

November /
December 2022
Edition 190



USEFUL NUMBERS

Braintree District Council	01376 552525
Colchester Hospital	01206 744491
Doctors Car Service	07845 596092
Freshwell Health Centre	01371 810328
Hedingham Medical Centre:	
Castle Hedingham	01787 461465
Sible Hedingham	01787 460612
Kaaren Berry, Parish Clerk	07341264219
Little Chestnuts Preschool	079018 80914
Little Hedgehogs Toddlers	01440 785778
Pumphouse Brewery	07780 702293
Rev. Caroline Brown	01787 469161
St Margaret's School	01787 237354
The Green Man Public House	01787 237418
Toppesfield Community Shop	01787 236003
Toppesfield Village Hall Bookings	
Wendy Ames	07933743724

TOPPESFIELD COMMUNITY SHOP

Church Lane, Toppesfield. Tel: 01787 236003

Fresh Fruit & Vegetables, Milk, Newspapers, Confectionery, Pet Food, Dairy Products, Meat & Poultry, Coal and Kindling, Cards, Stationery and lots more!

Monday—Friday

8.30 am— 4.00 pm

Saturday—10.00 am—12.30pm

TOPPESFIELD POST OFFICE

Church Lane, Toppesfield

Wednesday - 10.00 am—1pm

Services include: Special Delivery, Mobile Top Up, Insurance Services, Household payments, Travel Money, Moneygrams, Savings Accounts plus more!

Toppesfield Parish Council

Councillors — Alan Collard, Amanda Smith, Chris Neale, Trisha Roberts and Kitty Bourlet. There are currently two vacancies for Parish Councillors, if you are interested in joining the Parish Council please inform one of the councillors or the parish clerk.

Parish Clerk — Kaaren Berry

Parish Council Meetings are normally held on the first Thursday of every month in the village hall. You are welcome to attend the Open Session which starts at 7.30pm.

Toppesfield & Gainsford End Parish Newsletter

Published by Toppesfield Parish Council

Editor: clerk.toppesfieldparishcouncil@gmail.com

Please see our online resources to find out what is happening

Facebook Pages :-

Toppesfield & Gainsford End Community

Toppesfield Village Hall

Toppesfield Village Stores

The Green Man, Toppesfield

Pumphouse Community Brewery

Toppesfield and Gainsford End Neighbourhood and Development Plan

Twitter & Instagram— Toppesfield & Gainsford End Community

Website—<https://e-voice.org.uk/toppesfield-parish-council/>



From the Parish Council



Welcome to the latest edition of our Parish newsletter. This edition is filled with brilliant reviews of events that have taken place and information on exciting forthcoming events. I enjoy the newsletters as they are an opportunity to reflect and make me thankful to live in such a community minded village.

It was wonderful that the village has been acknowledged for its community businesses by winning an award at the recent Plunkett Denbury Awards. This is not the only award recognised in this edition. Well done Jane and Pete for your award-winning wine.

It is such an achievement that the village shop has been running for 20 years. The celebration was enjoyed by many. There are always opportunities to volunteer to keep this excellent resource running. We are so lucky to have this resource please support it in any way that you can.

Many of you may be wondering how I got on at the Village Show going head-to-head with my wife, Fran. I was delighted to place 2nd in the shortbread category (she placed 3rd). In the brownie section she placed 2nd (I did not place at all) so we have decided to call it a draw!

I feel proud that members of our community opened their homes to families fleeing the war in Ukraine. The whole village welcomed the families with open arms. There is a fantastic photo of Misha and Mira being reunited with their Father after six months. We wish them well and lifelong friendships will endure.

Forthcoming events include a wreath laying at the church on 13th November to remember the service and sacrifice of those that have defended our freedoms. There will be a coffee morning in the village hall on Saturday 19 November, we are planning to continue events in the village hall through the winter. The build up to Christmas truly begins on Saturday 3 December when we will enjoy festive treats and a countdown to the tree lighting. I have also heard a rumour that Father Christmas will try and make a special appearance this year. If anyone can assist in erecting the tree on the morning of 26 November, please do contact Kaaren, any help is gratefully received.

Essex County Council have an ongoing consultation on the 2023-24 budget, they are inviting residents to have their say. The Parish Council currently has 2 vacancies for councillors so if you think you could be interested, please speak to Kaaren.

Ann has kindly arranged a New Year walk around the parish to assist us in working off some Christmas excesses!

Chris Neale

Chair of Parish Council

Parish Council Information

A short summary of Parish Council goings-on at the September and October Meetings:

- In September, a member of the parish expressed concern regarding the speed at which the hay bale carrying trucks and the Hedingham bus drove along Stambourne Road. It was agreed that the PC would write to Chambers and to local landowners.
- In September, District Councillor Richard van Dulken reported:
 - ◊ That there is help and advice regarding the energy crisis and costs on the Braintree District Council Website
 - ◊ The Nunns Walk development in Great Yeldham has generated complaints about the two new pedestrian islands which are being built as trucks are finding it difficult to negotiate them as they are on the bend, and concerns have been raised as there are no streetlights cars may clip them.
 - ◊ Richard van Dulken has submitted comments directly to Braintree DC regarding the planning application for the Mission Hall in Gainsford End.
- County Councillor Schwier was unable to attend the meetings in September and October.
- Concerns had been expressed about fire risks in fields near housing. Councillor Collard spoke to one of the local farmers who said that it is possible to follow up immediately after the combines by turning the soil over but this year the ground was very hard. As a result, most fields were left and only now, after the recent limited rain, are they being turned over. He recalled that when it was practice to burn off stubble fields, farmers used automatically to plough a fire break around fields. It was suggested that next year the Parish Council should write to each of the farmers in the parish and the landowner adjacent to Berwick Hall Drive to request that they create fire breaks or cut the growth, as the case may be.
- A number of Policies have been drafted to govern procedure at the PC. These will be reviewed and adopted as appropriate.
- An update on the MoJ proposal to build a Mega Prison complex on the former airbase at Wethersfield is provided to the PC each month. Key issues coming to light include possible chemical contamination and pollution throughout the base, the fact that, despite earlier denials, the MOD had two sets of plans for the base including the prisons, hotels for visitors, private school and much housing and that there as yet has been no planning application. It was noted that a report has been published by WASC on the efficiency and effectiveness of Mega Prisons. Should anyone like to have an electronic copy, please contact Trisha Roberts.

