

**May / June 2024**

**Edition 199**



**TOPPEFIELD**  
**& GAINSFORD END** *Parish Newsletter*



## 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	07341 264219
Little Chestnuts Preschool	079018 80914
Pumphouse Brewery	07786 861009
Rev. Caroline Brown	01787 469161
St Margaret's School	01787 237354
The Green Man Public House	01787 237418
Toppesfield Community Shop	07895 510767
Toppesfield Village Hall Bookings	
Wendy Ames	07933743724
Vets - Ardmore, Gt Yeldham	01787 238255

## TOPPESFIELD COMMUNITY SHOP

Church Lane, Toppesfield. Tel: 07895 510767

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

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8.30 am— 4.00 pm

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## 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

**Your Councillors are** - Alan Collard, Amanda Smith, Kitty Bourlet, Frances Winter, Jeremy Graves, Paula Edwards-Holmes and Jane Daines.

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](mailto:clerk.toppesfieldparishcouncil@gmail.com)

**Please submit your articles for the next newsletter by 19th June 2024**

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



In 1845, when he was in northern Italy, Robert Browning wrote his poem, 'Home-thoughts from Abroad'. It began:

*Oh, to be in England*

*Now that April's there*

Well, I doubt he would have written such lines in April 2024!

April this year has been cold, wet and windy, a bit like a glass of Fosters.

Writing this article now, at the very end of the month, I am thinking more about the old proverb:

*'March winds and April showers bring forth the May flowers'.*

Let's hope that turns out to be correct.

So we look ahead to summer and already you will see in this edition of the Newsletter that there are events being planned for the next four or five months and more will no doubt follow.

Regular village walks? Check.

Music events? Check.

Quiz evenings? Check

And so on.

We are fortunate to live in such an active village. As a community we punch well above our weight, benefiting not only from our invaluable community owned amenities such as the shop and pub but also from all the hard working volunteers that keep these assets running but also undertake new events and activities.

At the Annual Parish Meeting last week, it was recognised that one of the areas in which the village falls short is communicating fully to all parishioners.

Efforts will therefore be made to rectify this situation over the coming weeks and months by using all the appropriate communication channels not just within the parish but also in the surrounding area.

Each organisation sent a report on its activities and plans to the Annual Parish Meeting and these will soon be posted to the PC website - Home - Toppesfield Parish Council ([e-voice.org.uk](http://e-voice.org.uk))

Staying on the theme of communication, if there is anything you would like especially to see in the Newsletter please let our Clerk, Kaaren, know. Alternatively, you can write an article yourself if you wish or share any photos you have taken of the village.

The next Newsletter will be published in July and will be the 200 th edition, so it would be good to make that a bumper issue!

## Parish Council Information

A summary of Parish Council goings-on at the March and April Meetings:

In March District Councillor Richard van Dulken reported that:

- The 2024/25 BDC budget was approved at Full Council on 19<sup>th</sup> February, with no Councillor voting against, with the BDC portion of the total Council Tax bills increased by 2.96% - approx. 11p per week for a Band D dwelling, which is one of the lowest rates in Essex.
- The Councillors' Community Grant will continue during the coming year, with the same rate as this year, of £1,250 per Councillor.
- I can confirm that the Application for £312 from the PC, for dog waste bags and wall holders is allowable and will be paid over in April, the new financial year.
- I am pleased to have learnt that there will be patching of potholes (“patching”) on Great Yeldham Road very shortly - as the Clerk is aware this will involve a closure or reduced access to the road during 18-20 March.
- The most recent news I have on Wethersfield (following a meeting on the site a few weeks ago) is that there are 550-600 users, and we were informed that no crime had been attributed to the migrant residents. The Home Office has advised that they intend to use Wethersfield for 3 years, with a 6-month decommissioning period at the end of 3 years. On a more positive note, the prisons team at the Department of Justice appears to have no further interest in Wethersfield as a prison site, as better located sites have been approved.
- I have been appointed as the Braintree District representative on the Essex Flood Partnership Board which meets 4 times a year. I appreciate that floods from rivers are not a major issue in Toppesfield but the remit of the Board does extend to surface water and drainage issues, while not being involved in day-to-day maintenance which is generally Essex Highways, or Anglian Water.
- As you may have seen in the news, BDC Operations were able to assist Uttlesford with their bin collections, over 16 days in February, with no adverse effect on our operations.
- BDC has announced a new small grants scheme providing grants of up to £10,000 to start or enhance community projects which support residents with the cost of living. Any non-profit community group can apply as long as they can evidence that the project supports one of the main objectives of the “Cost of Living Fund”, has a clear purpose, and benefits District residents.

## Parish Council Information continued.

Other parish council business included: confirmation of a grant award towards the cost of dog poo bag dispensers and bags to help encourage people to pick up after their dogs. Research into the use of Common Land was carried out, and the litter pick arrangements were finalised. Thank you to everyone who turn out to help. As you can see lots of rubbish was collected.



