittest?

The nest box is on a north-facing wall, less than a metre away from a thick hedge. Close – but perhaps not close enough?

Mid-June: it was a day of heavy cloud, electricity in the air threatening worse to come. There was activity at the box, the parent birds dropping in frequently with food. One dominant chick filled the access hole, others pushing hard from behind – so hard that after a while it fell out, clinging frantically to the bottom edge of the hole. It managed at first to beat its way back into the box, but after another tussle, chick no.1 was banished irretrievably from the nest, clinging precariously onto the bush below.

Overhead the clouds were growing ever more black, rumbles of thunder could be heard and distant flashes lit the heavens. Down on earth, the battle for survival – or imminent disaster – continued. In just a few short minutes, each in turn, five too-young wrens tumbled from the box and disappeared into the foliage.

At that crucial moment, the storm hit: fierce gusts flung sheets of water across the garden, lightning flashed, thunder rolled; and the slow-moving atmosphere meant the rain continued for quite some time, soaking the ground, even the normally dry soil beneath the hedge. Did those five very tiny chicks survive? Who knows, and though evidence was never found to suggest that they didn't, it's hard to believe that they did.

But then ... good news! Two days later, shrill demands for food were heard coming not from the hedge but from the box once more. Parents were in attendance and soon, very soon, the remaining two (or maybe even three) of those former runts which had remained to shelter in the box, finally and happily fledged, with now stronger wings and stout hearts.

Is there a moral here ('first shall be last...' etc.) – or is it simply that it's events such as these that drive small birds in particular to produce large broods, in the certain knowledge (or instinct) that not all can or will survive?





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A CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

We hope you're enjoying Toft Village Calendar and all the usual content. We always welcome contributions from readers for any of the features we include, such as 'What I'm Reading' (let people know in just a few sentences, 50-100 words, what you're reading and why you're enjoying it – or disliking it). We'd also welcome suggestions for new features. And if you'd like to write a guest editorial, we'll consider contributions of 300-500 words on any topic. Naturally, we reserve the right to not publish any offensive, politically-biased or inappropriate material; otherwise, feel free to offer a view of the world that would interest Calendar readers. Send all contributions and ideas to calendareditor@toft.org.uk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CALENDAR

The Calendar is always pleased to receive contributions from readers 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. Please send your written contributions as Word documents, if possible, or just plain text. Send any photos, art or illustrations in a separate document.

Photographs are best submitted as JPEG files. Graphics as SVG or PNG.

Please avoid sending PDFs unless you have no other option. Please ALWAYS send your contributions to calendareditor@toft.org.uk - never to an individual member of the editorial and design team.

Many thanks.

And, finally... Please remember that contributions for the next issue of the Calendar must reach the Editor by 18th August.

Many thanks to all who contributed to this edition.

Email: calendareditor@toft.org.uk

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