Parish Council Information continued

- Braintree District Council adopted Section 2 of the Braintree Local Plan 2013-2033 Local Plan at a meeting of Council on 25th July 2022. The Local Plan Section 2 Adoption Statement and be seen at: www.braintree.gov.uk/directory-record/1062233/section-2-adoption-statement-july-2022. This has the effect (along with Section 1 adopted in 2021) of replacing earlier documents used to help determine Planning Applications received by Braintree District Council.
- Braintree District Council are looking for volunteer drivers for their Community Transport Team – please contact 01376 557883, email: community.transport@braintree.gov.uk or visit www.braintree.gov.uk/communitytransport for more information.
- Neighbourhood Plan update - Cllr Collard reported that the grant of £7,300 to complete the NP had been received from Locality/Groundwork. Additionally, Paul Munson, a Planning Consultant and former Head of Planning at BDC, has submitted his proposal to undertake the work that will lead to NP completion. He has provided a contract for signature. His costs will be covered by the grant so no cost will fall directly on PC funds. It was agreed that the letter of acceptance be signed and returned. It had also been agreed in September that Toppesfield would participate in the development of a multi-parish Neighbourhood Plan, joining with Finchingfield, Wethersfield and Sible Hedingham to develop an NP to cover the former Airfield at Wethersfield. Our participation will be relatively minor as only a small part of the base falls within Toppesfield Parish.
- It was reported that further progress will be undertaken on playing field projects when the Petanque court is completed (See 22/149.4 above).
- The Charity Commission had responded on the subject of the proposed Village Charity advising that further work needs to be done on setting out the proposed charity's Objects. Work on this will continue.
- Discussion were held about opening a "Warm Bank" and also about publishing tips for saving energy. It was agreed that both issues would be pursued further.

The Parish Council meets on the first Thursday of each month at 7.30pm. Residents are encouraged to bring any issues for discussion to the meeting, the first 15 minutes of which are a public meeting.



St Margaret's Church

Haven't we been so lucky to share in an Autumn time of warm weather and rich colours, every time I come into the village the colours change and it's a joy to behold and watch Gods' creation in action.

"God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform" are perhaps familiar words known to you from a Hymn, in nature, and the changing seasons, and weather we are constantly reminded of Gods awesome power. And how blessed are we to live in such a wonderful area.

Some are not so lucky and struggle to see God at all when they are in poor housing, or do not have a home at all, or do not know how they will feed their family or keep warm. Our Harvest Festival was so well attended ,and many of you enjoyed the food at the Harvest Supper afterwards, The Church looked amazing with the flower displays and all your generous donations on display and the foodbank and Warm Hearts for Cold hands were so thrilled to receive these donations.

Warm Hearts for cold hands are a charity that supports those on the streets and were thrilled to receive my car load of practical goods that are so needed especially as we go into the cold winter months. And the foodbank is desperate for donations as food costs rise and the need for help gets greater. A big thank you to you all.

As with all things we do at Church, whether services, Messy Church, the fete or the Supper Auctions, we rely on an army of helpers both within the Church and from within the community. The congregation is small and to keep being an active Church we do have to rely on the community to support us, and while some Church attendees may not always be in sight a lot goes on behind the scenes in preparing and organising all that we do. So, a very big thank you to you all.

Soon it will be the supper auction a time to clear out your loft and garages of all that 'treasure' that will enable us to make lots of money.

We are also helping to be part of the Christmas tree festival, but again it takes a lot of support and volunteers, even more so when we have children attending. Last year was amazing and we would very like to do something similar this year, but it can only go ahead if we have enough people come forward to volunteer.

If you would like to help the children dress the Christmas tree, help make craft for the tree decorations or serve on the tombola stall, please let me know, it will only be for a couple of hours on Dec 3rd from 2.30pm -4 pm.

Please remember the Church is not just here for the sad milestones in life, but also for christenings and weddings. So, if you are thinking of planning either of those get in touch and we can have a chat.

And the normal pattern of services continues on Sundays with services starting at 11.00am.

In addition, the Church is open every day for private prayer. And as always if you know anyone in need of a visit, or you would like a visit yourself. Please get in touch.

revcarolinebrown@gmail.com: 01787 469161



WARM HEARTS FOR COLD HANDS

St Margaret of Antioch
Toppesfield
Halstead
Essex

Dear Caroline

Just a small note, to thank you and your kind Congregation, for the choosing our group as the recipients of your Harvest Festival.

The kind gifts donated for the Rough Sleepers, Homeless & Vulnerable within our Community will help keep them warm, clean & fed.

It lets them know that people do care about them, and they are not forgotten

They really are appreciated.

My sincere thanks

Julia Best
(Founder)

St Margaret's Church



Upcoming Services

- Nov 6th Morning Prayer - 11.00am
- Nov 13th Remembrance Service - 10.45am
- Nov 20th Morning Prayer - 11.00am Rev Caroline
- Nov 27th Holy Communion - 11.00am Rev Graham
- Dec 4th Morning Prayer - 11.00am
- Dec 11th Holy Communion - 11.00am Rev Caroline
- Dec 18th Carol Service - 3.00pm
- Dec 24th Christmas Holy Communion - 6.30pm
- Dec 25th Christmas Family Service - 11.00am

Church Flowers

I would just like to thank all the ladies who do a Stirling job in keeping the Church filled with flowers throughout the year.

