

Toft Village Calendar

December 2025



DIARY DATES

The Parish Council

The next meeting will be on Monday 1st December.

St Andrew's Church

Christmas tree festival
6th -7th December

Toft Friendship Club

Christmas Party
10th December
2.30pm at
Toft People's Hall

Christmas concert

Toft Choir and
Toft Session
St Andrew's Church
on Saturday 13th
December at 4pm

Christmas at the Café

Wednesday 17th
December from
10.30am at
Toft People's Hall

Ric Mar Christmas Entertainment

at The Club Saturday
20th December

GUEST EDITORIAL

This month, the editorial comes from our regular contributor, Robert Longhurst (School Lane). If you have an idea for an editorial (300-400 words), please send it to us at calendareditor@toft.org and we will consider it for publication. Please note that we will not publish anything of a politically partisan or sectarian nature.

Is Toft a Milking Stool Village?

What a strange question! Let me explain, but before I do, I would like to give the humble milking stool a boost. It first appears in its present form in the paintings in the tombs of ancient Egypt, which makes the design about 5,000 years old. Then there is the recognition given by the Swiss aerobatic team. While the Red Arrows are performing 'the Swan', 'Concorde' and such like, the Swiss perform the 'Milking stool'. So what? you say. What is so special about a such a



humble item of agricultural furniture? That's easy to answer. It has three legs, which means it stands firm and secure even on an uneven surface. Then there is a second question which many people ask. Why does Toft punch so far above its weight? Toft is smaller than its neighbours but competes and often exceeds them!

My theory is because Toft feels secure, the village works from a firm base.

Toft has three main organisations or institutions, which provide the life of the community.

They are, in no particular order: The Church in Toft, Toft Shop, Toft People's Hall.

These are the three legs on which the village stands, providing the firm secure base, promoting the confidence to punch so hard.

The Church in Toft, in addition to all the religious services, plays host to so many functions such as lectures, exhibitions, concerts, Christmas festivals, music and choral practice, a warm hub and many, many more.

Toft Shop, which is open every day, provides not only the staple goods we all need but in addition, it is where information is exchanged and is a meeting place for villagers to gossip (very important).

Toft People's Hall is home to endless activities but includes the Club with a regular bar, film nights, quiz and food nights, top class music groups, the beer festival, the Schoolroom café, the Warm Hub, as well as being a venue for meetings, classes, special interest groups, wakes and wedding breakfasts. The list could go on but you get the picture.

Of course, it's not the *buildings* which provide that punch. It is the dedicated teams of volunteers who give Toft its special atmosphere.

So, to sum up, I say Toft performs as it does, punching well above its weight, because there is a feeling of security and confidence and, in my view, TOFT definitely IS a milking stool village.

Robert Longhurst

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Friendship CLUB 10th December Christmas Party – panto, carols, games and of course our Chocolate 'Draw'.

This will not be a raffle so all can join in, but we do need everyone to bring a chocolate parcel, not large or extravagant but wrapped up. This year, there will be a small charge to cover costs, rather than bringing food individually.

The Friendship Club is for over 50s. We meet every month on the 2nd Wednesday at 2.30pm at Toft People's Hall. Visitors always welcome.
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THE CHURCH IN TOFT

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

Assistant Curate Revd Barnabas Leeke 07787 800 888
Lay Minister Mrs Barbara Preece 263466
Churchwardens Mrs Ann Mitchell 262516
Mrs Elizabeth Dolman 262574
Deputy Wardens John Quenby 263949
Jean Verney 263557

SERVICES OF WORSHIP

6th/7th December

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL WEEKEND - see note right

8.30am Holy Communion (BCP)

Revd Prof. Michael Reiss

3.00pm St Andrew's, Christingle, Tree and Gift service

Barbara Preece, Revd Barnabas Leeke

14th December

11.00am Holy Communion

Revd Barnabas Leeke

21st December

8.30am Holy Communion (BCP)

Revd Prof. Michael Reiss

4.00pm CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT - lessons and carols

Revd Barnabas Leeke

24th December

11.30pm Midnight Communion

Revd Barnabas Leeke

25th December CHRISTMAS DAY

9.30am A short service of celebration

Revd Robert Dolman, Mrs Ann Mitchell

28th December No Service in Toft

9.30am Morning Prayer – Dry Drayton

10.30am Holy Communion – Comberton

4th January

8.30am Holy Communion (BCP)

Revd Prof. Michael Reiss

11.00am Covenant Service

Revd Robert Dolman

Wednesday morning prayer at St Andrew's will be on Wednesday 3rd and 17th at 9.30am but not on 10th, 24th or 31st.

