



# Toft Village Calendar

Produced and Distributed by St. Andrew's Parish Church

February 2020



## DIARY DATES

### MONTHLY

#### COFFEE MORNING



sadly still on the not yet list! When we do get back to having monthly coffee mornings, which will be fantastic, we will be looking for a new Coffee morning organiser. Not onerous – just asking for volunteers for each month and ensuring the venue is in the Calendar for that month. Arpi Johnson has run this rota for many years and would now like to hand it on to a 'keen' volunteer.

#### TOFT FRIENDSHIP CLUB

[Over 50s Club]. Still no meetings at present. (see P 3)

**Sewing, Knit and Natter** is still unable to meet. See P.2

**The Parish Council** - The the next PC meeting is at 7.00 pm on 1st Feb 2021 via Zoom. Details will be on the Village web site at least 3 days before the event.

New time for the **Internet Club** Zoom meetings.

We will meet on 1st and 15th February at **4pm**.

Do log in and join us if you can for a chat and any IT advice.

[katherine@jameskj.plus.com](mailto:katherine@jameskj.plus.com)

and  
[jane@tebbitdesign.co.uk](mailto:jane@tebbitdesign.co.uk)

## EDITORIAL

So, here we are then - The Home Straight. If you've had your jab, then you can allow yourself a suitably socially-distanced sigh of relief. And if you haven't, you can at least cheer yourself up with the thought that some computer somewhere is placing you in a queue. After all, who amongst us can fail to be cheered by the news that a Government IT system has everything under control? Certainly not me - I've had my sleeve rolled up and ready since Guy Fawke's Night. We've been told that we can't just expect an 'open sesame' style return to normal life, that timing is important, that we will see the return of the not-much-missed Tiers and that slow-and-steady wins the day. Nevertheless, there will come a time - and let's hope it's sooner rather than later - when, here, in this village, we will be able to say with confidence: We're Done. And, at that point, we can, to quote the endlessly-quotable Winston, 'permit ourselves a brief moment of rejoicing'.

So, the question arises: How are we going to celebrate? Just what form did this 'rejoicing' ought to take? Naturally, we'll all have our own particular, long-suppressed celebrations in mind. A reunion with friends or family, perhaps; a trip to a special place, or maybe just a wander round the shops or a visit to the pub. But a day like this, when an entire village shrugs the strait-jacket from its shoulders and feels the warmth of the sun - mentally if not physically - back on its face? This, surely, deserves a special, village-wide knees-up? There's quite a history - I was almost going to say a tradition - of joint efforts around here when it comes to showing the rest of the country how to party like it's 1945. The Millennium, The Jubilees of 2002 and 2012 and, of course, the once-and-future annual Spring Feast - all these and more show we know how to do it when we want to. But what can we do to make this a stand-out special occasion? It will, we all hope, be a once-in-a-lifetime moment after all, so just having a bit of a lie-in then whanging into the Milk Tray and Bristol Cream isn't really going to do. So - what, then? A carnival, a parade, a street-party, a display, an exhibition? Good ideas, but...been there, done that.

One suggestion - pilfered shamelessly from another village of which I wot - is to run every single cancelled or postponed event over the last year as one giant beano over the course of an extended, four or five-day weekend. Could that, or something like it, work here? I have no idea and in any case, it's above my pay-grade to speculate on such matters. But there are some powerful minds in this village (look no further than page 7 for an example!) and now is the time to turn them loose on the matter. After all, it's not as if at least some of them have got much else to do right now.

In the meantime and until the nice person from the immunisation squad calls, I guess we just cross our fingers, keep our teeth well-gritted and console ourselves. After all, we also serve, who only stand and wait.

## Community Defibrillator

We were due to have a defibrillator awareness training session last April but it was cancelled due to COVID-19. As it looks like it will be some time before we are able to book another session here is a reminder of what to do if you find yourself with someone who is having a cardiac arrest.

### 1. RESPONSE

Check response by TALK & TOUCH. Speak to the patient in both ears, tap both collar bones.

### 2. DIAL 999, THEN DIAL VETS 01223 755503

Remain calm, dial 999 and tell them your emergency. If you have someone with you, have them dial VETS and begin CPR. If alone, dial VETS if you can. Ambulance Service Dispatch may ring the number for you, but please be aware they may deny the request.

### 3. AIRWAY

Ensure the airway is OPEN & CLEAR. Open the airway by lifting the patient's chin and tilting their head back.

### 4. BREATHING

LOOK, LISTEN & FEEL for normal breathing. See if the chest is moving.

