



Toppesfield Parish Council



Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Thursday 30th April 2015 At The Village Hall, Toppesfield at 7.30pm

15/86. Attendance and Apologies for Absence:

The following Councillors were in attendance:

Councillor Andrew Bull
Councillor David Bagnall
Councillor Alan Collard
Councillor Gill Page

Also in attendance:

Kaaren Berry – Clerk to the Parish Council
Margaret Dyson – Doctors Car Service
Dave Dyson – Village Hall Committee, Toppesfield Community Pub, Art & Craft Group
Anne Read – Community Shop, Footpaths and Flower Show
Paul Thompson – Allotments, LARG
Malcolm Braithwaite – Toppesfield Stringed Instruments Appreciation Society
Sheila Braithwaite
Brian Moody – St Margaret of Antioch Parish Church
Andy Howells – Toppesfield Community Pub
Andrea Chinery – Little Chestnuts Pre-School
Rob Sullivan – LARG
Nick Hasler – LARG
Rob Stafford-Baker – LARG, Red Barrows, Allotments, Pumphouse Brewery

Apologies were received from

Councillor Sheldrake, Tony Davison – Toppesfield Parish Charities, Trisha Roberts - Toppesfield Yarnies, Zoe Hughes – Little Hedgehogs, Art & Craft group, Golden Chestnuts and Fit Fun Club and Ginny Laskowski – Village Hall committee.

15/87. Minutes of the last meeting – 2014 Annual Parish Meeting:

Councillor Bull explained that these were signed off at the meeting following the Annual Parish Meeting last year. The minutes are still available on the Parish Council website for viewing.

15/88. Matters Arising from the minutes:

Malcolm Braithwaite questioned if a review of the village plan had been carried out yet. Councillor Bull explained it hadn't but will be addressed by the new Parish Council this year.

15/89. Parish Council Annual Report from the Chairman:

Andrew Bull gave his report – see attached appendix A.

Alan Collard also explained that the Parish Council are purchasing 20 native Elm Trees to be planted around the parish to mark the centenary of WW1. The trees represent each of the 19 fallen soldiers and 1 for the parish. Each tree will have a plaque with the name of one of the soldiers on. It is hoped the trees are planted by Remembrance Day this year. Alan Collard and Rob Sullivan are working

together to ask groups and families to adopt a tree and look after it in the early years. It is hoped the trees are planted on a walk round the parish or several smaller walks. This will be a living memorial of WW1.

15/90. Organisations / group Reports:

Reports were received from various organisations.

Margaret Dyson gave a report on the progress of the Doctor's car service – see appendix B
Councillor Bull thanked Margaret and the team of volunteers for all their hard work to keep this service going.

Councillor Bull read out the report from Tony Davison on behalf of the Toppesfield Charities and their accounts. For Tony's report see appendix C.

Councillor Bull thanked Tony Davison and Dusty Millar for managing the Charities.

Andy Howells gave a report on behalf of Toppesfield Community Pub – see appendix D.
Andy also mentioned that Tony is planning a Music and Beer Festival on 4th, 5th and 6th September 2015 to be held at the Green Man.

Councillor Bull read out the report from Trisha Roberts for Toppesfield Yarnies – see appendix E.

Alan Collard gave a report on behalf of Pumphouse Community Brewery Ltd. – see appendix F.

Malcolm Braithwaite gave a report on behalf of the Toppesfield Stringed Appreciation Society – please see Appendix G.

Brian Moody gave a report on behalf of St Margaret of Antioch parish Church – see appendix H.

Ginny Laskowski from the Toppesfield Village Hall Committee was unable to attend but Dave Dyson read out on their behalf– see appendix I.

Andrea Chinery from Little Chestnuts Pre-School gave their report - see Appendix J.

Paul Thompson gave a report on behalf of the Allotment Committee – see appendix K.

Ann Read gave reports on behalf of Toppesfield Community Shop, The Village show and The Parish Paths Partnership Group a - please see appendix L.

Zoe Hughes submitted reports for Little Hedgehogs Parent & Toddlers, Art & Craft Club, The Golden Chestnuts Club and Fit Fun Club as she was unable to attend. Councillor Bull read these out – see appendix M.

Rob Stafford-Baker then gave the presentation on behalf of LARG – please see appendix N.
Councillor Bull thanked the group for their work and taking the project forward.

Rob Stafford- Baker reported on behalf of the Red Barrows that they have raised in excess of £50,00 and they have three shows this year.