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 on Sundays.

MEETING ID: 823 1147 36

WEDNESDAY 10TH DECEMBER There will be NO access to the church or churchyard that day as major work is being done to three of the lime trees.

Find some moments of peace during Advent

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. Luke 2.4-5

Each year in Toft we run an 'Advent Course', which is really just an opportunity to meet with other people in the runup to Christmas and talk to each other about the meaning of Christmas in a deeper way than is possible in a standard carol service. By the time you get this, it will probably have already started on Thursday mornings at 10am (first is 27th November), but you can join in any of the four sessions, so just drop me a line if you'd like to come along.

This year we are looking at the different narratives that make up the Christmas story, lives of ordinary people that were transformed by an encounter with God and their lives overlapping with that of Jesus. It's undeniable that the life of Jesus has changed the world and resonates all the way down the centuries to us today, and so we will be thinking about how our own lives intersect or reflect the stories of those we meet in the Christmas narrative.

Advent was traditionally a period of fasting and waiting, but there is nothing of that now in the frantic rush of activity that precedes the modern festival. I encourage you, in whatever way feels right to you, to find some moments of peace and reflection in the coming weeks. You would be very welcome to share them with those of us meeting on Thursday mornings and you will also be very welcome at the celebrations happening at St Andrew's this year. I look forward to seeing you there.

God bless

Barnabas





THE CHURCH IN TOFT



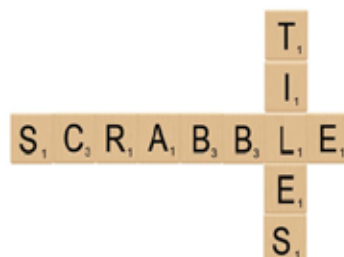
The WARM HUB is meeting every Monday

from 10.00 to 12.00 at Toft People's Hall.



Come and join us for chat, games, friendship
and refreshment, all for free.

We would love to see you there -
you'll be guaranteed a warm welcome.
Feel free to bring a friend.



CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

6th — 7th December

We would like to fill the church with trees!

Help us to do this as a group, a family or as an individual.

Please see the flyer for details and be sure to let Barbara know you plan to decorate one.



THE CHURCH WILL BE OPEN SATURDAY, 6th 12 noon - 3.00pm

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

The Festival will end with a short, joyful Christingle Service at 3.00pm on Sunday in St Andrew's,
followed by a drink and mince pies.



TOFT SHOP regular and holiday opening times

Thank you for all the tremendous support and encouragement from customers and friends of Toft Shop during 2025. This is much appreciated.

CHRISTMAS essentials

We have Christmas cards, wrapping paper and gift bags. Not to forget sellotape and stamps.
All practically on your doorstep.

POST OFFICE Regular opening hours are:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday 8.30am – 5.00pm

Wednesday and Saturday 8.00am – 1.00pm

Sunday 8.00am – 12.00pm

Please check online for post office key posting dates
for international destinations as well as local.

ANNUAL closing dates for 2025/26

**We will be on our annual holiday and will be closed
from Monday 22nd December 2025 and reopening
7.00am Monday 5th January 2026.**

Looking forward to seeing you in Toft Shop soon.

**Jenny & Justin and our fantastic team of young
assistants**

TOFT PARISH COUNCIL

Who is on the Council?

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

	Phone	E-mail
Chair:		
Martin Yeadon	263663	cllr.yeadon@tpc.toft.org.uk
Deputy:		
Elaine Miles	262255	cllr.miles@tpc.toft.org.uk
Avril Coghlan		cllr.coghlan@tpc.toft.org.uk
Emma Darbyshire	07763 463234	cllr.darbyshire@tpc.toft.org.uk
Rebecca Harris	07796 176333	cllr.harris@tpc.toft.org.uk
Giles Harrison		cllr.harrison@tpc.toft.org.uk
Sarah Tebbit		cllr.tebbit@tpc.toft.org.uk
Clerk:		
Ben Stoehr	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.