### 5. COMPRESSIONS

If not breathing normally, start chest compressions. Place your hands in centre of the chest and push down hard, press x2 per second.

### 6. DEFIBRILLATOR

As soon as the defibrillator arrives, attach the electrodes and follow the instructions. Our defibrillator will tell you exactly what to do - when to do CPR and when to stop. Follow the instructions until the ambulance arrives.

Some more useful information:

The defibrillator is situated outside Toft People's Hall by the kitchen door.

VETS stands for *Volunteer Emergency Telephone System*. We have 10 volunteers in Toft signed up to help you. When you dial the VETS number it will ring on all 10 numbers at the same time so there is a greater chance that a helper can be found to assist you. Every house in the village has been given a fridge magnet with the number on it - 01223 755503.

**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](mailto:alison.walker@methodist.org.uk)

Stewards:

Diana Tebbit 01223 263557

Stephen Acklam 264055

Mrs Pat Morton 264010

## The Church in Toft

As many of you will have realised we have been discouraged under the present guidelines from holding services although the church remains OPEN every day – so please feel free to drop in at any time between 9.00ish and sunset.

We will be reviewing this decision in mid-February so please keep an eye on the notices on the gate and we will certainly get in touch with any regular congregation if we reopen for services at that time.

In the meantime

there continues to be a zoom service at 11.00am every Sunday

THE MEETING ID: 898 7070 2475

**<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89870702475>**.

There is also online audio available.

There will be morning prayer on Wednesdays at 9.15am, also available on email. And 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>**

We will celebrate **Ash Wednesday** (February 17<sup>th</sup>) at 7.30pm on Zoom – link as above and are planning Easter services to be out of doors where possible.

A **Lent** course '**Consider the lilies**' will be run locally on zoom at 3.30pm on Wednesday afternoons beginning on February 24<sup>th</sup>. We will be using paintings by Stanley Spencer as our inspiration. Please join us.

St Andrew's is open every day if you just want to drop in. For the present the Methodist Church will remain closed.

**D**ear Friends**What is the church for?**

The government left places of worship in a tricky predicament this lockdown. They were permitted to stay open, but with the new variant and case rates rising as they were in mid-January each place of worship had to ask itself difficult questions.

In our context, there is no doubt that our cavernous country church is relatively safe, and all the necessary measures had been put in place since July. Still, with the key message 'stay at home', and with each of us asked to do our bit to help 'stop the spread' we were deeply torn.

We had to go back to basics – what is the church for? It is *not* just another club for those who continue to hold out-dated beliefs! It is there to serve the common good spurred on by the belief that each person is valued and treasured in a world that is ultimately sustained by Love. (Even if it usually fails to reach such lofty aims).

In normal times, the gatherings of the church community are the powerhouse and engine room for all that. But what if, for a season, the best way to serve the common good is not to gather. That is where we find ourselves, and so the PCC took the decision to suspend public worship through till at least mid-February.

Church gatherings continue online (via zoom) and via the Lordsbridge Podcast, and we do what we can to include those not internet enabled.

The church is also open for private prayer every day. Everyone is permitted under law to leave home to pray (or simply be quiet) in this sanctuary.

Do feel free to use the space.

With Love

*Rev. David Newton*

**Sewing, Knit and Natter** - The ladies of Sewing, Knit and Natter are still not able to hold their monthly meeting but we are all working separately in our homes on a joint project for display in February!



# THE CHURCH IN TOFT DIARY

## TOFT FRIENDSHIP CLUB

A belated Happy New year to all members and potential members. Since I was appointed Chairman last spring I have had no duties at all but I want to assure everyone that much thought is being given to the future, two of our cancelled speakers are on stand-by and the committee will arrange to meet as soon as we are permitted. I know that some of you will have received the vaccine by now so better times are definitely in sight.

Looking forward to our next meeting

Elizabeth Harrisson



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**Dr Pam Fisher BEM** – some of you will remember Pam as your GP, part of the Comberton practice and others will remember her at Antiquarian meetings, WI, Methodist and other church events, teaching you 1<sup>st</sup> Aid and sundry other occasions and I am sure you will be delighted to hear, if you have not heard already, that she was awarded a BEM in this New Year's Honours' List for services to the community in Cambridgeshire. Well done Pam and well deserved.





## TOFT SOCIAL CLUB NEWS

It is pleasing to hear that several people are starting to receive dates to attend and have the coronavirus vaccine. This gives hope that there may be a light at the end of the tunnel; unfortunately the length of tunnel remains long meaning that sadly social club activities remain on hold.