If anyone would like to try their hand at flower arranging for one month, please contact me on 01787237530. You don't need to be an expert flower arranger but would like to offer your time, this would be very much appreciated. We do supply the oasis but not the flowers.

Wendy Turner.



Well done, Toppesfield!



Trevor, Janet and Wendy representing Toppesfield at the Awards

Great news for Toppesfield Community Stores, TCP and Pumphouse Brewery as their work was recognised at the annual Plunkett Denbury Awards. The event was held at the Locks Inn, a community owned and run pub in the village of Geldeston between Bungay and Beccles.

The nomination for Toppesfield stated that **‘..as well as being an inspiration to any community setting up or running their own business, they are also a flagship example of how communities can play a vital role in re-localising every stage of the food supply system. The village shop sources from local suppliers, beer and wine is processed and produced within the village itself through the community brewery and local vineyard, and then these local products appear on the bar at the community pub as well as supplying other local enterprises. Toppesfield shows how community businesses can create strong and resilient local supply networks that serve local people as well as invest in the local economy.**

Cheers to Toppesfield!’

Plunkett Foundation is a national charity that supports community businesses, especially in rural areas. It has been very supportive of our activities in Toppesfield over the past 20 years and both TCP and Pumphouse have benefitted from grant funding during the covid lockdowns.

TOPPEFIELD Community Shop

20 YEARS
2002 - 2022
ANNIVERSARY

The sun was out and so was Toppesfield.

What an amazing morning we had celebrating the 20 years that our Community Shop has been open.

It was wonderful to see so many of you enjoying the delicious cakes, tea and coffee or indeed a glass or two of Toppesfield's very own wine, so kindly donated by Pete and Jane.

Our prize draw was a great success too, with over 100 tickets sold, however, there could only be one winner.

The Hamper, won by Kaaren Berry, was full to the brim with goods from our shop as well as some very generous donations from, Toppesfield Vineyard, Pumphouse Brewery, Priors Hall Farm and Ozes CDP



Our newest recruit chatting with the lovely Jean



Our fabulous prize hamper won by Kaaren Berry



Fran, enjoying a glass of wine, generously donated by Toppesfield Vineyard



Delicious cakes made and donated by our amazing volunteers.



Jacqui & Ruth the backbone of our shop



Fantastic to see Ivy. She was volunteering in our shop on day one, twenty years ago.

Having also attended the Plunkett Foundation Communities awards this week, when all three of our community businesses, the shop, brewery and pub, were nominated in the Community Food category, it really brought it home to me how lucky we are to live in such a community lead village.

Wendy Ames



Toppesfield Village Hall

Anyone new to the Village maybe unaware that the hall is available for hire. The hall has been used for many different occasions. It is fully equipped with tables, chairs, crockery and cutlery, plus two working ovens, a microwave and a fridge. Also instant hot water. Heating is provided so there is a comfortable atmosphere, but if it gets too hot there are also ceiling fans!

On the **19th November** a coffee morning will be held in the Hall by the Village Hall Committee so why not pop in and have a cuppa, a chat and a look around, it would be nice to see you. We will be serving drinks from 10.30 .



Hopefully see you soon.

Coffee time teaser

T	A	B	L	E	C	L	O	T	H	G	Y
F	J	T	B	M	R	I	I	O	S	X	P
A	Y	U	A	I	C	A	K	E	J	J	L
M	M	E	G	L	S	O	G	S	T	T	R
U	R	T	W	K	K	C	F	E	A	R	A
G	T	E	R	E	G	I	U	F	Y	S	C
S	E	R	V	I	N	G	N	I	E	E	S
S	A	U	C	E	R	S	V	G	T	E	W
F	R	I	E	N	D	S	H	I	P	S	F
G	E	T	T	O	G	E	T	H	E	R	O
T	W	G	E	R	S	U	G	A	R	S	U
J	J	T	F	L	A	S	A	E	E	T	E

Biscuits

Cake

Coffee

Friendships

Get together

Milk

Mugs

Saucers

Serving

Sugar

Tablecloth

Talking

Tea

Toppesfield Vineyard Grape Harvest 2022

Thanks to everyone who joined us for our traditional harvest day. We had nearly 100 volunteers this year which meant we could tuck into harvest lunch earlier than normal – click/see on the link to watch the mini video and get a sense of this great fun day:

https://www.instagram.com/reel/Ci7uu4Sg_t/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=



Aldeburgh Food and Drink Festival

Thanks to Sharon Benfield for managing our stand with the East of England Coop at the Aldeburgh Food and Drink Festival. This is such a lovely festival, a real highlight of our calendar, but unfortunately the date coincided this year with our grape harvest so Sharon managed it single handedly. We had lots of repeat clients from last year as well as lots of new faces who had been recommended by friends and family to come and buy our wines.

Travel begins at 40

We were very pleased to host Roger Hermiston (former Assistant Editor of the Today programme) and Eileen Wise (former Head of Global PR for the Economist and Reuters) at Toppesfield Vineyard in mid September. They spent their time exploring this beautiful, historic part of Essex as well as making sure they relaxed with a glass or two of Toppesfield wines while reading their books and spoiling our pets!

Read the full article here - <https://www.travelbeginsat...>

TRAVEL
BEGINS AT 40



Back to the Future at Toppesfield Vineyard

*Roger Hermiston and Eileen Wise stay at
Toppesfield Vineyard in Essex, to enjoy the
excellent wine and luxury accommodation.*

Toppesfield wins Rosé Wine of the Year 2022 in Wine GB East Awards



We were absolutely delighted to win silver award for our Toppesfield Bacchus, GOLD for our Pinot Rosé AND ROSE WINE OF THE YEAR in the Wine GB East Competition (Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire) early September.