15/91. Questions from the public:

Following the report from LARG it was questioned if there would be any equipment for older people in the playing fields. Rob stated that these are initial plans and nothing has been finalised and a public meeting will be arranged to gain opinions and ideas.

15/92. Any Other Business:

Alan Collard reported that Essex Community Foundation what to do a feature on Toppesfield for their enterprise and community spirit article they are putting together. This will appear in the Gazette group of papers.

Dave Dyson reminded those present that the Parish Council are short of members at present and if you are interested in joining talk to Kaaren Berry and write in to express an interest in joining.

15/93. Time and date of next Parish Council Meeting:

The next Parish Council meeting will be on the 14th May 2015 at 8pm. This will be the Annual Parish Council Meeting.

15/94. Close:

The meeting closed at 9.00pm

Appendix A

Toppesfield Parish Council

My thanks to Kaaren Berry, our Parish clerk and Responsible Financial Officer. You may be aware that we receive roughly £11,000 each year to manage our Community, collected from our Council Tax by Braintree District Council. Kaaren keeps a tight rein on this money and us a Council so that we spend wisely yet still invest in improving the community.

This year we managed to award £10,000 to the Leisure and Recreation Group for the on-going development and improvements to the Playing Fields: we are close to purchasing a piece of land located behind The Green Man to protect this view and development of the area. We are purchasing a number of trees as part of the Community Commemoration of World War 1, provided Parish Grants to the Allotments and Church, ran our very successful Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, subsidised a Play Event for local children in the Village Hall during the Summer Holidays, paid for the grass verge cutting and playing fields maintenance and purchased new notice boards for better communication. Not a bad achievement on our £11,000 a year, so a big thank you to Kaaren for her diligent management of our accounts.

My other thanks is to all the organisers of the clubs, societies and organisations that operate in the community. I also have the privilege of chairing the Network 5 Group which is made up of representatives from Stambourne, Ridgewell, Great Yeldham and Birdbrook. All these communities look to Toppesfield for inspiration in how we get things done. They are literally blown away by the spirit that has produced a Village Shop, purchased a Community Pub, developed a Community Brewery, produces a colour Community Newsletter, runs a Facebook page with over 300 followers and is still able to produce the nationally known Red barrows collecting over £50,000 for Breakthrough Breast cancer. Long may it continue!

Appendix B

Doctor Car Service Report for Annual Parish Meeting 2015

Doctor Car service is being well use, we have had 64 requests for the service since last annual parish meeting, and we were able to get everyone to their appointments.

For those who don't know this service is for anyone who has a Doctor's appointment but does not have transport.

This service is free to residents of Toppesfield and Gainsford End and covers the following surgeries:- Sible Hedingham, Great Yeldham, Castle Hedingham and Finchingfield.

If you need to use the Doctor Car Service the number is 07845596092.

Last but not least, a big thank you to the volunteer drivers and the Parish Council for their support.

Margaret Dyson.

Appendix C

Charities Report

At the Annual Meeting of the Charities held in December 2014, the Committee consisted of:- Tony Davison & Dusty Millar (Pariah Council Representatives) and Brain Moody & James Blackie representing the Church. Apologies were received from the Rev. Barbara Hume.

The income for the Charities this year was £974 – the same as last year.

The beneficiaries were the Church; the School and the Older people of the Parish.

As I was the member of the Trustees who negotiated the rent increase with Mr Kettley of Toppesfield Hall in 2014, I was concerned as to whether I had agreed a correct rent on the Parish Land of £80 per acre so I brought my concerns to the notice of the Committee. Mr Blackie offered to verify this figure – and since the meeting has informed me that an independent Land Agent has confirmed that a rent of between £80-£85 is the going rate, as of now, for bare land without buildings or houses which has satisfied my concern.

Tony Davison
(Hon. Treasurer)

Appendix D

Toppesfield Community Pub

The original intention and objective of purchasing the pub was to ensure it stayed open. It is required to be an asset to the village and its various groups, existing and future, formal and informal. A place where anyone in the wider community could meet and felt welcome, and hopefully an attractive venue for those outside the village so to increase footfall and turnover.

You will recall we purchased the pub primarily from shareholder funds and borrowings, not from large grants. As a village we own the building and beer tie, and do not operate the pub business itself or are allowed much say into its running; given a good relationship with the tenant we do of course meet regularly to urge improvements and developments that would aid both parties.