In April County Councillor Peter Schwier reported that:

- Essex County Councils LED lighting programme is hoped to be completed by the end of the year. There have been 4000 fewer faults reported with the LED lights than last year.
- The 5-year tree planting initiative has been completed a year early with 375,000 trees planted and another 100,000 are hoping to be planted next year. £380,000 was budgeted but grants received for the project more than covered the costs.
- Essex County Council has launched its first ever water strategy at their Spring Climate Summit – details of which can be found on their website at: [New Water Strategy for Essex | Essex County Council](#)

District Councillor Richard van Dulken reported:

- Wethersfield - Asylum Centre: the organisers have recognised some of the challenges and are aiming to cap the number of residents to 800.
- Wethersfield – Prison: Braintree District Council are still going ahead with their final appeal on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> April 2024, however it would appear the project maybe fading away as other more suitable sites have been identified.
- Councillors Community Grant – Last year £300 was given to Little Chestnuts Preschool for their upcoming 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event and £100 to St Margarets for their summer club activities. So far this year £312 will be given to the Parish Council for Dog poop bag dispensers and bags.
- There was over a 50% take up in the green waste subscription service.
- Braintree District Council has adopted its Corporate Strategy for 2024.
- It is the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Braintree District Council this month.

Other business included: the Neighbourhood plan is still progressing, defects and highway issues along Church Lane were discussed and reported to Essex Highways .

Full minutes of each meeting can be found on the parish website.

If you have any issues you would like to raise with the Council please do get in touch or attend the open session at a Parish Council meeting.



## Parish Channel Sweeping

Braintree District Council will be carrying out their next channel sweeping run on:

**Friday 31st May 2024 in Toppesfield and**

**Monday 3rd June 2024 in Gainsford End**

It would be appreciated if you could park on your driveways or elsewhere on these days to allow the sweepers to have clear access to the road channels.

Both sweeps are only scheduled to take half a day so disruption will hopefully be minimal.

Thank you for your help and understanding.



## Toppesfield and Gainsford End Village Show

Yes we have to start thinking about our fantastic village show.

The date is Saturday 14th September 2024 in Toppesfield Village Hall from 2.00pm.

As always lots of classes to enter, delicious refreshments , local produce stalls and a great afternoon.

So get sewing, sowing, painting, cooking and clicking.

We always need more help so why not join us and get involved in this fantastic event. So many villages have lost their shows so do not let Toppesfield be one of them.

Want to get involved do contact me.

Ann Read

01787 237464/ m .07981422665

# St. Margaret's Church, Toppesfield.

A huge thank you to everyone who made our Easter Messy Church so enjoyable and such a wonderful success.

**Our next Messy Church will be:**

**Wednesday, 29<sup>th</sup> May**

**10.30 – around 12.15**



**To Celebrate The Feast of Pentecost**



**We will be enjoying a morning with lots of fun, crafts and activities based around the Story of Pentecost. Refreshments will be available.**

**We look forward to welcoming you and having a great time together.**

**For further information, please contact:**

**Tia Stickland: [tiastickland@hotmail.com](mailto:tiastickland@hotmail.com)**

**To ensure we comply with the latest Safeguarding rules and are still able to run activities, unfortunately, we are not able to allow any child to be left unless accompanied and supervised by a parent or carer. Our main priority is to ensure your child is safe, while enjoying time with us.**

**We appreciate you supporting our activities, and we really hope that you understand the need for us to be transparent and ensure the safety of all.**



## ***Thank You***

The new play equipment at the pub has been installed and is ready for action! This fantastic addition to our beloved village would not have been a reality without the incredible support and generosity of our community.

A huge shoutout to the Red Barrows, Toppesfield Community Shop, our very own Janet & Kevin and the Bacon Roll Fund for their significant contributions that made this project possible.

I also want to extend a special thank you to the amazing team of volunteers—Adam Carter, Bill Littler, Chris Waterhouse, Mark Bishop, Rob Stafford-Baker, and Simon Hughes—who dedicated several weeks of hard work, come rain or shine, to bring this project to life. A heartfelt thanks to Alan Lingley from The Play Inspection Company Ltd. Alan not only assisted with the installation but also generously provided his expert inspection services free of charge.

Thank you, everyone, for your dedication and community spirit! Here's to many fun and joyful moments at the pub for our little ones.

Kat xx







## **St Margaret's Church Services for May - June 2024**

All the below services are at 11.00am

May 5th Morning Prayer

May 12th Ascension Holy Communion (Common Worship)

May 19th Service for Pentecost

May 26th Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

June 2nd Morning Prayer

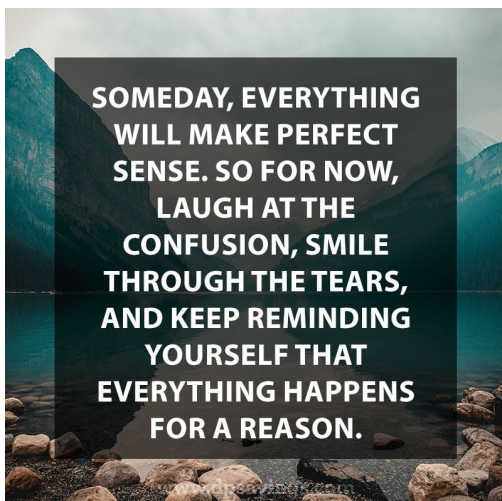
June 9th Holy Communion (Common Worship)

June 16th Morning Prayer

June 23rd Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

June 30th No service here. Benefice service to be confirmed.