**With some online exceptions.**

### SOCIAL CLUB ONLINE ZOOM QUIZZES

The online Zoom Quizzes continue on a two weekly basis. If you have not yet participated but would like to join in please log on to <https://www.toftsocialclub.org.uk/maillinglist.php> complete your details and you will then be added to our email circulation.

Dates of the quizzes will be circulated by email and included on the website

### A ZOOM MEETING GET TOGETHER

We like to keep in touch with members, to chat and share news on the online Social Club "Zoom" meeting get together. In the session members can join in video chats either in the main group or in a separate smaller group of people. We plan to do these as a monthly session; details of dates and times will be sent to members via email and included on the website.

Information and updates on Toft Social Club activities can be found on the Website and Facebook pages

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

**[www.toftsocialclub.org.uk](http://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
<i>Chairman:</i>		
Martin Yeadon	263663	cllr.yeadon@tpc.toft.org.uk
James Wrycroft	264427	cllr.wrycroft@tpc.toft.org.uk
Elaine Miles	262255	cllr.miles@tpc.toft.org.uk
Tricia Ellis-Evans	263477	cllr.ellis-evans@tpc.toft.org.uk
Andy Tall	07984796273	cllr.tall@tpc.toft.org.uk
Lluis Borrell	264611	cllr.borrell@toft.org.uk
Kaushik Popat		cllr.popat@tpc.toft.org.uk

*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](http://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 February 1st 7.00 pm (via Zoom)**

The Parish Council met, via Zoom, on 11th Jan 2021.

It was a long meeting as the PC had to agree a budget for 2021/22 which, in turn, sets the precept for residents (the Parish Council's share of council tax). One significant item that was included in next year's budget is a pledge of up to £5k to support a judicial review of the decision of EWR to not fully consider the rail route into Cambridge North. This review is proposed by a coalition of local PC's. This is a significant amount of money and the PC is keen to ensure that residents are supportive of this. So please, if you object to this let a Councillor, or the Clerk, know. Funding was also agreed for an awareness campaign to ensure that residents are fully aware of the EWR proposals. The PC agreed that some funding should be set aside to make contributions to charities that have an impact on a significant proportion of residents. (The PC is not allowed to make contributions to major charities such as Cancer Research as it's believed individuals are best placed to do so.) The PC is pleased to report that it was able to balance the books

and is in a position to maintain, without increase, the precept level as the same as last year.

The PC considered the planning application for 41 (additional) houses at Bennell Farm. The PC objected to the proposal. It was noted that the application for 12 self-build houses off Hardwick Rd had been rejected.

Cllr Yeadon reported on a conversation he had had with Cambridge Design Partnership. The company had been reported to the police for contravening Covid guidelines. It was reported that apparently there had been 180 cars at the premises. The police inspected the premises and car park and concluded that the company was operating within the guidelines and no further action would be taken. CDP reported to Cllr Yeadon that they were continuing to operate, employees were working from home wherever possible and the guidelines regarding face-space-hands were being followed on the premises. They reported that they are working on projects associated with the fight against Covid as well as other projects.

It was agreed that the PC would register the village green as a village asset, the PC having established that the PC does, in fact, own it.

Cllr Tall reported that the CC had investigated the drains affecting the drainage on the High Street and concluded that further work was needed. Unfortunately the CC were not in a position to say when this may be carried out.

The PC discussed the state of the verges by the Church on Church Road. The CC have inspected the location and are not in position to fund improvements. The PC agreed to discuss this at the next meeting to see how improvements could be progressed.

Cllr Miles has organised new signage to try to stop horses and cycles from being ridden on footpaths as it's illegal and damages the footpaths. The PC asks riders not to ride on footpaths.

Cllr Popat gave a report from the first meeting of a Climate Change Working Group. There is more on this elsewhere in the Calendar.

Please read the official minutes of the meeting for the definitive outcomes from the meeting.

# You don't have to face Covid-19 alone!

## The Toft Volunteer Team is still here to help

You do not need to be isolated or lonely.

Ways we can help.... Collecting prescriptions, collecting shopping, phoning for a chat, going with you for a one-to-one stroll, helping you to get additional support or access food banks.

## How to contact the Toft Volunteer Team or offer help

- Call or text/email Linda Hollow – 07779 918 682 or [linda.hollow@btconnect.com](mailto:linda.hollow@btconnect.com)
- Message for help via 'Nextdoor Toft'. Contact Jackie Morton at [jem.wickets@btinternet.com](mailto:jem.wickets@btinternet.com) to join Nextdoor online.

The vaccine is coming and many of our residents have already received their first dose.

We are all asked not to ring our doctors – they will get in touch with us.

For more information search the web link below.