We are on track with the original business plan both in top line, operating profit, and investments, however have seen the first few months of 2015 being challenging. Low footfall in the pub reduces the volume of drinks sold and therefore our beer-tie income, so this year needs an injection in activity to ensure we stay on target. We can assist the tenant with planning, arranging activities, and sweat capital, however what he really needs is the support of the village in attending activities and dropping in for food and drink more often.

The building itself is somewhat ageing and is inefficient in insulation, water, and behind-the-scenes space. The quantity of electricity and heating oil it consumes is out of kilter with its size and an unfair burden on any tenant. Water consumption is high due to old-fashioned plumbing and flushing systems, and kitchen space is limited. The building did not deteriorate, partly due to volunteer labour ably organised by Paul Thompson, however it is a drain financially.

As a committee our time is currently split into 3 activities.

Firstly the on-going monitoring of the building and activities for governance purposes, ensuring we operate within our mortgage, insurance, and community commitment requirements.

Secondly we are actively pursuing grant funding to develop the building according to the village plan; improving insulation, heating, and cooking facilities is paramount. Anything from a redecoration to full

rebuild is planned, depending on the size of funding available. We have produced (with James Blackie at the helm of this exercise) a set of drawings for planning permission purposes (which has been granted), the final design to be decided when the size of funding is known. It is likely we will need to generate further funds ourselves to meet the granting bodies guidelines, we don't see this as an obstacle.

The third activity is in securing the next lease with a suitable structure, term, and income for the village. The current lease expires towards the end of the year and we are in productive discussions.

Our AGM is on 30th May when shareholders are invited to receive further information on progress.

We are intending to rent part of the barn area to the Pumphouse Brewery, whether that be through or aside of the existing lease agreement, our tenant is in agreement with either proposal; a level of symbiosis will naturally exist between the two ventures although they are clearly separate bodies in every other way.

The strongest message we can deliver is that the pub needs the continuing support of the village, and if anyone has drifted away from a regular visit please make a point of reinstating it in your social calendar, any of us in the village who didn't venture in yet should give it a try - your pub supports both community spirit and the value of your property!

Andrew Howells

Appendix E

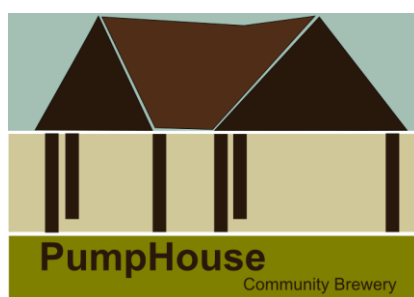
Yarnies Report 2015

We are a small select number of women who endeavour to meet every two weeks on a Tuesday evening in the pub. We knit, spin, crochet, maybe do a bit of embroidery or needlepoint, and, more importantly, have a drink and a chat.

For the village Christmas tree competition, we make our own decorations.

Everyone is welcome. There are no fees, no committee to be invited to join, no commitment – just a group who enjoys a chat, a drink and a little handicraft.

Appendix F



Pumphouse Community Brewery Limited (PHCB), was registered at the Financial Conduct Authority on 2nd January 2015 as a Community Benefit Company under the 2104 Act.

It is basically the same legal structure as Toppesfield Stores and Toppesfield Community Pub. The rationale behind starting this was largely to complement the pub by providing very competitively priced beer and becoming an attraction to non-residents, who hopefully will come to Toppesfield and spend money in the pub, the shop and the brewery. In addition it will be an additional activity and interest for people in the village, as there will be opportunities to do volunteer work in the brewery and learn about brewing.

We were fortunate in that some second hand, good quality brewing equipment became available at an attractive price from Helions Bumpstead. The small brewery there, located on the site of the Three Horseshoes, was closed following the closure of the pub.

Once the decision was made to proceed, a small committee was set up, comprising Wendy Ames, Rob Stafford-Baker, Chris Neale, Mike James and myself to bring the project to fruition. We have also been supported by a number of others, especially Dave Dyson and James Blackie.

The funding for the project is now either in place or committed. This comes from grants from SFCT (£4,000), The Yellow Car Trust (£3,000) and Braintree's Mi community Fund (£10,000) and from a share sale which has raised exactly £20,000, from 70 shareholders.

The brewer will be Phil Snowdon, whom some of you have met already at our 'meet the brewer....and his beers' evenings. These have been very well received and, I believe, augur very well for the future. We anticipate work will commence in May on transforming the cart lodge of the barn into an attractive and successful craft brewery. We also hope to be able to decorate the front of the whole barn and make that aspect more attractive than it currently is.