All Holy Communion services will be led by Rev Graham Ridgewell.





## **St. Margaret's C of E Primary School**

As we begin the summer term in school, we are delighted to share with you some of the things we have been doing and some of the things we have coming up.

We were thrilled to hold our first community coffee afternoon, where the children enjoyed playing games with the people who came along. Our huge thanks to the Friends of St. Margaret's School who provided lots of cakes and supported us in our first event of this nature. We will be holding our second community coffee afternoon between 2:00 pm and 3:00 pm on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> June. We hope to see lots of you there!

Last term, we celebrated reading with book week in school, which expanded upon World Book Day. We had a fabulous week thinking about what it means to 'read your way' and also invited parents and carers to come and share in new books with their children at our Reading Cafes, which were enjoyed by all. Our house captains and deputies were fantastic wait staff serving their customers their books!

In addition to these special events and the brilliant learning going on across the school, Blossom Class had the opportunity to join with other primary schools taking part in the Braintree Sings concert; had our Easter craft open afternoon and held our second Maggie's Museum.

FOSMs also ran their popular Easter raffles and an Easter Egg hunt for the children.

As we look forward to this term, we have lots planned including a trip to Boydell's farm, sports day, our production of 'Hoodwinked' and our leavers service for year 6. We'll be packing things in!

We would also like to let you know that our hall is now available for lettings.

If you have a need for a letting for a one-off event or a regular booking and are struggling to find a suitable space, why not contact the school office by emailing [admin@st-margaretscofe.essex.sch.uk](mailto:admin@st-margaretscofe.essex.sch.uk) or calling 01787 237354 to find out more.

## St. Margaret's C of E Primary School continued



Do remember to follow us on social media and like and share our posts far and wide!

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

X (formerly twitter): @StMargaretsTopp

Instagram: stmargaretstopp



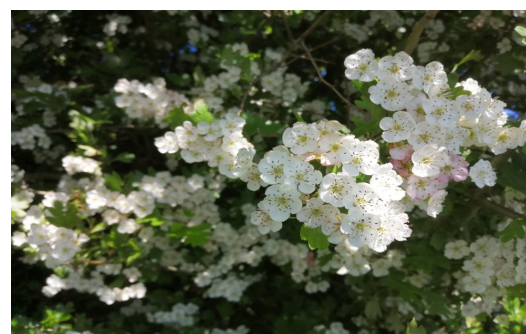
## News from the Footpaths



Hi Everyone

Well it does seem that the rain has eased up for a bit. What a Spring! We have had some lovely days but it always seems to rain in the night. Still wet and warm does mean that the plants are rushing out of the ground providing some much needed early pollen and nectar for the bees and butterflies. I have had lots of bumble bees and several brimstone butterflies visiting my garden already which is a joy to behold. They are the pale yellow butterflies and always seem to be the early ones to visit. Of course the birds are busy courting their partners with their song, building their nests and laying eggs. So the cycle continues. I always think Spring is such a bringer of hope after what seems an endless and dreary Winter.

The blackthorn blossom seems to have been more spectacular than ever this year, coating the hedgerows almost like snow. Soon to be followed by the May or hawthorn and the verges have been carpeted by first snowdrops and primroses and now cowslips. Magic.



The footpaths have continued to be pretty soggy but things do seem to be drying up a bit. Thank you again to our farmers for marking out cross field footpaths as soon as they are able. This year has been such a challenge for them as many fields were too wet to be drilled in the Autumn which made walking across ploughed fields very difficult. Now the pressure is on to get crops planted. Of course the brilliant yellow of the rape crop is painting our landscape and the brown fields are gradually turning to green.

I have been Footpath officer for Toppesfield for many years but feel it is time to hand on the baton (or walking pole!). I am delighted to tell you that Paul Thompson has agreed to take it on and I wish him well. He has already started a weekly walking group which meets every Thursday at 10.00 am from The Green Man which is being well supported by two legged and four legged walkers. Do join them.

Enjoy your walking.

Ann Read



## **Toppesfield Village Hall**

Following my last article in the Newsletter, we once again provided a warm environment for the many litter pickers who turned out to do the fantastic job of keeping our village clean and free of rubbish. It's amazing how many bags of litter are collected on these occasions. Once again the volunteers were welcomed into the Hall with hot drinks, cakes and biscuits. The table tennis was in action for those who still had the energy to play!