<https://www.cambridgeshireandpeterboroughccg.nhs.uk/news-and-events/latest-news/covid-19-national-vaccination-programme/>



HM Government



## We must keep protecting each other.



HANDS



FACE



SPACE

**STAY ALERT ▶ CONTROL THE VIRUS ▶ SAVE LIVES**

It is with great sadness that we inform you of the passing of **Mrs Ruth Jacklin** formerly of Toft and most recently of Hatley Court Haven Care Home, Waterbeach, on 7th January 2021 at Addenbrookes Hospital.

*Mick and Donna Jacklin*

### Richard Preece Honoured



Congratulations are due to Toft resident Richard Preece (on the right in this photo), of Firethorn Cottage, who has been awarded a prestigious academic medal. The James Croll\* Medal is the highest honour bestowed by The Quaternary Research Association (QRA). This medal is given to a member of the Association who has not only made an outstanding contribution to the field of Quaternary science, but whose work has also had a significant international impact.

The award honours Richard's work in using fossil molluscs to understand the environments and climates of the recent past, namely the ice ages of the last 2.6 million years, known as the Quaternary Period. Richard has used molluscs for dating geological sequences and for reconstructing the environments of early humans that arose during this time. This includes work he has undertaken as far afield as the Lake Baikal region of Siberia and the Pitcairn Islands in the South Pacific.

Richard accepted the award at the QRA's Annual General Meeting hosted (virtually) by the University of Portsmouth, which is a stone's throw from the Isle of Wight where Richard was born and where his interest in all things molluscan began. On accepting the award Richard repeated the comment made by his fellow islander Anthony Minghella, when he collected his Oscar, that this was another "Great day for the Isle of Wight!"

\*James Croll (1821-1890) was a self-taught Scottish scientist, who corresponded with Darwin, and who proposed an astronomical basis for the periodicity of ice ages (later developed by Milankovitch).

## **Comberton Library**

**Tel: 0345 045 5225**

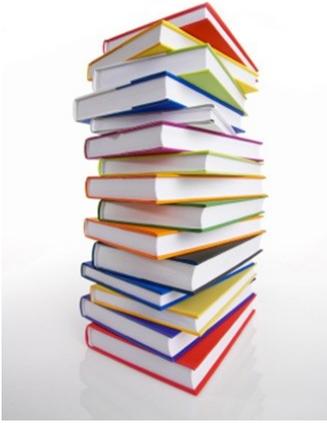
(Old) Normal Opening Hours - **but please see below:\***

Monday: 10am – 1pm, Wednesday: 10am – 1pm, 2pm -5pm,

Friday: 2pm – 5pm, Saturday: 10am – 1pm

**\*Current opening hours:** Monday: 10.00 am – 2.00 pm

Wednesday: 1.00 – 5.00 pm



The staff at Comberton Library wish you all a happy, healthy and safe 2021. Although, as I write this, we are at the beginning of another period of lockdown, we hope that this year will be a kinder one to us all, and that, in the not too distant future, we will be able to enjoy more freedom from the current necessary restrictions.

Please do note the change to our opening hours on Wednesdays. We are opening an hour earlier at 1.00 pm and closing at 5.00 pm. The hours on Mondays remain unchanged at 10.00 am until 2.00 pm.

The lockdown has meant that we are again only open for the return of items, which will be quarantined for at least 72 hours before being removed from customer library accounts, and the collection of pre-ordered items. There are currently no overdue charges being levied. We are also offering public computer access for essential need only, with one 45 minute session per day per customer allowed.

Ordering of items can be made through our 'Select and Collect' service, which enables customers to request a selection of books, which will be put together by staff from the stock available in the library and based on customer preferences. Please use the online form, available via [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/library](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/library) to make your requests. If you do not have internet access, you can call Customer Services on 0345 045 5225, and your request will then be forwarded to the library. We will contact you to let you know when your items are available to collect. The usual reservation system is also still available, but a 50p per item request charge is now applicable for adult library users. We will continue to issue all items to customers' library cards before collection.

All our online services are available as normal; we have e-books, eAudiobooks, eMagazines, eNewspapers and eComics available to download to a pc, tablet or smartphone. You are also able to access encyclopaedias, directories, genealogy, online film, history, music, business resources and much more from the comfort of your home. Please do visit our library pages on the County Council website to find out more and to take advantage of all that is available.

We look forward to welcoming you to the library, but please do keep an eye on the Library Service pages of the County Council website and the Libraries social media platforms for any changes to the service we are able to offer.

[Comberton Library is situated in the Village College campus, with car parking available and is Wheelchair-friendly and fully accessible for all.]