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

The Parish Council met on 3rd November 2025 at 7.00pm and held The Annual Meeting of William Eversden's Charity (Allotments) followed by the monthly meeting of Toft Parish Council. The next meeting of the William Eversden's Charity will be in 6 months' time and the next Parish Council Meeting will be 1st December 2025. All are welcome to attend.

The meeting opened with the **William Eversden's Charity**. Cllr Tebbit sent her apologies for absence from both meetings.

The minutes of the previous William Eversden's Charity meeting were approved. There were no interests expressed and no matters arising; the meeting closed at 7.10pm.

The **Toft Parish Council** meeting opened with a comment by a resident about overhanging vegetation on Comberton Road near the bus shelter and in School Lane. It was agreed that a request for homeowners to keep their hedges under control would be put in the Calendar, though it was acknowledged that this had been done before to no avail.

Another resident raised the problem of roadworks in the area. It was agreed the Parish Council would write to our County Councillor about this.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

Cllr Darbyshire confirmed that she had been in touch with the landowner of the Home Meadow, who agreed to meet with the PC on 7th November to discuss the wording and placement of signs regarding dogs.

Regarding the youths riding at high speed on motorcycles, Cllr Darbyshire reported that Comberton PC have CCTV cameras at the recreation ground, where youths tend to congregate, and that this has helped them catch some of the offenders. Cllr Darbyshire is arranging a meeting with Comberton PC to discuss this further.

Cllr Harrison reported that the best option for the new bench near the allotments will be to attach new brackets to the four legs, which will be concreted in.

Cllr Yeadon reported that a resident has expressed an interest in restarting the Speed Watch Group and has been asked to draw up a proposal. In light of this, further investigation of acquiring a new speed camera will be on hold until the Group is re-established.

Cllr Yeadon confirmed that an article he had sent to the Calendar regarding requests for nominations for the Village Hero scheme was accidentally not published; the Editor has apologised. The Social Club committee added it to their email newsletter.

Correspondence regarding speeding in School Lane has been received. **The Parish Council urges everyone to obey the 20mph signs that were erected at either end of School Lane at considerable PC expense.**

It was reported that the owners of the Methodist Church have given notification of their intention to dispose of this asset. It was agreed that the PC would register our interest in purchasing it.

It was agreed that the PC had no comments on the Street Trading Policy consultation.

Cambridgeshire County Council has sent out requests for volunteers for the 'gritting scheme'. This would require someone to put grit onto the pavements in the event of a hard frost. A machine and training is provided. If any resident is interested in volunteering, please contact the PC.

The Finance report and payment of bills were approved.

CAMBRIDGE CARBON FOOTPRINT Thermal imaging for a cosier home in cambs

We are offering residents and organizations the opportunity to borrow a thermal imaging camera for free. Join a one-hour online training session to learn how to interpret thermal images and make your home more energy efficient.

Thermal Imaging Training Dates:

Wed 3rd December 7:30-8:30pm

Wed 7th January 7:30-8:30pm

Mon 9th February 7:30-8:30pm

We only lend cameras to people who have attended the training. Loan periods are Fri pm to Mon am, or Mon pm to Fri am. Cameras can be picked up from one of 18 volunteer camera hosts around South Cambs and Cambridge City.

Contact Fran Sutton:

fran@cambridgecarbonfootprint.org

Tel: 07713841391

Toft Choir and Toft Session Christmas concert

Angelic Choirs



and Earthly Delights



Saturday 13th December at 4pm

St Andrew's Church, Toft

Admission free

Music approx. 1 hour followed by mulled wine and mince pies

Donations welcome for refreshments, with surplus proceeds going to St Andrew's Fabric Fund

Christmas in the Café



Our last Café session before Christmas will be held on Wednesday 17th December, when, as usual, we will celebrate the festive season in style!

In addition to our usual array of homemade soups and cakes, we'll have mince pies, mulled wine, a special visitor to the 'Funtime' children and if we're not too full by then, we hope to sing a few carols, aided by some members of Toft choir.

Look forward to seeing you there.

Finally, a big thank you to all the volunteers who have baked, cooked and served throughout the year to make the Café a great place to be!

Please note: WE ARE CLOSED ON DECEMBER 24TH AND 31ST, RE-OPENING ON JANUARY 7TH.

Help your local community – become an on-call firefighter!