Toppesfield Vineyard Jubilee Celebrations

We were delighted to celebrate 10 years of Toppesfield Vineyard on Friday 3rd of June, the weekend of our late Queen's Platinum Jubilee. We wanted to thank our families, friends, staff and clients for their amazing support over the last decade. The afternoon started very gracefully with drinks in the Wine Centre garden and finished late in the evening after dancing the night away to our favourite band, Swing Machine. We look forward to celebrating in a similar style in 2032!





News from the Footpaths

Hi Everyone

I hope you are all well and enjoying your walking. It has been such an amazing Autumn with temperatures still really high in the day resulting in the leaf changing colour gradually and many flowers that should have finished blooming are still in full bloom. But it would seem that the very long hot dry Summer has confused some things in nature and I was amazed to see some small flowers on the horse chestnut trees as well as the conkers. Their normal flowering time is May!

I do love this time of year for the appearance of fungi. I find them a fascinating group of organisms. They appear overnight in amazing different shapes and colours. Some are parasitic, living on living organisms and can do a lot of damage, but others are saprophytic, living on dead material and helping to rot down the vegetation so here we have natural recycling!

Of course some of them are delicious to eat but also others are poisonous so do not pick them unless you are absolutely sure of their identity and make sure you wash your hands after handling any of them. On the subject of food of course the fungi themselves are food for other creatures too. It is not often that you can find a perfect mushroom cap. There will be holes or teeth marks on them so that something has been having a feast. I wonder what?

The landscape changes so dramatically at this time of the year. In a matter of weeks we have gone from fields of golden corn to the brown of cultivated fields and already the green of next year's crop. This can pose a bit of a problem where the footpaths go across the fields but we are lucky in that our local farmers will soon spray out the footpaths once the new crop is established to re-establish the footpath.

I have made several complaints to E.C.C highways letting them know that many of our roadside finger posts and waymarker post have fallen down or are missing. I have been informed that this will be dealt with as part of their Winter programme so let's keep our fingers crossed.

I plan to do a New Year Walk on Sunday 8th January 2023, leaving the Green man at 10.30 am. It will be about 3 – 4 miles rather depending on the conditions. Do join me.

Keep safe and keep walking!

Ann Read



PUMPHOUSE

BREWERY

We are pleased to say that pub sales have increased over the last three months, thanks to the unflagging efforts of our small and dedicated sales and delivery team, with addition of up to five regular customers since August, including The Cock at Clare, The Dog Inn at Halstead, the King's Head at Pebmarsh and the White Horse at Ridgewell. This is in addition to our loyal long-term customers, including The Black Lion at High Roding The Railway Arms at Saffron Walden, The Leather Bottle at Pleshey, The White Hart, Gt. Yeldham and the Bell at Woodham Walter.

Poplar Nurseries, the garden centre near Colchester, continues to be a loyal customer for our bottled beer, serviced ably by Richard Evers in his volunteer capacity.

Toppesfield village shop now has an alcohol licence and will be selling our beer; watch for the launch!



We also continue to enjoy very satisfactory sales of our bottled beer at Writtle Farmer's Market, on Writtle village green, usually on the second Sunday morning each month. Our Oktoberfest theme was well received by our customers, Paul causing a sensation in his lederhosen!

We will be at Writtle again on 6th November, when our theme will be Remembrance. Do please come along and support us if you can.

Bottles are also for sale Wednesday to Friday, from the brewery at £2.50 each, and our three bottle gift packs containing your choice of beers make a very welcome Christmas present for friends and family.

As always, we are forever ready to hear from anyone who would like to help us out on the committee or as a volunteer to help with the many tasks we are faced with, such as sales and delivery, cask and bottle cleaning, stock taking and facilities management.

Toppesfield and Gainsford End Village Show

17th September 2022

Yes we made it and it was a brilliant sunny day. We had not held the show in 2020 nor 2021 because of covid so it was so exiting to be staging the show again. Of course tinged with sadness at the passing of our dear Queen and several people thought that we should cancel the show but I felt that the village shows had meant so much to The Queen, particularly when the family were staying at Balmoral and Sandringham, that it was the right thing to continue. However we did dedicate the show to her memory and held a minute's silence for our own personal reflections. I even found a photograph of The Queen receiving a cup at Royal Windsor Horse Show !

With such a very hot and dry Summer I was concerned that there would be very few exhibits in the flower, fruit and vegetable sections but I should know that Toppesfield will always find a way and the judges were very impressed with the entries. The cookery classes always look so delicious and there was such an array of different handicraft items. What talent we have amongst us. The thing that was so encouraging was the huge increase in children's exhibits, as always stealing the show with their weird animals and imaginative ideas!

We took a risk with the weather by having some stalls outside but it was such a lovely day and it made such a colourful entry to the show to have The Brewery, The Vineyard and Plants That Grow stalls by the entrance.

The raffle was terrific and I must thank so many local businesses who gave generous donations to the raffle. Darkins, Earey, The Green Man, Priors Hall, Kat Waterhouse, Poole Farm, Toppesfield Vineyard, Plants That Grow, East of England Coop as well as personal donations.

The refreshments were particularly delicious being strawberry and cream teas provided by Zoë. It was so great to see everyone enjoying the sunshine, the teas and chatting with friends.

It was so encouraging to see many new exhibitors to the show. I must thank and congratulate all the exhibitors as without you we would not have a show.