By the time this article appears, the Village Hall Committee will have held their AGM and hopefully either the existing members will still be in office or new faces may have come forward.

At the moment plans are being discussed to further improve facilities, so it's an ongoing job. The existing committee have worked well to keep the Hall in good shape so that hiring of the Hall, for whatever occasion, provides a suitable venue.

Let's hope this year the weather will be kind to everyone who hires the Hall and garden, so whether indoor or outdoor, we hope you enjoy hiring your Village Hall.

Jean Bagnall on behalf of the Village Hall Committee, 01787 238178, if I can be of help.

**The Next Village Markets will be held at  
Toppesfield Village Hall on:  
Saturday 4th May— 10.30 am —12.30 pm  
Saturday 1st June— 10.30 am —12.30 pm  
Saturday 6th July—10.30am—12.30pm**

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.

## TOPPESFIELD ALLOTMENTS with NASLAG

We have new young plot holders joined the Lotty this year and only have one plot left ! Welcome to Hayley, Annie, Bonnie and James. It was a hive of activity on Sunday the 14<sup>th</sup> with lots of Children having a great time .

My first 4 crops of Asparagus have been pan fried in garlic butter and eaten with sirloin steak and black pudding (Yum).

### TOMMOS TIPS

We can soon plant out Courgettes and Beets, other Salad Staples and Main Crop Tatties as they say in Scotland and don't forget Onions ( why not try Shallots and Garlic in the same plot ?).

### NASLAG INFO

The humble cauliflower has bloomed. Once a soggy side at school dinners, this bland brassica is now the highlight of many an Instagram snap or hip restaurant menu. And whilst edible trends tend to come and go, the craze for cauli seems to be here to stay.

In culinary terms, cauliflower is often treated as a blank canvas, partly because it is fairly flavourless on it's own. This cruciferous vegetable has a tightly packed texture, lending itself to being served as vegan steaks, chopped as a rice alternative, deep fried as 'cauliflower wings' and let's not forget the classic comforting cauliflower cheese.

It's a versatile veg; useful raw in salads, puréed, mashed, grated, roasted and it freezes well. Don't throw the stems – they are equally nutritious and can be used as a base for soup and in slaws.

Cauliflowers have a reputation for being tricky to grow, but with the right planning, growing conditions and care, you can cultivate a Cauli to rival any of those in the shops.

There are hundreds of varieties of cauliflower. A reliable variety is 'All The Year Round', one of the easiest to grow and can be harvested from spring through to autumn. But to make the extra effort worthwhile, why not have a go at growing a stand-out variety.

## TOPPESFIELD ALLOTMENTS with NASLAG continued....



### Cauliflower companion planting tip:

Try growing cauliflowers with mint to deter flea beetles. Nasturtiums planted nearby will help to draw cabbage white butterflies away from your crop. Runner Beans ,Stick Beans and Carrots can all be planted out in May .

For those that are not aware, I have taken over the responsibility of coordinating the Footpaths for the parish council I was press ganged in to it by Ann Read who has done great works for many years, Thank you Ann.

We at the Allotments have always kept the footpaths around the plots open and accessible to Parishioners Rob Stafford Baker and Myself were instrumental in creating the greensward behind the Causeway that is used by the school kids on the way to school.

My focus will be on keeping the footpaths free of Dog Mess and arranging working parties for any maintenance that is required with the BDC representative .

I have also started a weekly walk on Thursdays at 10 AM for approximately 1½ hrs - often finishing with a coffee at the Shop CAFE watch out for info on the Parish Forum FB page (thanks to the admin for this useful tool).

Pics of the site

Cherry Blossom and The Herb Garden ( thanks To Linda Pritchard )



Paul Thompson Chair



# PUMPHOUSE

## BREWERY

As the famous Victorian poet and aficionado of beer, Alfred Lord Tennyson so aptly put it: 'In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of beer'. Or something like that.

Well, it is Spring (really, it is) and the thoughts of us all at Pumphouse are certainly turning to beer.

After a pretty quiet start to the year, we have noted a marked increase in orders for our ales, which of course we have been delighted to meet.

The range of customers is gradually increasing and we have been supplying across north Essex, which is really satisfying. Mick Simms and Tina Mason, although they stepped down from the committee earlier this year, are continuing to help the brewery by delivering much of the beer. It seems that after a working life delivering beer, Mick just cannot stop. Forget the Duracell Bunny; we have the Duracell Drayman.



Of course, this June sees the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day, when the largest seaborne invasion in history took place along the beaches of Normandy. There is real interest in our Allied Amber, 9<sup>th</sup>'s Havocs and 19 Elms beers, including from Royal British Legion branches which are holding commemorative events. So, just like our forebears in 1944 you can roll out that barrel with ales from Pumphouse!

The summer season is always busier, of course, and we have had requests from beer festivals (you will find our beers at the Braintree Festival from Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> to Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June, for example) and private parties as well as events like the Shalford Summer Fete on 22<sup>nd</sup> June.