Cambridgeshire Fire and Rescue Service is looking to recruit more on-call firefighters to help local communities by responding to emergencies.

On-call firefighters are a vital part of your fire and rescue service. They respond to a wide range of incidents, from fighting fires and attending road traffic collisions to rescuing people and animals in need. They also respond to medical emergencies.

Being an on-call firefighter has many benefits. As well as being paid an annual wage and for the time spent at incidents or training, there are also opportunities to develop first aid skills and heavy goods vehicle driving qualifications.

Find out more about becoming an on-call firefighter by visiting our website: <https://bit.ly/CFRSONcall>



Toft Club News

We have a busy month coming up in The Club – we hope to see you in the run up and over the festive period.

We start the month with the **Slow Session** on Saturday 6th – a chance to play or listen to live traditional music in an informal setting. The bar opens at 8pm. Free entry.

The world-famous **Club Christmas Dinner** is on Saturday 13th – there may still be some tickets left by the time you read this! Price is just £11 – available from the bar.

Saturday 20th December sees the return of the legendary **RicMar Christmas Entertainment Evening** – a mix of music (including a sing-along), comedy and video to get you in the festive mood! Free entry – doors open at 7:00pm for a prompt 7:30pm start.

The Annual **Christmas Draw** is 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, when we will be open from 8pm, with the draw at 9pm, followed by nibbles. Come along and welcome in Christmas with us.

We are open on **Christmas Day lunchtime** this year – from 12 noon to 2pm – a chance for a pre-Christmas Dinner drink and to meet up with friends. First drink free for members!

The **December film** will be on Saturday 27th, when we will be showing the 2025 release *The Ballad of Wallace Island*. This British comedy, starring Tim Key and Tom Basden, tells the story of an eccentric lottery winner, who lives alone on a remote island and tries to make his fantasies come true by getting his favourite musicians to perform at his home. Doors open at 7:30pm and the film starts promptly at 8pm. Film Club membership is £12 for the year (due in January for most members) or evening membership is £3.00.

We are having a party and dinner on **New Year's Eve** to welcome in 2026. The evening will start with a meal prepared by Carol, tickets are £16 and on sale now at The Club. Then from 10pm, music will start to welcome in the New Year.

Our regular events are taking place in December: **Toft Art** is on Thursday 4th, **Toft Quiz** on Thursday 11th, **Carpet Bowls** on Friday 12th and then **Toft Bingo** earlier than normal on Thursday 18th. Please note: there is no Toft Art in January 2026.

And don't forget, there will be a **Murder Mystery Dinner** on 31st January 2026.

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:

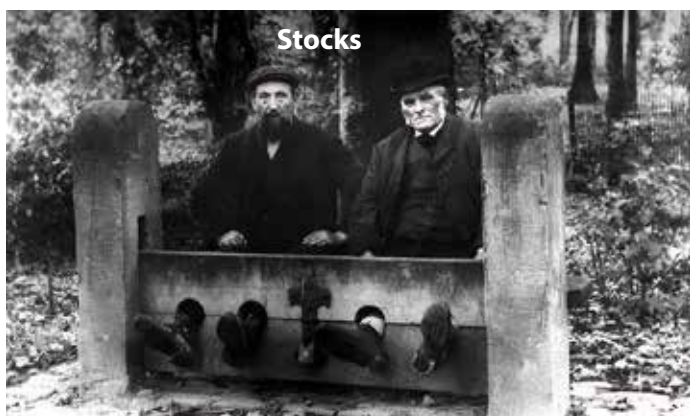
Website: <https://toft.club>

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

Parish Constables

Before the creation of the Cambridgeshire Constabulary in late 1851 as a police service for the entire county, policing in communities such as Toft were the responsibility of Parish Constables. Records indicate that around 1819 Toft had two Parish Constables, William Basely and John Newman. In 1833 a parish constable with the surname Male was responsible for policing the parish.

The office of Parish Constable (or Petty Constable) was a law enforcement role dating back centuries, usually unpaid and part-time, and serving a civil parish from which they drew their powers. The Constable was chosen by parishioners and was expected to present indicted individuals from the parish to the courts for trial. They were also expected to try to prevent crime within their parish. For example, they were among those people with authority to 'read the Riot Act' (an Act of Parliament, 1714) and were indeed expected to do so if a riotous assembly (more than 12 people) arose in their parish.