The cup winners -Adults

Jennie Wiffen x2, Lynn Collard, Ann Read, Jacquie Stafford-Baker x2, Ralph Nicks, Chris Hammond, Mike Jarman and Ellie-Ann Hughes.

The Cup winners – Children

Ellie-Ann Hughes , Hermione Nicks, Theo Neale and Avery Greenway.

Several people asked me about the origin of the cups and I do know a bit about some of them but not all.

Ivy Cook Award - Given by Ivy Cook who lived in the village for many years and died relatively recently at the age of over 100.

Mary Ager Cup - Given by Mary Ager who lived in Gainsford End for many years.

Good Sport Award - Given by Barbara Rumsey who lived at Morris Green and was a great supporter of the show with all her vegetables and handicraft exhibits.

H. Lapsker cup - Given by Mrs Lapsker in memory of her husband. She lived in the village for many years .

Morley Tankard - Given by Mrs Morley who lived in Camoise Close for many years.

Jack Nicks cup - Jack lived in Camoise Close for many years and the cup was given in his memory by his family. It was so befitting at this show that Jack's son was here and presented the cup to Ellie-Ann.

Over 60's cup - Years ago there was always a 5 a side football competition and this cup was presented to the winners. It is inscribed with the winners. However when this competition ceased to happen the cup was reallocated to the Over 60's class.

Henry Bragg Cup - When I joined the show committee in 1973 Henry Bragg had been secretary to the show for many years and I presume this cup was in his memory.

Other cups I do not know their origins. If any one else does I would be delighted to hear from them.



I must give a huge thanks to Maureen, Dimmock, Fran Neale, Andrea Chinery and Zoë Hughes for their terrific help in getting the show on the road.

There is such a lot to do, particularly in the last few days and we do hope that some more of you will join us next year.

It is such fun!!!!

Ann Read

TOPPESFIELD ALLOTMENTS

I always fully embrace November on the allotment as it's really the start of the next gardening year. The winter months are a great time to improve our plots, and if you think of it in terms of building a house, now's the time to lay foundations or plan a new extension.

If you want more growing space, this is, without question, the best time of year to take on another plot. We have one available and it is with regret that Mick Francis will be vacating his plot also at the end of March.

During November and for the remainder of this year, winter digging is one of my priority tasks. This gives the frost plenty of time to gradually break down the freshly dug clods, and by next spring it should have become a fine tilth. I'll also be cutting the foliage of my asparagus plants to ground level now it's turning yellow. This tired foliage has served its purpose, and I don't want it blowing around and loosening the soil around the roots. Top dressing with Manure will ensure that a bountiful crop will again hit the dinner table in May

At this time of year, I always feel an inherent need to tidy up! But while I'm filling my compost bin, I remind myself not to take it too far. I like to make a hedgehog pile with fallen branches and twigs to provide much needed shelter. These timid creatures are in decline and need our help. And I'm always happy to encourage guests who get rid of slugs!

Tommo's Tips

Take on the big jobs you've been putting off during the busy summer months, like maintenance, tidying and clearing.

November is a great time to take on a new allotment. Woven ground cover is an easy way to weaken perennial weeds over the winter so they're easier to remove in spring.

Double dig your empty beds. The bigger clods will break down to create a fine tilth with repeated winter frosts, perfect for spring planting. If you live near the coast, Boxford for instance! gather dead seaweed to use as a free-soil improver over winter.

Cover young plants with frost protection fleece this month.

Prepare a special climbing bean trench now by digging a deep ditch and filling it with vegetable scraps and organic matter. When it's full, backfill with soil or compost. The plant matter will rot down over winter and spring, providing warmth and nutrients for your bean seeds to get a head start.

Raised beds warm up quicker and drain better than regular beds, so earmark them for planting broad beans or lettuce for your first spring crops. Try making your own using pallets or old planks for a fun winter project.

Check your netted brassicas regularly, ensuring they're fully covered to keep the birds away. Do the same for your covered autumn planted garlic, onions and shallots. Make a pile of leaves to rot down in a corner. You'll have nutrient rich leaf mould in around 12 months.

Use a petrol-powered lawn mower to pick them up if you can. This shreds the leaves and speeds up their decomposition. Don't add them to the compost heap, as they break down at a much slower rate.

Spare a thought for hedgehogs at this time of year. Check before lighting any bonfires, put a hedgehog house in a quiet corner of your plot or leave a messy area over winter. They're great allies in the fight against slugs and snails.

Planning ahead

As the days darken and get colder, find a comfy armchair and start next year's crop planning! Sketch everything out on paper, and mark down sowing and planting dates on a calendar. It pays to be organised when you come to order your seeds for next year.

Check you have plenty of frost protection gear and netting to keep young plants healthy over the coming months. Mini Greenhouse Cloche made from plastic dust sheets.

Sow winter hardy broad beans into unfrozen beds and cover with a cloche or fleece. Sow dwarf variety 'The Sutton' into trays in the cold frame or into large containers under cover.

Sow hardy peas and keep them in a cold frame or an unheated greenhouse. You can plant these out in March for an early crop.

Plant garlic through November as long as the ground isn't frozen. Use netting to cover your cloves until they root to prevent birds pulling them up.

Plant onion' sets in November for harvesting next summer. Cover them with a net to keep them safe until they root. Shallots are a great addition to the veg patch too,

Cut back your yellowing asparagus foliage, if you haven't already. (I've done mine)

Sow kale seeds alongside pea shoots 'for quick windowsill crops at home. The leaves are lovely in salads and sandwiches.

Remove the lower leaves from your Brussels sprouts as they start to yellow to improve airflow.

Sow hardy winter lettuce under cloches or in grow bags in an unheated greenhouse. This variety produces large buttery heads, which are suitable for picking whole or using as a 'cut and come again' crop. Alternatively, start off with lettuce plug plants. Winter Gem' is a great choice.