Toppesfield's own event will take place on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June. Chris Ames and Sam Burnett together with Reptile Dysfunction and a whole load of other bands and musicians will be hosting another Music Extravaganza. The Brewery Pallet Bar will be open, as in the past, to supply a range of Pumphouse beers.

So let's drink to a warm and successful summer – with beers from Pumphouse, of course.

Cheers!



Dear All

Over the past 14 years living in Toppesfield, we have endeavoured to promote and encourage the owl population. This was partly driven by the owls in residence when we first moved in to the village a large old tawny that would sit in the ash tree high up, wisely observing the comings and goings.

Over the years, I have installed a number of owl boxes, four in total with good success, including a pair of kestrels that nest once a year. We have owls in two of the boxes with a number of sightings through the year.

Aviation and flying has been a lifelong interest and vocation but watching and observing owls has demonstrated how far man's attempts at flight and design are behind the wonders of nature. Owls are truly amazing.

Silent flight, hunting along hedgerows and field margins, unfortunately, as their natural habitat of rough pasture has all but disappeared. Owls strictly control their diet and weight to be able to fly and hunt effectively. They unfortunately cannot tolerate extremes of wet weather as their downy feathers, enabling silent flight are prone to getting wet.

They generally hunt at dawn and dusk and early morning if they are feeding young from April to June. Unfortunately their habits come into conflict with our movement: over the years I have discovered five owls in Toppesfield hit by cars. One tawny survived after rehabilitation at Stonham barns owl sanctuary but the others were either dead or died shortly after.

Owls can be difficult to avoid, especially when flying low, hunting along roadways. Dazzled and disorientated by headlights and the noise of vehicles, their ability to see in the dark with hearing that is highly developed and extremely sensitive, they are unable to move out of our way quickly enough.

We all have our lives to live but if we can find time just to slow down at the critical times at dawn and dusk, we may be able to live a more sustainable future for all.

You may not see an owl very often but you will definitely hear them in the evening hooting and screeching.

Long may the wise old owls live 'Tu-whit tu-whoo'

Andrew Daines





## Toppesfield Cricket Club

Well, Spring has arrived and our attention turns to a new season for Toppesfield Cricket Club. We continue to try and gather a wide range of cricket lovers to play for our team which, like many local teams is proving difficult to achieve.

We aim to try and play local teams when we can, and preferably at our wonderful home pitch at the Playing Fields. If you are interested in joining our Club on an informal and social basis please do contact us. We have our own Facebook Page that will keep you up to date with all things cricket in Toppesfield.

We have appointed a new groundskeeper, Rob Sullivan, who will now take charge of keeping our wicket fed, watered and manicured ready for home games as they are accepted. We would like to thank Nick Hasler for his outstanding efforts in maintaining the wicket, purchasing the excellent equipment that we now have and for generally devoting most of his weekends to ensuring we have the best pitch available to play on.

Importantly, we are keen to be involved in the community and offer our facilities to those wishing to practice their skills with bat and ball. As the warmer weather approaches we will be opening up our Nets at the Playing Field for villagers to use. We aim to also be in attendance for one session per week to offer coaching and support and promote the game that we all love.

As in previous years, we hope to be organizing our all welcome Crinders Match in the Summer. This is always well attended and we look forward to welcoming the community to take part. We also hope to have a fundraising event later in the year to keep our club financially viable and more details of this will be announced in the Newsletter in due course.

We welcome all of you as spectators when we play and again we will confirm these on our Facebook Page and in the Newsletter.

Andrew Bull

Toppesfield Cricket Club Committee



## Spring has sprung – what crime does it bring?

Well spring has sprung and the migration into the garden has commenced with all the extra jobs that it brings. Unfortunately with the spring season also comes seasonal crimes too and we need give it a little consideration to prevent it and help others from becoming victims too.

**New tools and lawn mowers:** Be mindful of how you dispose of the packaging to your new purchases; don't advertise it to the thieves and burglars with your empty boxes on display outside for roadside collection. Fold boxes inside out or break them up and put them in bag for collection.

**Property marking:** It's a good deterrent if your property is visibly security marked with your house number and post code or labelled if a forensic property marking system is used such as [www.smartwater.com](http://www.smartwater.com) or [www.selectadna.co.uk](http://www.selectadna.co.uk). You can also record the serial numbers of any property free of charge at [www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com). If your property does get stolen with property marking and/or recording on Immobilise there is a greater chance of you getting it back.

**Working in the garden:** It is easy to get engrossed in what you are doing when working in the garden, if the house is empty it is wise to close and lock the door (don't forget the key though!). Put tools away after use, "it add insult to injury" if your tools are used to break into your house.

**Shed security:** With sheds coach-bolt and plate the padlock hasp sections to the frame and door, use a good quality "Close Shackle" padlock or a key operated mortice lock; don't forget the hinges ensure they cannot be unscrewed. Protect windows with a wire mesh and fit a curtain or white wash the windows to prevent prying eyes. Products that are fit for purpose can found by looking for the "Secured by Design" or "Sold Secure" logos, or on their websites [www.securedbydesign.com](http://www.securedbydesign.com) or [www.soldsecure.com](http://www.soldsecure.com).