The Constable further had general responsibility for the local stocks and the pillory, which were used to punish vagabonds and beggars but also the like of poachers, drunks, hedge-damagers, prostitutes, church-avoiders, and fathers of children born out of wedlock. As if this were not enough, Parish Constables could also be required to monitor trading standards and pubs, catch rats, restrain loose animals, light signal beacons, provide local lodging and transport for the military, perform building control, attend inquests and collect parish rates. They were even responsible on occasion for collecting national taxes within their area.

Acts of Parliament in 1829 and 1839 gradually led to the end of most non-professional constabulary. However, the voluntary nature of the County Police Act 1839 meant that change proceeded in a piecemeal fashion with Cambridgeshire only joining in 1851. The role of the Parish Constable in Toft officially ended in 1852, when the new County Constabulary appointed Constable Amos Cooper, PC 42.

In an interesting postscript, the Home Office re-introduced Parish Constables in 1995 to establish foot patrols in rural areas. The job fell to the Special Constabulary, who were asked to provide (if Special



Constables were willing) officers who would be trained in the work and operate solely in their own parishes. These Parish Constables apparently did an amazing job in some areas, as being local to their own community, they were more trusted than the regular officers, who were mainly seen passing through parishes in patrol cars. Several Parish Constable schemes operated in various parts of the country for several years but despite its success, the scheme appears to have been quietly shelved.

COMBERTON HERITAGE SOCIETY

Our first meeting after the Christmas break will be on Tuesday 27th January at 8pm in Comberton Village Hall, and will be given by Susan Oosthuizen. Her talk will be on

The Anglo-Saxon Fenland

Archaeologies and histories of the fens continue to suggest that the early medieval fenland was dominated by the activities of north-west European colonists in a largely empty landscape. Using existing and new evidence and arguments, Prof. Oosthuizen offers another interpretation.

Susan Oosthuizen is Emeritus Professor of Medieval Archaeology at the University of Cambridge. She specialises in examining the origins and development of early medieval and medieval landscapes and in the evolution of systems of governance.

All visitors most welcome.

BIN COLLECTIONS FOR DECEMBER

Black Bin: 11th, **Monday 22nd (3 days early)**

Blue Bin: 4th, 18th and **January 2nd**

Green Bin: 4th, 18th

NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS

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

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

Alcoholics Anonymous: 0845 769 7555
Anglian Water (for sewage): 08457 145 145
(Emergency number for burst water pipes: 01223 706050)
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 Michael Atkins 07968 264637
CVC Community Education: 01223 264721
District Councillor: Lina Nieto 07506 420655
Household Waste/Pest Control: 0345 045 0063
Lifespan Health Care, Family and Child Team: 01223 264460
MP pippa.heydings.mp@parliament.uk
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: 01954 713 000
South Cambs Fire and Rescue: 01480 444 500
Toft Car Scheme: 07790 171710
Trading Standards: 0345 0455206
UK Power Networks (Emergencies): 0800 31 63 105

SOME USEFUL WEBSITE ADDRESSES

Cambridgeshire Constabulary:
<https://www.cambs.police.uk/contact/af/contact-us->
Cambridge City Food Bank:
<https://cambridgecity.foodbank.org.uk/>
South Cambridgeshire District Council:
<http://www.scambs.gov.uk>
Toft Parish Council: <https://tpc.toft.org.uk>
Toft Shop: <http://www.toftshop.co.uk>
Toft Village Website: <http://www.toft.org.uk>

A call for contributions

We hope you're enjoying the Toft Village Calendar and all the usual content. One of recent new features we have included is 'What I'm Reading': let people know in just a few sentences (doesn't have to be more than 50-100 words) what you're reading and why you're enjoying it – or disliking it. 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. And if you have any other ideas for the Calendar, let us know. Send all contributions and ideas to calendareditor@toft.org.uk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CALENDAR

The 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. Please send your written contributions as Word documents, if possible, or just plain text.

Please avoid sending PDFs unless you have no other option. Graphics (if essential) are best submitted as PNG or JPEG files.

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 December.

Many thanks to all who contributed to this edition.

Email: calendareditor@toft.org.uk

Post: The Gig House, The Old Horse Yard, Comberton Road, Toft CB23 2RY