Sow a few rows of the heritage radish 'Black Spanish Round' under cloches. You'll get a tasty winter crop two months after sowing.

Don't forget to collect your dog's poo if walking through the allotment's greenspaces. You are all very welcome to visit the space.

Big thanks to Ian Pain and Rae Syder for the help clearing the Bonfire site, and again to Linda Pritchard for tending the quirky Herb Garden and her enterprise in fund raising.

Paul Thompson
Chair

ENERGY SAVING TIPS

It is said that the only certainties in this world are death and taxes.

This year, however, there is another certainty: energy prices are going up, up, up.

We thought it might be useful to gather together a number of energy saving suggestions that we have come across. Most are pretty straightforward. Much of this data comes from the Energy Saving Trust - <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/> It is well worth taking a look at their website.

So:

1. Switch off everything at the plug, and don't leave anything on standby: phone chargers, cooker, microwaves, TVs all use electricity when on stand-by. Turning off a TV would save £25 per year and a microwave £16.
2. Draught-proof all windows and doors; easy, cheap and very effective; this could save up to £60 per year for a typical semi.
3. Turn off lights in rooms not being used; this could save up to £20 annually.
4. Do washing at a 30 degrees setting; this will reduce energy costs by 40% compared to a 40 degree temperature.
5. Avoid using a tumble dryer; tumble dryers are one of the most energy-intensive devices in the home and using one 3 times a week will cost over £200 per year.
6. Use the shower rather than the bath; not only does this save electricity but will reduce your water usage and cost.
7. Put a timer in your shower and limit your shower to 4 minutes
8. Boil only the amount of water you need; don't fill the kettle to make just one cuppa; apparently only one-third of Brits do this and 70% of those that don't let the water get cold and reheat for the next cuppa!
9. Fit aerators to your taps; once again this saves energy and water.
10. Make sure that your dishwasher. Is full to maximise energy savings and minimize water usage.
11. Ensure your hot water tank is well insulated. Using a 80mm thick British Standard jacket, could save you around £70 a year, which is more than the cost of the jacket.
12. If cooking vegetables, boil water in the kettle and pour into the saucepan rather than boiling the water in the saucepan.
13. Try to use slow cookers, pressure cookers, air-fryers and micro-waves instead of using your oven. (A micro-wave only heats the food, not the air around it!)
14. Make a hay box or 'Wonderbag' to keep food hot and continue to cook (great for soups, stews and casseroles – rather like a slow cooker without using any power).

ENERGY SAVING TIPS

15. As you replace lightbulbs, ensure you fit LED ones.
16. If you have a freezer, keep it full. If you need to fill spaces, scrunch up newspapers, seal in plastic bags and use those!
17. If you are sitting, use a couple of fleece throws or an extra layer of clothes to keep you warm. Keeping you warm is more important than having a warm room! Keeping a scarf around your neck when indoors will also keep you warmer, as will wearing thick socks and using wrist warmers.
18. If you have a freezer, cook more than one meal's worth of food and freeze portions to have your own home-made ready-meals. You will use less energy per meal and help fill up your freezer
19. If defrosting food, do so in the fridge. This lowers the temperature of the fridge so the motor doesn't have to work as hard, and doesn't take the warmth out of the air in the kitchen. Also check that the motor on your fridge is dust free to help efficiency.

It might seem that some of these suggestions won't make much difference individually. BUT if you add up all these small gains for your household and multiply that by all the 215 homes in the parish, not only is the total amount of money saved quite considerable but reduced consumption lessens the risk of power cuts.

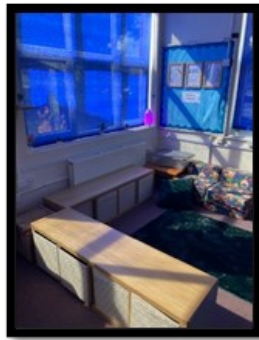


St. Margaret's C of E Primary School



We had a busy first half term back in school with lots going on.

Our nurture room is being put to good use to support children in being ready to learn, as are the resources that have been purchased as part of the development.



We were delighted to be back at St. Margaret's Church in the village to celebrate Harvest Festival at the start of October and joined with the church in collecting items for the local food bank and for Cold Hands, Warm Hearts.

We also joined in with the MacMillan Big Coffee morning and raised a fantastic £160.30 for this deserving charity.

Coming up this term will be a very different nativity on the last day of the school term. On Tuesday 20th December we will be working with St. Margaret's Church to come together in a walking nativity in the afternoon which will take place around the village and will end with a crib service in the church, due to start at approximately 2:00 pm to which all are invited.

Facebook: [St. Margaret's CofE Primary School, Toppesfield](#)

Twitter: @StMargaretsTopp

Instagram: stmargaretstopp



TOPPESFIELD Community Shop

It's official!

We are thrilled to announce that we now hold a licence to sell alcohol in our shop.

We will, therefore, soon, be stocking,

Toppesfield Wines

Pumphouse Beers

alongside selected lagers, wines and spirits.

Please note, we shall, in line with all policing

and child safety policies,

be adhering to the Challenge 25 measures.


TOPPESFIELD
Vineyard
Fine English Wine from East Anglia

PUMPHOUSE
BREWERY


Grant's

BACARDI

FOSTER'S

Gordon's



CHALLENGE **25**

IF YOU ARE LUCKY ENOUGH TO LOOK UNDER YOU WILL BE ASKED TO PROVE YOU ARE OVER 18 WHEN YOU BUY ALCOHOL

IF YOU ARE UNDER 18, IT IS AN OFFENCE TO BUY OR ATTEMPT TO BUY ALCOHOL

ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF ID:

- CARDS BEARING THE PASS HOLOGRAM
- PHOTO CARD DRIVING LICENCE
- PASSPORT
- MILITARY ID



** some of the selection of alcohol products shown are done so by way of examples and not as a definitive of sales*



**The Next Village Markets will be held at
Toppesfield Village Hall on:**



Saturday 5th November 10.30am—12.30pm

Saturday 3rd December 11.00 am—3pm—Christmas Market

Please pop along to see what is on offer from fresh meat, jams, pastries, and cakes to handmade crafts, cards, jewellery and more.