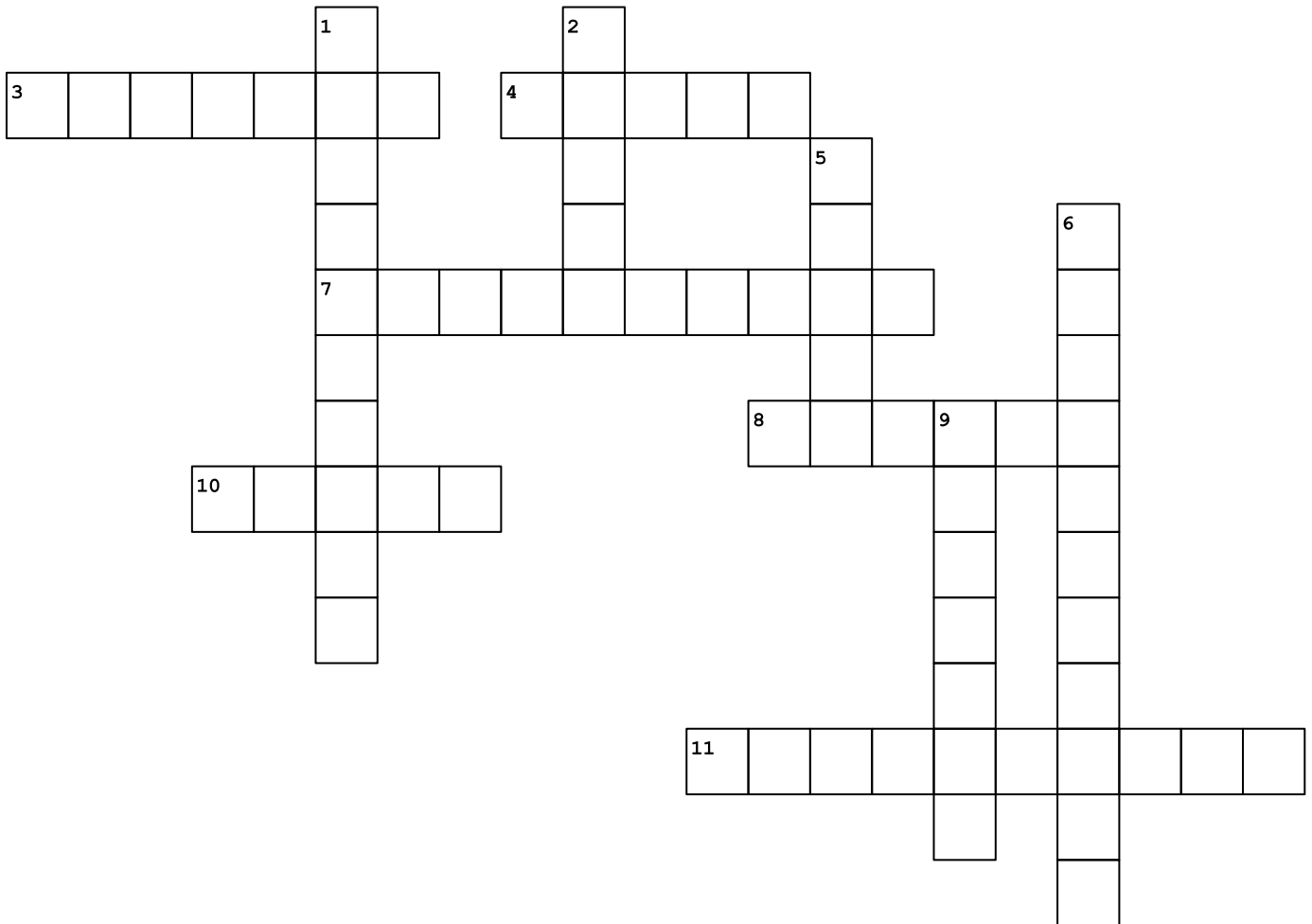
**New plants:** Larger plants etc can be secured to land or rootball anchors or plant through chicken wire covering the area with soil. Cement or bolt down containers to the ground. Your local garden centre or DIY store should be able to help.

**Rogue Traders:** The rogue trader also takes advantage of the fine weather to con the unsuspecting.

Although you may think you would never be taken in by them they can be very convincing especially to the elderly or vulnerable "I am laying some gravel up the road and see you need some....." "I notice your trees or shrubs need a prune..." so many stories. Look after the elderly or vulnerable near you and step in should you need to with a little advice, also another face sometime puts the rogue trader off. Need a trader and have no personal recommendations, look at [www.buywithconfidence](http://www.buywithconfidence) for traders checked out by Trading Standards.



