



**January / February  
2025**

**Edition 203**



## 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	07801 042545
Church Warden Brian Moody	01787 237974
St Margaret's School	01787 237354
The Green Man Public House	01787 237418
Toppesfield Community Shop	07895 510767
Toppesfield Village Hall Bookings	
Frances Winter	07809 237789
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!

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

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

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 16th February 2025**

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**



Dear Everyone,

A happy New Year to you all - hope you had a wonderful festive period.

I wanted to reflect on volunteering in this first newsletter of the year. We are really in need of people stepping up to support our community.

As a village, we have a fantastic community spirit, with a huge amount of volunteers that make everything we do possible. That goes from the shop, to the events, to the council itself and much much more. We all do this, I hope, because we value our community. However, we are also struggling. We do not get volunteers for a lot of things, and yet people seem happy to complain when things do not happen. Please can I urge you all to reflect on if you wish this village to maintain that spirit it so proudly has. If so, please offer your support where you can. It could be the smallest helping hand, or a phone call, or an email suggesting something, or help with an event, or as a helper in the shop. Every little helps - however as we move through the years, it seems the numbers of people willing to help becomes less and less. I understand everyone is busy, or unable to support physically, however, please do think about how or if you could help.

As a snapshot, here is a list of volunteering options we have available. Please do speak to Kaaren or contact the organisations if you are interested in any of these or indeed anything else:

Shop, events, Church, delivering newsletters/flyers, brewery, Doctors car service, School, Preschool, tree planting or helping with coffee mornings to name a few.

Many thanks

Kitty



## Parish Council Information

A summary of Parish Council goings-on at the November and December meetings:

In November County Councillor Peter Schwier reported that:

- The latest edition of Essex Highways has been circulated.
- Essex County Council are encouraging people to enjoy the county parks around the county.
- The street light replacement scheme is nearing completion, there will be a 75% cost saving due to the new LED lights which have a 20-year life span. The saving will be £39 million over 25 years.
- Essex County Council are prepared for winter and have checked salt stocks and vehicles.
- Cllr Schwier has funds available from his Locality Grant fund – initial enquires are to be emailed to him and he will see if the project fits the criteria.
- The property flood resilience grant for up to £8000 is still open. More details can be found on the Essex County Council website.

District Councillor Richard van Dulken sent in a report as follows:

- Thanks to the Chairman for the two applications for Councillors' Community Grants, for trees, and towards the Christmas event, which I am considering as I write this. You may be interested to know that small occasional grants for community activities can be applied for by organisations within 20 miles from Stansted Airport - at the Stansted Airport website, search for "Community Funds". The one I refer to is called the Stansted Airport Passenger Community Fund and is funded from unwanted foreign currency collected from passengers and staff.
- With reference to waste collections, the new collection calendars are available on the BDC website. Of greater note are forthcoming changes to the whole system, in accordance with new government guidelines, designed to increase the % of waste which can be recycled. Over coming months details will emerge, and there will be a public consultation.
- You may have read that work on the Braintree Community Diagnostic Centre - at the Braintree Hospital - has begun, to provide X-rays, CT and MRI scans, blood tests and more. This when up and running will mean fewer trips to Broomfield or Colchester General.
- And I am equally pleased to advise that there has been movement on the Hedingham Medical Centre....construction work could begin this winter, with planned completion as I understand it to be in Spring 2026.
- You will have received details of the latest POSI (Potential Open Space Improvements) Plan, for which amendments need to be sent by 31st January.



- An expression of interest has been sent by Essex Districts, Cities and Boroughs (plus Southend, Thurrock and Essex County Council) to the government for a devolution deal for Greater Essex, which would allow local councils to make important decisions closer to where residents live and work, on transport, investments, skills training and houses & infrastructure. The government is keen on the model of Mayors, and for instance 3 or 4 larger District Councils making up Greater Essex.

Other business included: Cllr Graves was appointed as representative on the Toppesfield Charities committee. The parish council adopted an updated code of conduct which is available on the parish council website. The parish council agreed to sign up to the National Association of Local Councils Civility & Respect Pledge.

Business in the December meeting included: final preparations for the Christmas event, a coffee morning has been planned for the 8th February 2025. A draft budget was presented for consideration and will be finalised at the January meeting and quotes for an internal auditor will be sought.