Or pop in for a tasty bacon roll and a cuppa with friends.



A big 'Thank you, Toppesfield' from Ukraine



During the year Toppesfield has hosted three Ukrainian families who escaped from the initial Russian invasion of their country.

The first to arrive, at the end of April, were Tetiana and her children Mira and Misha, from north of Kiev, an area which suffered badly at the outset of the invasion. They were followed the following week by Natalia and Valeria, who come from Transcarpathia in the rural west of Ukraine.



Misha, Mira & Tetiana

Mira who is 7 years old attended the village school and her brother Misha (who must have been the inspiration for the non-stop Duracell bunny) was at Little Chestnuts Pre-school. Meanwhile, Valeria was welcomed into the Sixth-form at Hedingham.

Many of you would have seen them all around the village (especially at the Green Man on Friday evenings!) and they were regular attendees at St Margaret's church. And any-



Valeria & Natalia

one who attended Happy's Circus in June would have seen the magnificent cakes made by Natalia; they were delicious.

Later in June Iryna arrived with her son Mykola. They are from Mikolaev in Kerson province, but Mykola, fortunately, was studying in Lithuania when Russia invaded so was able to join his mum in England. They, too, discovered the joys of the English pub and worked at Toppesfield vineyard during their stay.



Mykola & Iryna

As things appeared to be settling down in Ukraine, they all decided to return home to reunite with husbands, families and friends.

Natalia and Valeria left us in late July, Iryna and Mykola in August and Tetiana and her children departed in mid-October.

Each family is still in contact with their Toppesfield hosts and all of them have very fond memories of their stay in Toppesfield and of the very warm welcome they invariably received. Our quiet, peaceful and safe village is the antithesis of what they had left and what their families were experiencing. They were also fortunate to find themselves in a village with a school, with a shop, with a pre-school, with a pub.

As a village we should be pleased that we have an infrastructure that can accommodate 'ordinary' people fleeing from a war zone; not many villages of our size can do that.

They want us to pass on their thanks for the support and friendship they received, both from individuals and from the numerous organisations that helped them. We hope that the next time they visit us it will be on holiday and this terrible war is over.

Meanwhile with winter approaching and the Russians becoming evermore violent in their actions, let's not forget our Ukrainian friends and their families.



Home again with Daddy!



***Please join in the fun on Saturday 3rd December for our
Parish's Christmas Celebrations***

Toppesfield Village Market

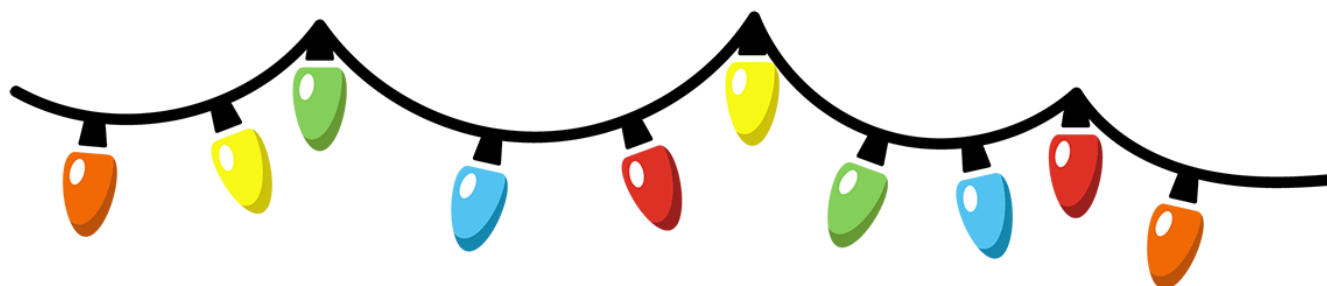
11am — 3pm Come along and do some Christmas Shopping locally



St Margaret's of Antioch Church

***Help the children dress the Christmas tree — arts and crafts and
tombola 2.30pm — 4 pm.***

Christmas Tree Display open until 6pm



***From 6pm—Gather round the village pump, enjoy a glass of mulled
wine and sausage rolls and meet some festive friends and help us to
countdown to***

turn on the village tree lights at 6.30pm

***Please feel free to put up your lights and start your Christmas celebrations
with us on***

Saturday 3rd December.





We here at the Green Man would like to thank all of our Customers for their support in our First Year.

Please see Facebook or our A Board for upcoming events.

Wishing everyone a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

Tel; 01787237418

Bar Opening Hours;

Monday Closed

Tuesday - Thursday 3- Close

Friday – Sunday 12- Close

Kitchen Opening Hours;

Wednesday & Thursday 12-8

Friday & Saturday 12-9

Sunday 12-4

An update from WASC October 2022

Since our last update we are pleased to announce another Parish Council has joined WASC. Ridgewell has joined bringing the present number of PCs to 14.

Many months of hard work by the technical sub-committee of WASC means that phase one of the work programme is almost completed. This brings us up to date and well prepared for what we feel is an inevitable planning application for 2 mega prisons by the MoJ.