## FOOD POVERTY

Everyone will have seen the shocking photos recently in the press showing the totally inadequate food parcels being given to the children of poor families, meagre rations laughingly intended to keep them fed for a whole week! We will also be aware of the campaigning by Marcus Rashford as he calls for and gets changes to policies affecting school children. These news bulletins and images are yet another indicator of a broken system made even worse by covid's effects on the economy and on the pockets of those who were struggling long before the pandemic set in to make things even harder.

Think of the cumbersome 'system' there is now. Parents and children are going hungry because they lack proper and adequate support in the form of decent wages, secure jobs, good and fair social welfare payments and other necessary measures from government, including free school meals. In response to these failures, all over the country charities of every kind have come into existence. The best known is the Christian-based, national organisation, The Trussell Trust and their many food banks. But there are hundreds of others great and small, many run by or from churches. Then there are all the Cambridge food hubs, again run by volunteers, that have sprung up. There's now a new one in Trumpington and also at St James's church on Wulfstan Way where the vicar tells me that his church building is now just one big food sorting and distribution centre. The City Council are using their community centre on the Arbury estate in north Cambridge to do the same. Round the corner from me St Paul's and the big Roman Catholic church on Hills Road are food banks. Churches such as C3 are providing hot meals. In villages like Linton food hubs, food-swop boxes and also community freezers have appeared - all of these sourced by 'waste' food from supermarkets, crates and crates of perfectly good fresh food, bread, eggs and so on – the basics of life.

The charitable effort is huge and praise-worthy BUT think how clunky it all is! People have to travel, now usually by car, to their supermarket to buy food to give to the food bank. All the food donated by individuals or by shops then has to be driven to the sorting centres. Volunteers must check, bag and box it before more volunteers drive it to homes; or those in need have to travel to collect their pre-packed boxes to lug back on public transport or bike. All this involves numerous journeys and much effort by a lot of people. It relies on generosity and on volunteers having the time needed. This ad hoc system has other draw-backs, one being the lack of co-ordination there is bound to be with a patchy, home-grown charitable effort never able to cater fully for all those in need. It has more the character of something desperate and stop-gap, rather than a proper, efficient, planned and streamlined operation to keep people fed. There are also questions to be raised about underlying issues such as the volume of food waste in our country and how this can be better controlled and utilized; or whether our food security should lie solely in the hands of the big private purveyors such as Tesco.

But most importantly there's the impact on real people. The trouble with being handed a food box like the ones shown on the news, is that you have no choice. You are forced to become a grateful Oliver Twist and suffer loss of the dignity and autonomy that the rest of us expect to be given in life. It is infinitely preferable to have money (or even a voucher) in your pocket so that you can make your own choices for yourself and your children. Then all the effort and 'clunkiness' described above can be dispensed with. This is called by the sometimes maligned term 'the welfare state'. The way forward for a rich country like ours is not food banks or food hubs. It is to ensure that social policies result in a reduction of inequalities between rich and poor, so that everyone can eat a healthy and balanced diet, and guarantee that their children receive the same by right. Then and only then will I stop asking you all to give generously to our food bank boxes in St Andrew's, at the village shop or in the supermarkets you visit.

Many thanks and happy new year, Cathy Michell (local volunteer)

### Useful Food Websites

<https://www.scambs.gov.uk/coronavirus/i-need-help/food-and-emergency-supplies-for-residents/>

<https://cambridgefoodhub.org/about/>

<https://cambridgesustainablefood.org/>

<https://www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank/cambridgecity/>

<p><b>toft</b> <b>historical</b> <b>society</b></p>	<h2 style="text-align: center;">Toft and the Varsity Line Past and Present</h2>
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In recent times, there has been much discussion of plans to build a new Oxford-Cambridge railway through the agricultural landscape of South Cambridgeshire. However, one has only to walk through the fields immediately south of Toft to see the evidence of an earlier railway which operated trains through the Bourn Valley, passing close to both Toft and Kingston.



*OS Map 1960 showing the Varsity Line and the Toft-Kingston Sidings*



*An incline sign (☐) beside the old rail bed close to Armshold Lane*

This earlier “Varsity Line” was closed only 52 years ago and many older Toft residents will recall when it was still operating regularly. The two nearest stations were Lord’s Bridge (now the Mullard Radio Observatory) and Old North Road (at Longstowe). The latter was a stop for coal and cattle freight. The small siding between Toft and Kingston was used for coal, timber and hay freight.