Full minutes of each meeting can be found on the parish website: [Minutes - Toppesfield Parish Council \(e-voice.org.uk\)](#)

If you have any concerns you would like to raise with the Council, ideas for projects or anything you would like to parish council to consider please do get in touch or attend the open session at a Parish Council meeting. There is a public session held at the start of every parish council meeting from 7.30pm —7.45pm.

Parish Council meetings are normally held on the first Thursday of each month but please check the website to confirm.

# Toppesfield Footpaths Walking Group



The Toppesfield footpaths walks continue to be well supported.

We set off from the pump at 10 am every Thursday, rain or shine sometime coats and boots are necessary dependent on the season.

We have great chats and encounter some wonderful wildlife.

Coffee and Tea is always available at the Community Shop, and sometimes Cake is eaten!

Come along and join us.

YOU WILL BE WELCOME - as will your dog.

Regards

Paul Thompson



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

**Saturday 1st February 2025 - 10.30am - 12.30pm**

**Saturday 1st March 2025—10.30am—12.30pm**

Please come along to see what is on offer from fresh meat,  
jams,

pastries, and cakes to handmade crafts, cushions, cards,  
jewellery and more.

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

**Toppesfield Parish Council have arranged a**

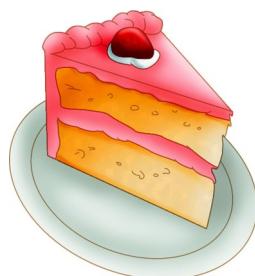
# *Tea and Coffee Morning*

**On Saturday 8th February 2025**

**From 10am—12pm**

**At Toppesfield Village Hall**

Everyone is invited to join for a cuppa,  
cake and chat. This is an ideal  
opportunity for people to meet new  
friends or catch up with existing ones.  
Looking forward to seeing you there.







# St. Margaret of Antioch Toppesfield

**Church services for January and February 2025 are detailed below.**

All services start at 11.00am unless indicated.

Jan 5th Holy Communion (Common Worship)

Jan 12th Holy Communion (Common Worship)

Jan 19th Holy Communion (Common Worship)

Jan 26th Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

Feb 2nd **Candlemas Service 4.00pm**

Feb 9th Holy Communion (Common Worship)

Feb 16th Holy Communion (Common Worship)

Feb 23rd Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)

# CHURCH NEWS

It was recently announced that The Revd. Dr. Justin Tomkins is to be the new Rector of the Hedinghams and Upper Colne benefice. This is really good news as there has been a long wait since Rev Liz Paxton retired just after Easter in 2023! Many will know Justin already as he has, for about five years now, been ministering at Great and Little Yeldham, and is already a lively part of the benefice team! He will be instituted by the Bishop of Colchester on 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at 7.30p.m. at St Peter's Church Sible Hedingham: All are warmly invited to welcome Justin as he embarks on a wider ministry in these seven parishes. Please do pray for him, his wife Delana and the children, Tuck and Olivia as he takes on this extra responsibility to which God has called him.



If you need to be in touch with Justin, he will continue to live in the Rectory in Great Yeldham where the phone number is 01787 237211. Email: [mail@justintomkins.org](mailto:mail@justintomkins.org). Details of services throughout the benefice is on the parishes website: [www.hedingham.info](http://www.hedingham.info)

## YOU ARE INVITED TO ALPHA

If you are curious about the Christian faith there will be a series of conversations on Wednesday evenings 7-9p.m.

From 15<sup>th</sup> Jan - 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2025 at St Peter's Church Sible Hedingham. More details, contact Justin as above. Cards with further information are in Church.



## **Toppesfield Allotment news**

Lets hope that we have a great 2025 and try to enjoy our gardening this year.

We have a spare plot for anyone that wants it in the last row, It was very productive last year.

The allotment green space was over seeded last year so we should have a picnic area for all to enjoy by the summer.

Please continue to walk your dogs over the green areas, but keep your eyes open for any dog mess left by your pouches, I am fed up of picking up other peoples dog mess.

This years theme for me is to do more companion planting.

With this in mind I have included a general guide as to what to plant with or near what.

It is not exhaustive, so look on the internet for a myriad of sound advice.