In time, we would like to consider developing a small retail outlet selling items such as gift packs of bottled beer, glasses, sweatshirts, t-shirts etc. with the Pumphouse logo and other brewery related merchandise.

The formal opening and launch of the brewery should be in late summer.

Alan Collard
30 April 2015

Appendix G

Toppesfield Stringed Instruments Appreciation Society (TSIAS) Yearly Report - April 2014 - April 2015

TSIAS plucked its way forward during the last 12 months. Two guitarists played at regular sessions, with one determined to do some busking. A number of new stringed instruments were introduced including, a parlour mandolin, a banjulele, a timble, a cigar-box guitar and a one-stringed "Diddley Bow". With the opening of Toppesfield's own 'open mic' nights in The Green Man, a new outlet has been afforded to our musical talents. TSIAS has been the major supporter, so far, of the initiative of Chris and Wendy Ames to get folks playing in the village. We have also played at 'open mic' nights at the Quay Theatre, Sudbury, Sible Hedingham's Sports and Social Club, The Bluebell Inn in Hempstead, and The Bell in Castle Hedingham.

A Ukulele band meets fortnightly in Gainsford End and has had up to 15 players, consisting of local residents, and associates from Halstead's U3A group. "The Red Hot Ukes" (performance section) played at a couple of Christmas events, including at the Christmas market in the Village Hall, and at a Christmas lunch at Halstead Bowls Club. A couple more gigs are booked in the near future for the "Red Hot Ukes". TSIAS once again entered a decorated Christmas tree in the Village Church Christmas tree festival.

TSIAS has once again co-operated in the organisation of the "Jazz Nite" at the Village Hall, this year on Saturday evening, 27th June. It features "New Orleans Heat" playing traditional jazz with their celebrated banjo player.

The group is open to new members, and contact from interested parties would be welcomed. We would like to return to The Green Man or, better still, to the Village Hall if numbers justified it.

Malcolm Braithwaite / Andrew Colley

Appendix H

St Margaret of Antioch Parish Church Annual Report to Toppesfield Parish Council 30th April 2015.

1 The Church and the Community.

The church is now open to visitors all day most days of the week. One cannot be sure how many people call in, but some certainly do; they light a votive candle or occasionally write in the visitors book or leave a prayer request.

Services continue to be held every week throughout the year with the special services at the main festivals – Christmas and Easter – being well attended. In 2014 there were four special events in which many village people participated – the Mothering Sunday art exhibition, the WW1 memorial service on August 4th, The Advent Christmas Tree competition in early December and the Bishop of Chelmsford's visit in the summer as part of the Diocese of Chelmsford Centenary celebrations. There were also three weddings and six funerals.

The school held a service in the church each term, its choir joined in the Christmas Tree festival and as usual the church provided Bibles for each leaver at the end of the school year.

The bells are rung regularly, though more volunteers would be welcome. Toppesfield is very popular with visiting teams of bell ringers and bell ringing training courses are held here.

2 Fabric

Apart from some small repairs to the roof no maintenance work was carried out in 2014. There is a plan, though, for major works to the interior, covering repairs and redecoration, replacing the pews with chairs and a new heating system. The cost is likely to be £70 – 100,000, for which special fundraising will be required. Also the roof of the south aisle now needs to be renewed at a cost of £30 – 40,000. An application for this was made to the Listed Places of Worship Roof Fund: it was unsuccessful but there will be a second round of grants later this year for which we will re-apply.

County Broadband continue to work on their plan to put equipment on the roof of the tower and are waiting for approval of a Faculty for the Diocese. Once this is granted installation should only take a few days, but County Broadband have not yet indicated where Toppesfield sits in their roll-out.

3 Churchyard

The Mortlock brothers have generously kept the churchyard tidy for many years at no cost to the church but have now retired. The church welcomes the Parish Council's plan to include the churchyard in the general grass cutting plan for the village but have had to spend some money already this year while a decision is awaited.

Tree surgery had also been carried out on the large oak overhanging gardens in Camoise Close, at a cost of nearly £700.

3 Finances

2014 was a relatively good year. Income was £16,000, producing a surplus of £4,000 after expenses of £12,000. The church's main expenses are one fifth of the salary cost of our vicar (payable to the Diocese) and insurance of the buildings and contents. This year's surplus provides a small contribution to the fund needed to repair the fabric, but it was exceptional because of the relatively large number of weddings and funerals, which may not be repeated in future years.