Lord's Bridge Station 1930's



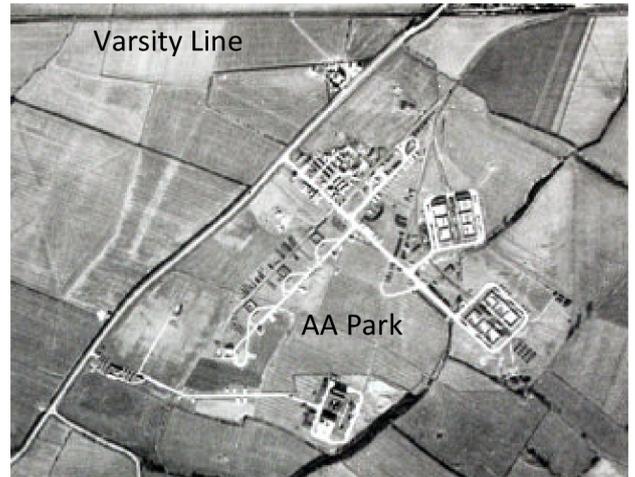
Old North Road Station 1930's

This railway was originally built to connect Cambridge and Bedford. Other railway companies were building further stretches of rail line which allowed Cambridge to be directly linked with Oxford by 1862. This brought a significant improvement to east-west rail connectivity for freight traffic. It also offered valuable connections with the major north-south mainline routes out of London. In its early days the Varsity Line was operating 4 passenger trains daily to Bletchley plus freight traffic.

In World War II the line was proposed as a strategic route for freight avoiding London which was being regularly bombed at the time, though in practice it was not used that much. However, there was increased traffic through Lord's Bridge when a large ammunition store was built close to the station in 1939 to supply aircraft ordnance, initially to RAF bomber squadrons and, later, American bomber squadrons on surrounding airfields. On the same site in 1942 a Forward Filling Depot established tasked with filling shells with mustard gas. The whole site was decommissioned in 1957 (though residual contamination was not finally removed until 1996!). Together with the railway station, it was handed over to the University which then established the Mullard Radio Observatory on the site. The old rail bed was utilised to allow the large Ryle telescope to be moved around on rails, albeit much wider.



*Lord's Bridge Station, 1970's*



*Air Ammunition Park, Lord's Bridge, 1947*

The advantages of utilising the east-west Varsity link more extensively was closely considered by government in the 1950's but ultimately never fully materialised and by 1959 it was being proposed that the whole Varsity Line be closed. The 1963 Beeching Plan recommended its retention but, the line's financial situation was dire, and the Cambridge to Bedford stretch of the Varsity Line was closed in 1968.

Half a century on, the idea of an east-west rail link between Cambridge and Oxford as part of a transport link around congested London has once again gained traction. Rail is now seen as a more acceptable means of moving bulk freight around UK and with the development of modern container freight systems there now exists the capability to efficiently move freight from the container ports of Harwich and Felixstowe around London and on to industrial hubs in the Midlands and the North of England by rail rather than by road haulage.

The East-West Rail Company, has been established by government to deliver the new Varsity rail route and are currently designing the Bedford to Cambridge link. They are to announce their preferred alignment for the Cambourne to Cambridge section in the coming weeks and it is rumoured to pass close to villages in our local area, as did the original Varsity Line, entering Cambridge from the south. However, a local Action Group, Cambridge Approaches, are campaigning for another route to also be actively considered by a judicial review. This alternative (originally devised by the Cam-Bed Rail Group) would go north of Bourn Valley, following the line of the A428 and then link with Cambridge North station. If you are interested/concerned about the possible return of a railway to our local area more information on EWR and Cam-Bed Rail is available at: <https://cambridgeapproaches.org>.

## PLEASE PROTECT OUR FOOTPATHS - NO HORSES or BICYCLES

The recent wet weather has made our footpaths extremely muddy. Sadly, there have been complaints from a number of walkers that these footpaths are being made even more treacherous to walk on because there is evidence of people riding horses and bicycles on them. There are sections of some footpaths where verges have been obliterated due to the damage from horses' hooves. Some of the complaints about this latter problem have come from villagers who keep horses locally and who, never having ridden their horses on any footpaths, are particularly angry. There has even been a complaint of a horse rider being accompanied by a cyclist.

To clarify, for those who are unaware, **footpaths are for walkers only**, as stipulated by the Cambridgeshire County Council, which means that horses and bicycles or any other type of conveyance (wheelchairs excepted) are not allowed on them. Please visit the webpage below and scroll down below the map where the law is quite clearly stated.

<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/libraries-leisure-culture/arts-green-spaces-activities/rights-of-way>

**Footpaths** - let you go by foot only and are marked by a yellow arrow

**Bridleways** - let you go by foot, horse or bike and are marked by a blue arrow

There are no exemptions to this law and it operates 24 hours a day and applies to horses of any size and people of any age. The Parish Council has had signs erected to further clarify this.