Marigolds



Mint



## Toppesfield Allotment news continued

# Free Printable Companion Planting Guide

Plant	Plant Near	Avoid
Artichoke	Brassicas (Cabbage, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Brussels Sprouts)	None!
Asparagus	Basil, Nasturtiums, Parsley, Strawberries, <b>Tomatoes</b>	Onions, Garlic, Potatoes
Basil	<b>Asparagus</b> , Oregano, Peppers, <b>Tomatoes</b> (Basil is known to improve the flavour of tomatoes. It acts as a repellent for asparagus beetle, aphids, tomato horn worm and mosquitoes.)	None!
Bean (Bush)	(Beans add nitrogen to the soil!) <b>Nasturtiums</b> , Beets, Radishes, Peas, Strawberries, Celery, Corn, Cucumbers, Swiss Chard, Potatoes, Marigolds	Onions, Garlic
Bean (Pole)	<b>Corn</b> , Sunflowers, Cucumbers, Celery, Marigolds, Oregano, Peas, Potatoes, Radishes, Rosemary, Spinach, <b>Squash</b>	Onions, Brassicas, Fennel
Beets	(Beets return manganese & iron to soil.) <b>Carrots</b> , Corn, Cucumbers, Bush Beans, Brassicas, Garlic, Kohlrabi, Leeks, Lettuce	Dill, Pole Beans
Broccoli	(Cabbage moths prey on brassicas resulting in cabbage worms. Planting near other plants that deter moths helps to protect your brassicas.) Artichoke, Beets, Celery, <b>Chamomile</b> , Cucumbers, <b>Dill</b> , <b>Garlic</b> , <b>Marigolds</b> , <b>Mint</b> , Nasturtiums, Onions, Oregano, Potatoes, Radishes, <b>Rosemary</b> , <b>Sage</b> , Spinach	Dill, Pole Beans, other Brassicas (as they attract the same pests)
Brussels Sprouts	Artichoke, Beans (Bush), Beets, Celery, Chamomile, <b>Garlic</b> , <b>Marigolds</b> , <b>Mint</b> , <b>Nasturtiums</b> , Onions, Peas, Potatoes, Rosemary, Sage, Spinach, Thyme	Pole Beans, Kohlrabi, Strawberries, Tomatoes
Cabbage	Artichoke, Beets, <b>Chamomile</b> , Cucumbers, <b>Dill</b> , <b>Garlic</b> , <b>Marigolds</b> , <b>Mint</b> , Nasturtiums, Onions, Potatoes, Radishes, <b>Rosemary</b> , <b>Sage</b> , Spinach	Beans (Pole), Tomatoes
Carrots	Beans, Brassicas, <b>Chives</b> , Leeks, Lettuce, <b>Onions</b> , Parsley, Radishes, Peppers, Rosemary	Dill, Parsnips, Potatoes
Celery	Beans, Brassicas, Chives, Cilantro, Garlic, Leeks, Nasturtiums, Spinach, Tomatoes	Carrots, Parsnips
Cilantro	Celery, Parsley, Peas, Potatoes, Tomatoes (Cilantro repels potato beetle, spider mites and aphids.)	None!
Corn	Beans, Beets, Cucumbers, Dill, Artichoke, Marigolds, Melons, Parsley, Peas, Potatoes, <b>Squash</b> , Sunflowers	Celery, Tomatoes



## ZONE 3 VEGETABLE GARDENING

### What is companion planting?

Companion planting is an organic method of maintaining a natural balance in your garden by growing plants together that are mutually beneficial. Planted together, certain plant combinations can aid pollination, prevent disease and keep pest numbers down. Most companion plants are strongly scented and can confuse

## **Toppesfield Allotment news continued**

pests looking for their host plant, some have antibacterial or anti-fungal properties, while others attract beneficial insects, such as ladybirds and lacewings, which prey on aphids. Most companion planting occurs in the vegetable patch, but some ornamental plants, such as roses, can also benefit from particular plants growing nearby.

Common plant combinations include growing Nasturtiums to deter aphids from beans, and planting Allium (onions) around carrots to ward off carrot root fly.