The PCC very much appreciates the Parish Council's grant of £500 towards churchyard maintenance and hopes this will continue over and above the grass cutting arrangements.

The PCC also very much appreciates the support of the village for the fundraising events which raise almost half of the church's normal annual income – the Cheese & Wine evening, Church Fete, Barbecue, Clay Pigeon Shoot and Supper Auction.

Brain Moody
Churchwarden

Appendix I

Chairman's report from Toppesfield Village Hall Committee

This year has been busy... The Village Hall is used each day during the week with Fit Fun and Pre-School extending their sessions. We still support the Village Markets held each month – these are doing really well.

We have had a good year building up our finances which means we can introduce more activities in the year ahead. For example the spot lights for the stage encouraging new bookings and we will look into heating for the toilets before winter.

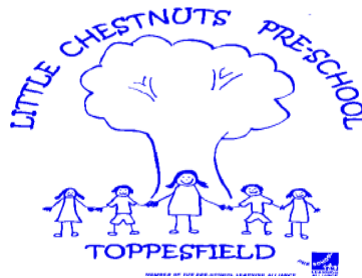
We are planning a Psychic evening with Ronnie Buckingham later this year if not early next year with a drink and jacket meal included in the ticket price more info to follow when date has been confirmed. Plus more fundraising events throughout the year ahead.

We would like to thank Andrew Colley for stepping into the role of secretary last year, we wish him well as he had to leave us in early February. I would also like to thank the rest of the committee for all their help and support over the last year and I'm looking forward to another good year hopefully with you all.

Thank you

Ginny

Appendix J



The beginning of the new school year started well, numbers were steady and children had increased their sessions.

After listening to our parents needs and requirements for child care, and to help increase our numbers with new registered families, the committee and I decided we would open pre-school for two afternoon session 12pm-3pm, this was to start after the October half term, and was to provide more sessions and flexible hours for our parents. Numbers have continued to increase over the past year and we are now run a session alongside the toddler group on Mondays 12-3pm

We have continued to fundraise which included a family mouse racing night, raffles and fetes, the money raised has purchased new role play equipment such as a cooker, fridge and food, we have also purchased scuttle bugs and scooters for physical play.

Our link to the primary school is strong and continue to visit them to take part in activities with class one, they also visit us to join in our music sessions and activities, these visits ensure the children moving from pre-school to the primary school have a smooth transition and are familiar with the teachers and class rooms.

We are currently promoting the pre-school to ensure our numbers are good for September, we have organised several open mornings and stay and play sessions for this term, which allows a time for perspective families to visit pre-school, meet the staff and committee and see the setting set up and how we promote children's learning and development.

During May we are also launching our website, this will also promote and provide information about the pre-school, and what we provide.

Andrea Chinery

Supervisor for Little Chestnut's Pre-school

Appendix K

TOPPESFIELD Allotments review of the Year

Great strides have been made in the common areas of the allotments this year.

The pathway at the rear of the causeway has been levelled in preparation of laying down a grass causeway to enable access of plant and equipment.

The orchards have started to bear fruit blossom and we expect our first meaningful harvest of apples and we may even have some cherries this year.

The grass gangways are looking very lush this year. We will only need this year to do constant cutting as we are planning the wild flower meadows planting next spring.

We now have a trained arborist allotmenteer. Who is assisting to keep the trees healthy on the site , and visitors will see that a bench as been fashioned from a felled willow bow. Which makes a great place to contemplate. Or rest after a stroll.

The allotments are full and we are now looking at a waiting list.

The dog poo bin is well used by responsible dog owners but we still have a problem from time to time . Naming and shaming may be the next course of action .

Last year's trip was to the Royal Norfolk Show which after a slow take up was well attended and was a great success. Fine weather and a cornucopia of man crèches made it memorable.

There were also cows in abundance.

Watch out Kent ! Toppesfield are coming!! the next trip this \July 10th is to the Kent show we are selling seats fast so if you know you want to go please respond ASAP

Appendix L

Toppesfield Community Shop

Report for Annual Parish Meeting 30th April 2015

The shop continues to thrive , providing a vital service to the village. As with much larger food retailers, it has been a challenging year with a bit of a down turn in turnover combined with necessary expenses for the freezer, fridges and air conditioning. Also we have had a very mild Winter . There is nothing like a few days of being snowed in to boost sales!

We welcomed Kaaren to our team as treasurer this year and she has done a sterling job in getting to grips with retailing and keeping us on the straight and narrow.