The only bridleways in the Toft Parish are "Church drift" leading from Church Road to the Meridian golf course and "Pinfold Well Lane" which leads from Brookside/Church Road to School Lane. On the outskirts of Toft Parish there is the Wimpole Way which leads from the Caldecote Road to Hardwick Road and then to Long Road. Additionally, there is Armshold Lane which leads from the Kingston Road to the old railway track alongside the golf course and a bridleway from Kingston to the Old Wimpole Road.

While it is regrettable there are no more Bridleways in this area, this is no excuse for horse riders and cyclists to damage paths which are designated for walkers and we would respectfully request that this behaviour is stopped.

Toft Parish Council



## Climate Change Working Group Update

2020 has been an extremely tough year for many of us, with many having to change their working habits to keep themselves and others safe. Some of these changes will, undoubtedly, have had an impact on the environment and carbon emissions. The Government is committed to achieving the net zero carbon emissions by 2050 and we need to continue our efforts to help with the climate emergency.

The Toft Parish council (TPC) is committed to helping towards this target and has started to look at ways to achieve this. TPC has already changed to an electricity supplier which delivers 100% renewable energy and is also in the process of changing street lights to more energy efficient LED bulbs. The PC also borrowed an infrared camera to help residents assess the levels of insulation in their homes from the District Council which hopefully will be available again once the council is back to normal.

Going forward we will be publishing articles of general interest in future calendar publications as well as advice on how village residents can also reduce their carbon emissions and help (however small) towards a healthier and cleaner planet.

If you have any ideas or wish to join the Climate Change Working Group please email:  
[cllr.popat@tpc.toft.org.uk](mailto:cllr.popat@tpc.toft.org.uk)

# Open the box!



You will find seeds to sow now.

## Vegetables

-  Chillies
-  Tomatoes
-  Rocket
-  Lambs lettuce

## Flowers

-  Climbing Cobaea and Imopea
  -  Lovely scented sweet peas
  -  Annual purple salvia
- ...and many more.



toft\_telephone\_box\_seed\_swap

## A Huge Thank you to the Toft Litter Fairies!

People outside the village often remark how free of litter our village is. Of course, we are not grateful for this to any magical creatures but to some conscientious residents!

This wouldn't be necessary if people didn't discard litter on footpaths and in ditches. It is hard to comprehend why someone carries with them a full can of drink, a whole piece of fruit or chocolate bar, all of which weigh *something*, and having consumed them throws away the empty can, peel or wrapper, all of which are lighter.

So a huge thank you to those people who pick up this litter and a request to everyone to take your litter home with you or bin it.

Toft Parish Council

## TOO EARLY FOR A BIG BREAKFAST?

As many of you will know, in previous years plans would be afoot for Toft IW to organise the fabulous 'Toft Big Breakfast' (which we would hold in early March).

It is clearly not going to happen in March 2021. But, we would very much like to have this event as soon as it feels safe for all. In the past we have raised large sums of money for the charities 'Farm Africa' and 'Fairtrade' and just as importantly we have had a brilliant time feasting together and enjoying a wonderful community-wide event. We haven't forgotten about it. We will do it when we get our freedom back. Watch this space....!



Looks as though changes are afoot in The Mother Of Parliaments. The Boundary Commission writes to tell us that "It's my pleasure to inform you that the Boundary Commission for England has commenced its review of Parliamentary constituencies in England, in accordance with the Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986 (as amended by the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011 and Parliamentary Constituencies Act 2020). "

As one of the constituencies which has experienced rapid and sustained population growth over recent years, South Cambridgeshire is strongly tipped to have its boundaries re-drawn in the next shake-up. This won't happen till at least 2023, when the commission's report is supposed to be completed, but if you want to keep an eye on progress you can check how things are going at their website: <https://boundarycommissionforengland.independent.gov.uk/home/2023-review/>

## Become a Home-Start Volunteer in 2021

The Cambridge Dictionary online defines a volunteer as:

*A person who does something, especially helping other people, willingly and without being forced or paid to do it.*

But it means so much more to us at Home-Start: committed, kind, reassuring, non-judgemental, creative, generous... the list goes on and on.

**Royston & South  
Cambridgeshire**

Our volunteers have many different reasons for joining the Home-Start family; regardless of the motivation, what unites them is that they find volunteering with us rewarding and fulfilling.