Here are some obvious plant combinations to avoid, for example you should avoid planting tall plants next to shorter plants, as they will block light and prevent them from growing well. Growing thirsty plants next to drought-tolerant plants is also not advised, as one plant will either be getting too much water, or too little.

The strongly scented leaves of mint confuse flea beetles and can deter them from laying eggs on the leaves of brassicas such as cabbage, broccoli, radish and cauliflower. However, it's best to grow mint in a pot, or it could smother your crop.

## **Subscriptions**

### **Clare will be coming round with the agreement notices in the spring.**

Anyone not wanting to continue with their plots please let us know at the earliest allow us to let others have the opportunity to have one .but remember it is your responsibility to clear the site.

Kind regards to all for 2025

Paul Thompson

Chair

## Teatime teaser about tea and biscuits

1. What kind of tea is Earl Grey?
2. What country is the world's largest producer of tea, producing over 40% of the globe's tea leaves?
3. What is the name of the process of soaking tea leaves in water to extract the flavour?
4. What kind of green tea powder is used in traditional Japanese tea ceremonies?
5. Which of the six main types of tea contains the most caffeine?
6. What is the term for a tea produced by pouring boiling water over dried leaves, herbs or berries?
7. What country does Oolong tea originate from?
8. What Indian tea drink is made from black tea, cardamom, black pepper, cinnamon, cloves and ginger?
9. What country is Darjeeling tea grown in?
10. In 1773, American protestors dumped a boatload of tea into which harbour?
11. The three basic components of a biscuit are flour, sugar and which other ingredient?
12. Which Cadbury's biscuit brand used the slogan 'It's a Finger Thing'?
13. What is the most consumed cookie in the United States, and also the official cookie of Wyoming and Massachusetts?
14. The witch in Hansel and Gretel lives in a cottage made of what type of biscuit?
15. Which British chocolate biscuit shares a name with a French royal dynasty?
16. What type of crispy biscuit might predict your future alongside a Chinese meal?
17. Which company produces Viennese Whirls?
18. Which chocolate biscuit is famous for having (usually bad) jokes on the wrapper?
19. How did Nice biscuits get their name?
20. Which delicious British treat was officially classed as a cake and *not* a biscuit by a court tribunal in 1991?

Answers:

1. Black Tea, 2. China, 3. Steeping, 4. Matcha, 5. Black Tea, 6. An infusion, 7. China, 8. Masala Chai, 9. India, 10. Boston, 11. Butter, 12. Cadbury's Fingers, 13. Chocolate Chip Cookies, 14. Gingerbread, 15. Bourbon, 16. Fortune Cookies, 17. Mr Kipling, 18. Penguin Biscuits, 19. They come from the French city of Nice, 20. Jaffacakes.





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

We are looking forward to the term ahead with great excitement.

The end of last half term was, of course, very busy with lots of Christmas excitement. Seed Class performed an excellent nativity called 'A Little Bird Told Me' which was well-received by all who saw it.

We also presented a crib service in the Church on the last day of term, presenting a nativity scene featuring characters made by the children. This was a beautiful service with some traditional carols which we hope was enjoyed by the community.

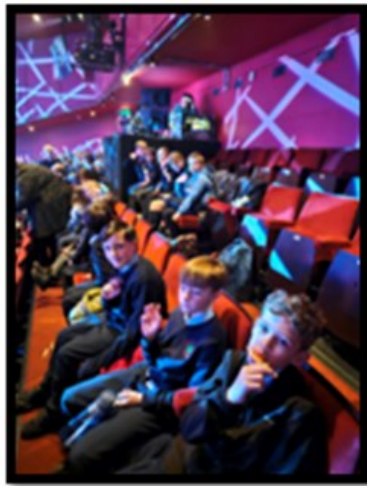
We also held our annual craft afternoon where we invited parents and carers into school to work with the children. We hope you spotted some of the decorations we made on the village Christmas tree by the pump. The choir joined the village for the turning on of the lights, despite some awful weather, where they enjoyed singing a couple of Christmas songs for the village.

FOSMs also arranged for the children to attend the Peter Pan pantomime at The Mercury Theatre in Colchester. This trip was enjoyed by all and we offer our grateful thanks to FOSMs for making it possible.

Earlier in the term, Abrahannah represented the school and laid a wreath at the village remembrance service and a team of children represented the school in a local cross country tournament where they did exceptionally well.