## Another teatime teaser about Toppesfield and Gainsford End



### Across

- 3. This Baroness's portrait is in the village hall (7)
- 4. How many years old is Little Chestnuts Preschool? (5)
- 7. A place to grow your own (10)
- 8. Historically the parish is associated with this type of farming (6)
- 10. Play with these in bowls or walk through them (5)
- 11. This house has a roof made of reeds (10)

### Down

- 1. A local flying formation team (10)
- 2. How many bells are in the church tower ? (5)
- 5. You find this at the front of the Church (5)
- 6. How many metres above sea level is Toppesfield ? (11)
- 9. The Flintstones was set in this town or a house in Toppesfield (7)

## What is Common land and what are you allowed to do on it?



This question was raised with the Parish Council recently.

The definition of this can be found on the government website, [Common land and village greens - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/common-land-and-village-greens) where it reads:

Common land is owned, for example by a local council, privately or by the National Trust.

You usually have the [right to roam](#) on it. This means you can use it for certain activities like walking and climbing.

Some common land has different rights, so you may be able to use it for other activities, for example horse-riding.

You cannot:

- camp on common land without the owner's permission
- light a fire or have a barbecue
- hold a festival or other event without permission
- drive across it without permission unless you have the [right to access your property](#)

More information about common land can be found at [Land ownership, use and rights: common lands - The National Archives](#)

The reason for the question being raised was due to increased garden waste being left in Church Lane on the historic 'burning heap'. With the increased size of the burning heap (when lit), if left unsupervised this could cause problems for the surrounding vegetation, a nuisance to neighbours and potentially a hazard to nearby buildings.

The Parish Council would like to remind residents that although the area has been used by residents as an area for disposing of small amounts of burnable garden waste the area is not actually intended for this purpose. In fact, the laws on Common Land prohibit bonfires.

Garden waste and rubble can be disposed of via the Braintree District Council green bin subscription scheme or at local recycling centres. Please see [www.loveessex.org/find-your-nearest-recycling-centre/braintree-recycling-centre/](http://www.loveessex.org/find-your-nearest-recycling-centre/braintree-recycling-centre/) to see what the restrictions and quantities are.

Please keep this area for its intended use and safe.

Thank you for your understanding in this matter.

Toppesfield Parish Council.



We are inviting families past, present, future and also all who have supported us over the past 50 years!!

There will be a bouncy castle, games and activities, memorabilia, refreshments and lots of cake.

So please save the date, spread the word and join us to celebrate this fantastic achievement.

*50 years of*

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**LITTLE CHESTNUTS PRE-SCHOOL**

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*22nd June 2024*

*12pm - 4pm*

**TOPPESFIELD VILLAGE HALL**



This is Danaher's lovely year old Cane Corso female. She has had a stressful start to life, and not surprisingly this has made her a bit anxious.

Once she trusts you she is affectionate and has a very waggy tail. She is a real foodie so this is definitely the way to her heart.

She'll need patience and training to show her how to behave in the home, and would be a great match for an experienced adult household who understand how sensitive she is. She could make great dog friends out and about, but would need to be the only dog in the home.

Would you be interested in helping Cali? We invite you to submit an interest form to us at [www.danaheranimalhome.org.uk](http://www.danaheranimalhome.org.uk) and follow the links.



For more information or to see other animals available for homing, please go to our website address shown above.



## March / April Teatime teaser Toppesfield and Gainsford End

Apologies for the mix up in the numbering and the extra question.

Did you manage to solve the clues and fit them in? The answers were:

- Old pub in Toppesfield - Chestnut
- Unique home in Gainsford End - Windmill
- Place in the village for celebrations - Village Hall
- Old Pub in Gainsford End—Wheatsheaf
- Lord - Sainsbury
- Memorial Trees - Elms
- School or Church—St Margarets
- Lots to buy here - Shop
- Water source—Pump
- Popular early bitter for Pumphouse—Tap

If you have can create a puzzle about our parish please do share it with the parish council—this is a fun way to learn facts about where we live, work and play.