### A lifeline of support

Home-Start volunteers provide support to local families when they need it most. Our volunteers all have parenting experience which they can share with families so that they can give the right support at the right time in a way that suits each family individually. Our volunteers do all of this as an integral part of our friendly, supportive Home-Start team.

For some people, being a parent can be overwhelming. Many of the parents that Home-Start supports don't have an established support network of family and friends to help them. A friendly connection once a week can make such a difference to someone who is struggling – a lifeline, as one of the families described it this year.

Home-Start volunteers provide individual one-to-one home visiting and a range of other targeted support for parents and their children. Over the last year we have had to think creatively about how we offer support to families. We now have a variety of tried and tested services (online and in person) all of which are based around the principle that volunteers offer no judgement, just compassionate, confidential help and support.

At Home-Start we value the skills, expertise, time and commitment volunteers give to families, and recognise how it is important that they feel well supported. The volunteer training course gives volunteers the opportunity to build solid relationships with co-ordinators, who then provide formal and informal support. We believe that the course fully prepares you to feel confident and able to begin supporting families.

As well as receiving regular support from a co-ordinator we offer volunteers ongoing training around a variety of topics and provide plenty of opportunities to meet with other volunteers for mutual support.

### Just two hours a week can make such a difference

If you could give as little as two hours a week to support a parent and their children then get in touch today. **Our next course for volunteers begins at the end of February 2021** and if you're a mum dad, grandparent or carer we would love to hear from you. With your knowledge and experience developed through being a parent or carer, you could be the vital support a family needs to help change their life, and while you're doing it, it might just change yours!

Still in two minds? Read what one of volunteers said about their role:

*"Working for Home-Start truly gives me riches that no pay packet ever could - the fulfilment and privilege of being invited into a family home to encourage and support parents and young children is just wonderful."*

If you'd like more information about the Volunteer Prep Course, please visit: <https://www.hsrsc.org.uk/volunteer/>  
Or give us a call: 01763 262262 or email: [admin@hsrsc.org.uk](mailto:admin@hsrsc.org.uk)

Thank you.

**Wheelie Bin Collections For February**

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

**Black Bin:**

Weds 3rd Feb

Weds 17th Feb

Weds 3rd Mar

**Blue/Green Bin**

Weds 10th Feb

Weds 24th Feb (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 April 2021 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: [calendaradstoff@gmail.com](mailto:calendaradstoff@gmail.com) to discuss their requirements.

**✕ USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS**

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 Bourn GPs' Surgery: 01954 719313  
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 Cambs County Council: 0345 045 5200  
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 Care Network Cambridgeshire 01954 211919.  
 Citizens Advice Bureau: 0844 848 7979  
 Comberton GPs' Surgery: 01223 262500  
 Comberton Village College: 01223 262503  
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 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  
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 UK Power Networks (Emergencies): 0800 31 63 105



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE  
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**Fire Authority seeking an additional £1.44 per year for a Band D property**

Are you happy to pay an additional £1.44 a year for your fire and rescue service (based on a Band D property)?

With no increase to our government grant this year and additional costs managing the Covid pandemic, we are proposing a small increase to our share of the council tax to help meet these costs and fund enhanced first aid training for our firefighters who are often first at the scene of an incident. An increase of two per cent is the most the Fire Authority is allowed to ask for due to capping restrictions. The Fire Authority's government grant for 2021/22 is remaining the same as this year so this small council tax increase will help towards the Service covering inflation costs, additional expenses that Covid has brought and new, enhanced medical training for firefighters.

You can provide your feedback about the proposed increase via a short survey (just two questions). The survey can be found on-line at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/CFRScounciltaxconsultation2021>

**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 or non-attributable 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 February**. 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

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Little Hands is also at Linton, Melbourn and Newton, visit the website at  
[www.littlehands.co.uk](http://www.littlehands.co.uk)

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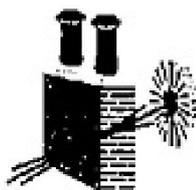


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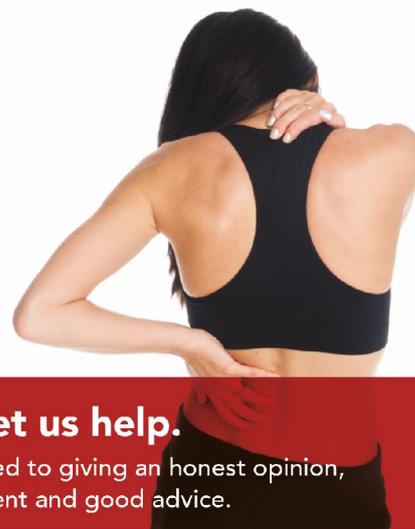
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