There are some dates to add to your diary:

Community coffee afternoons will be held this term at 2:00 pm on the following Fridays: Friday 31<sup>st</sup> January; Friday 28<sup>th</sup> January and Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March. These coffee afternoons are open to all. There are wonderful refreshments available, prepared by FOSMs, and children on hand to play some games and have a chat with. We also hope to have the choir singing at one, after their next big performance in London on 4<sup>th</sup> February is out of the way and we may even try out a beetle drive at one! Do please come along and bring a friend with you so that we can keep this community event running.



We look forward to keeping you up to date with our news in the next edition of the Parish magazine and look forward to seeing you at lots of our events this year!

Facebook: [St. Margaret's CofE Primary School, Toppesfield](https://www.facebook.com/StMargaretsTopp)

Twitter: @StMargaretsTopp

Instagram: stmargaretstopp





## Christmas in Toppesfield delivered again!

A few last minute changes to the event due to the weather, however the community spirit was not dampened and it was lovely to see so many people turn out to enjoy the evening. Sincere thanks go to all those who helped both on the day, in the planning and lead up to the event.

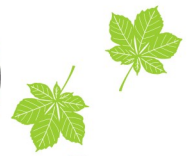
It would not be possible to put on such an event without the help on these volunteers.







# TOPPESFIELD



## Community Shop

# VOLUNTEERS

## URGENTLY NEEDED

*Can you spare the time to  
come and help out in  
your Village Shop ?*

*Know someone that can?*

*No experience needed!*

*Training given!*

*Work experience opportunity!*

*Please contact*

*Wendy: 07933743724*



**alternatively please message**

**TOPPESFIELD VILLAGE STORES**



## 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





# CHAPEL COMMUNITY CARE

*Support through Life Changing Situations*

Ridgewell Community Chapel, Meeting Lane, Ridgewell, Halstead, Essex, CO9 4RS

Chair: Rev'd Adrian Burr, 07983 656166

Project lead: Jill Holmes, 07883 423528



## Annual Review 2024

### for Chapel Community Care

As 2024 draws to a close we look back at what has happened over the year and what we have achieved. Some of us also make resolutions.

So, I look back at the work of Chapel Care.

We are coming to the end of our 4<sup>th</sup> Year and have seen a few changes this year. One major change is a change of name. We were known as Stambourne Chapel Care and have now changed that to Chapel Community Care and come under the work of Ridgewell Community Chapel.

We continue to support around 60 people throughout the North Braintree Rural Community, between the towns of Haverhill, Braintree, Halstead and Sudbury

### **Referrals**

During 2024 we received 16 referrals. One did not want a service, 6 for befriending, 2 for emotional support and 3 for transport.

### **Volunteers**

We now have 12 volunteers with 4 joining us this year.

Just a few statistics for you...

In total for 2024 we completed:

- 82 befriending visits
- 132 transport journeys
- 18 shopping trips
- 12 hospital visits
- 34 telephone befriending support
- 59 support visits.
- 45 dog walks

## Fund Raising

**We need donations and fundraising to fund what we do and if you would like to support us please get in touch to make a one off or regular donation.**

## Get Your New Years resolution Sponsored

One idea is to be sponsored to do something.

Do you have a new years resolution you need to keep?

Maybe people would sponsor you to keep it?

Let us know and we will support you in your event!



# TOPPESFIELD

## Community Shop

**\*OFF LICENCE & GROCERIES**

**BREAD - MILK - FRUIT & VEG - FROZEN FOODS**

**ICE CREAMS - BEERS - WINES - SPIRITS**

**STATIONERY - CARDS - STAMPS**

**COAL - PET FOOD - PLANTS**

**NEWSPAPERS - MAGAZINES - CIGARETTES**



## Garden Cafe

\*no alcohol is to be consumed on the premises

\*\*\*\*\*

## OPENING TIMES

Monday	.....	8.30am - 4.00pm
Tuesday	.....	8.30am - 4.00pm
Wednesday	.....	8.30am - 4.00pm
Thursday	.....	8.30am - 4.00pm
Friday	.....	8.30am - 4.00pm
Saturday	.....	10.00am - 12.30pm



**WEDNESDAY 10am - 1pm**