## BAR OPENING HOURS

Monday - Closed  
Tuesday - Thursday 3 - Close  
Friday - Sunday 12 - Close

## KITCHEN OPENING HOURS

Wednesday & Thursday 5-8  
Friday & Saturday 12-9  
Sunday 12-4

### Weekly specials

Sunday Roast featuring sirloin of beef and large selection of fresh vegetables

### What's On

Pub Quiz - First Saturday of the Month from 6pm  
Proceeds to Air Ambulance

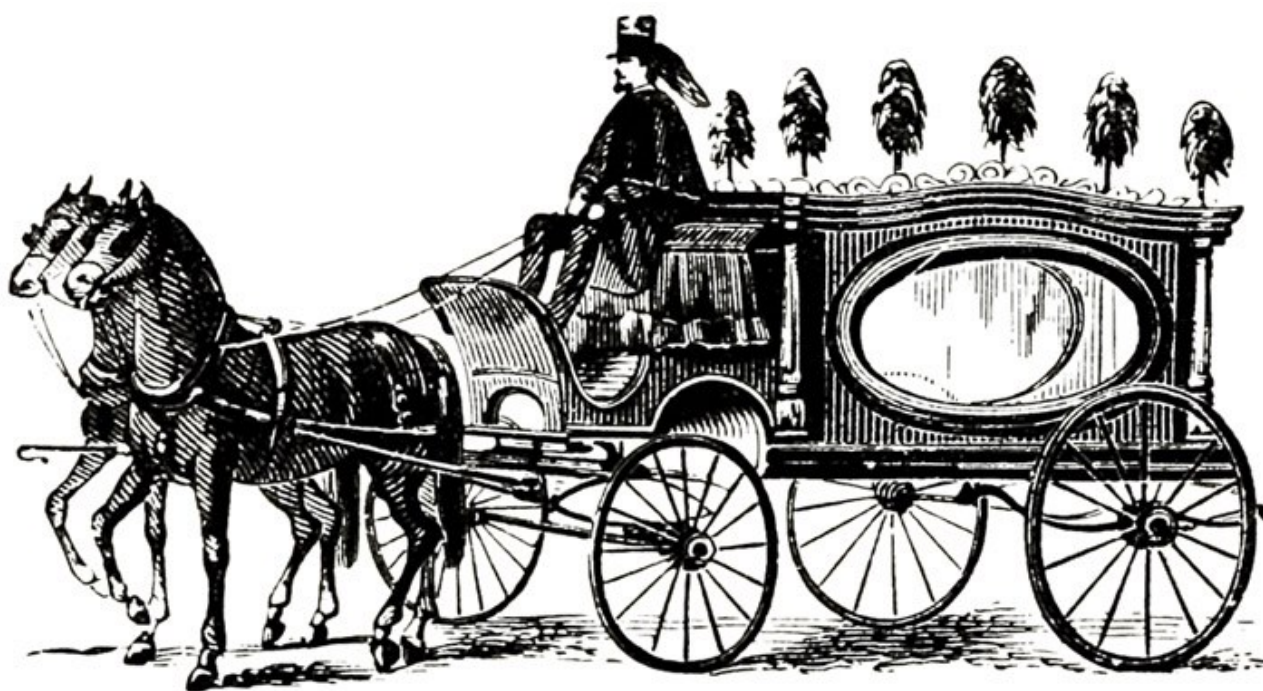
For take away and table bookings please call 01787 237418



## 'How friends said 'Goodbye' in 1794'

Copied from the Gentlemans Magazine for the year 1794. Obituary for that year.

February 1794 at Sible Hedingham, County Essex, Francis Chatter by his own desire he was carried to Toppesfield in a hearse followed in five carts by his relations to the Green Man ( a house he formerly frequented) and placed on tressels in the middle of the parlour; the attendants stood round and spent a guinea (the coffin serving as a table) and after several of the relations, in the joy and loyalty of their hearts, had sung God save the King, he was interred in the Church Yard.



## Answers to this month's teatime teaser:

### Across

3. This house has a roof made of reeds (10) - Thatchings
6. How many metres above sea level is Toppesfield (12) - Seventy-five
9. A local flying formation team (10) - Redbarrows
11. You find this at the front of the Church (5) - Altar

### Down

1. How many bells are in the church tower (5) - Eight
2. Play with these in bowls or walk through them (5) - Woods
4. A place to grow your own (10) - Allotments
5. This Baroness's portrait is in the village hall (7) - Plummer
7. How many years old is Little Chestnuts Preschool (5) - Fifty
8. Historically the parish is associated with this type of farming (6) - Arable
10. The Flintstones was set in this town or a house in Toppesfield (7) - Bedrock



**Do you know lots of facts about the parish and  
Would like to share them in a fun way?**

Could you create a puzzle for others to learn more about the parish or provide the facts for a puzzle to be created?

If you can help please let the parish clerk know so we can pass on the knowledge about where we live.

Lets keep knowledge alive.



# 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



**STAMBOURNE CHAPEL**  
*Being Church every day, Gathering on Sundays to Worship*  
Chapel End Way, Stambourne, Halstead, Essex. CO9 4NX  
Minister: Adrian Burr, 07983 656166

Stambourne Chapel Care Lead, Jill Holmes, 07883423528

Affiliated to



## **Stambourne Chapel Care**

*Matthew 25:40 (CEV) The king will answer,  
"Whenever you did it for any of my people,  
no matter how unimportant they seemed, you did it for me."*

**Do you have a few hours to spare?**

**Would you like to make a difference  
to your community?**

We have vacancies for:

**Befriending**, both in person and telephone  
**Transport** to appointments or social events,  
**Help and Support** with outings, lunch club and more.

We also need **Administrative Support** and a **Treasurer**  
and support for fund raising and writing grant proposals

If you feel this is for you please get in touch:

[stambournechapelcare@gmail.com](mailto:stambournechapelcare@gmail.com)

or Tel: 07883423528