The work programme has involved the following

1. A detailed landscape character assessment and how the prisons are likely to affect this has been finalised.
2. A comprehensive study on how such large mega prisons in such a rural location are not in the national interest has been finalised. Produced by Dr Richard Sidebottom and Frank Easton and running to 40 pages, this is a hugely impressive and compelling study based on solid evidence and extensively researched data, the bibliography of references quoted runs to 5 pages.
3. A paper has also been written strongly countering the MoJ assertion that this is 'previously developed land'. The proposed prisons are to be sited on what is now existing grassland and part runway, the proposed prisons take over no footprint of any current building.
4. A response to the Prisons Strategy White Paper has also been sent back to the MoJ. It demonstrates quite clearly that such a large prison in such a rural location actually conflicts with the MOJs own guidelines.
5. We have undertaken our own traffic surveys to get baseline figures on current traffic flows around the area.
6. A strategic accessibility study is also nearing completion. This study will show how Wethersfield airbase is actually one of the most remote areas in relation to what Government considers a strategic road, or in other words, a road suitable to manage further development.
7. A heritage assessment has been finalised with key assets identified and a strategy for their protection underway
8. A legal assessment has been made as how Crichel Down - the rules in which the land was originally compulsory purchased - currently affect the site. When land is offered from one government department to another, the Government can avoid offering the land back to the previous owners to be purchased.
9. A review of Local and National Planning Policy has been undertaken, it is clear these prisons, in such a location, contravene a huge amount of these planning policy frameworks.

An update from WASC October 2022 continued

10. A review on the outcomes of other planning applications for mega prisons is also underway.
11. The Transport Assessment has been completed. A well-respected traffic consultant has been appointed and is currently working hard on this. It is obvious to all that live here that the roads simply cannot take the increase in traffic these prisons will generate. A professional and detailed assessment of the impact of these prisons on the road network is obviously the major factor in this application and WASC will endeavour to make sure this assessment is as thorough as can be.
12. It is planned that the four parishes with part of the airbase within their parish will work together on a joint Neighbourhood Plan which will cover all of Wethersfield and Finchingfield and just the parts of Toppesfield and Sible Hedingham that include part of the airfield.

As mentioned before, we are extremely lucky to have such expertise within WASC that a lot of the above work has been done 'in house'. The work of Councilor John Pearce in particular has been instrumental in making sure we have the most professional and comprehensive work programme finished.

Dr Richard Sidebottom and Frank Easton have produced a report providing a very clear and detailed analysis as to why these prisons are not in the national interest and this could become a key factor in the planning discussion. Their comprehensive report (40 pages long) 'People, Place and Performance' subtitled 'Are rural Mega Prisons in the National Interest?' is being distributed by WASC and by SWAP to senior politicians and relevant cabinet ministers, BDC and Essex senior planning officers and councillors, as well as the prison service and police etc. If you would like an electronic copy, please contact Trisha Roberts.

A small number of WASC technical sub-committee members met with planning officers at BDC in September. Whilst officers cannot comment on their likely response to a planning application until it is received, they did take an interest in the work program outlined above and we believe were impressed by the depth of the work we have done so far. We would therefore expect that this would form part of their considerations when they process the planning application from MoJ.

WASC will continue to work hard, ensuring our voice is heard, we will also, with the help of The Fields Association, be pushing for alternative uses for the site – uses that can benefit all of us.



TOPPESFIELD



Community Shop



*Support your community
to enable them to support you!*

**We stock a wide range of
frozen and convenience foods
as well as many household products
alongside our fresh and 'to order' services
all at very competitive prices**



Weekly orders

Bacon
Ham
Sausages
Chicken
Lamb
Beef

PRIORS HALL FARM



Fresh Quality Meat

Prices dependent on cut and weight

Fine wines



TOPPESFIELD
Vineyard

OZES
cdp

*also available in
our freezer cabinet*

Specialty
CAKES
PIES
PASTRIES

Magazines & Newspapers

Do you have a favourite periodical? Albeit Daily, Fortnightly, Monthly, we can order it for you.

Eat In or Takeaway

***Coffee, Tea, Hot Chocolate, Cold Drinks, Ice Cream
Soup, Rolls***

OPENING TIMES

Mondays	.....	8.30am - 4.00pm
Tuesdays	.....	8.30am - 4.00pm
Wednesdays	.....	8.30am - 4.00pm
Thursdays	.....	8.30am - 4.00pm
Fridays	.....	8.30am - 4.00pm
Saturdays	.....	10.00am - 12.30pm

**POST
OFFICE**

OPEN
Wednesdays
10.00am - 1.00pm



Danaher Animal Home

Apollo is our loveable giant cane corso.

True to his breeds nature he bonds well with his immediate carers here where he is exceptionally loving and loyal.

Apollo needs an experienced home who loves and understands his breed. It is essential you understand what this brilliant breed is all about to ensure you have the right pet and Apollo has his needs met and behaviour managed.

The team are working on basic obedience, currently he is learning to walk to heel, sit, stay and come, naturally he is so keen to stimulate and work his brain that he loves training activities.

Apollo is still growing and has boisterous moments as he is a young adolescent dog so he needs a family who are confident with big breeds.

When he is not busy training he loves to play with his toys, roll around for belly rubs or go for a dip in our pool!

Apollo is one fantastic dog and will be the most loyal and fun dog in the right home.

If you are interested in rehoming Apollo, please fill out an application form online at www.danaheranimalhome.org.uk



Toppesfield Parish Paths Group

New Year Walk

Sunday 8th January 2023

Meet at Green Man at
10.30am

- Start the year as you mean to go on.
- Join me for a ramble around our beautiful parish.
- Walk off the excesses of the last few weeks.
- An hour and half to two hours depending on weather and conditions.
- Stout footwear recommended. It might be a bit muddy!
- Dogs welcome, on a lead please.
- Great exercise, conversation and company.
- ALL WELCOME

Why not book in for Sunday lunch in
The Green Man for when we get back

Further information Ann Read 01787 237464