Trisha and Keely continue to provide the Post Office facility that is so vital in an isolated village like Toppesfield. Trevor Cooper steps in fill the gaps as well. The Post Office provides all the financial services and helps maintain people's independence.

WE always allocate a sum of money each year to be available for grants towards specific projects. This year we have given grants to Toppesfield School to set up their book club, The Pub choir event,, James Sheldrake towards his Educational project in Tanzania, Zac Smith toward his University expenses and Evie Plumb towards her Educational project. It is very important to us that the money that is made in the shop is available to people in the village.

The shop would not survive without its volunteers. We felt the need to get some new volunteers involved and did a leaflet drop in the parish to recruit some new volunteers. I am delighted to be able to tell you that from this we have two new volunteers Sam Shiggins and Maggie Parmenter and also Dave Dyson has rejoined the team. Eve Smith, who moved to Sudbury a while ago has continued to be a volunteer but now has decided it is a bit too far. I would like to thank Eve for all the years she has been a volunteer. We always welcome new volunteers to share the load and the fun.

During the year we had a spot inspection by Braintree Council Environmental Health team and am delighted to tell you that we were again awarded top rating of 5 for the shop. This is a tribute to all the volunteers in keeping everything clean and keeping an eye on the dates.

We lost two committee member during the year and three more will be standing down at our AGM on 15th May. We hope to encourage some volunteers to join the committee. Our AGM is on Friday 15th May at 7.30 in the village hall. The business will be followed by some light refreshments. So do come along and if you are a shareholder have your say and vote.

Toppesfield Village Show Report for Parish Meeting 30th April 2015

The Show was held on Saturday 13th September 2014 in Toppesfield Village Hall.

It always seems to be a tricky growing season and entries in the Fruit and veg sections were disappointing however there was a huge increase in the entries in the miscellaneous section and in particular the cookery classes so that overall the numbers of entries in all the adult classes was almost double that of the previous year. As ever the entries in the Art classes were of a very high standard and the Art club exhibition certainly added greatly to the show. The children's classes are always great fun and I would like to thank the staff of Little Chestnuts for organising a lot of entries from the young children.

Chris and Brian Hammond again organised the outside stalls and games. This year the show did invest in a gazebo to give the stall holders some protection and also we have bought a duck fishing game as well to be used at future shows. A cricket match in the afternoon and a Talentless competition in the evening organised by Bernie completed a great village day.

I would like to thank Chris and Brian Hammond, Maureen Dimmock, Angela and Denis Delaney and Lesley Scollay for their help in organising and running the show. It is a huge amount of work, particularly in the last few days.

The show this year is on Saturday 12th September in the Village Hall. As always more help would be most welcome. Again there will be a Cricket match in the afternoon so why not join in and make it a great village day.

Toppesfield Parish Paths Partnership

Report for Annual Parish meeting 30th April 2015

I reported last year that two applications for for diversion of footpaths had been submitted and passed. I am pleased to report that the way marker posts for these diversions are in place and the footpaths are being well used. The issue of the route of the footpaths around Olivers has not as yet been resolved however I am delighted to report that most footpaths in the parish are well marked and clear and cross field paths sprayed out. It makes such a difference if the users of the paths can see where the paths are. Unfortunately County Highways department, who are responsible for the surface of the paths, have had their budget cut and now the paths will only get one cut a year rather than two. However if the paths are clear and well used this does help to keep the paths clear.

I organised a walk in the New Year. There were seven of us plus a dog setting off on a very frosty morning. Unfortunately it was rather foggy which did obscure the views a bit. However we checked out the newly diverted footpath around Bradfields and up through the vineyard to Gainsford End then down to Cust Hall and back up to the village along the path to the waterworks and up through the churchyard. a really delightful walk. On Tuesday 21st April I joined a parish walk on to a walk from Toppesfield I was leading for Friends of Walking for Well being. There were 27 walkers altogether, just two from Toppesfield, However it was a beautiful day and a fantastic walk. I entitled the walk Two churches, a castle and the bluebells and that is what we saw. The verges were a carpet of cowslips and primroses and the hedgerows festooned with the creamy white blossom of the Black thorne. Should be a good year for sloes in the Autumn!

I plan to organise more walks during the year and to make a start on a parish footpath map.

Appendix M

Little Hedgehogs Parents and Toddlers:- We have joined in with Little Chestnuts pre-school so that they can open another afternoon session in Monday's.... this is on a trial basis till the end of the summer term in July. Numbers are very low but I am determined to keep the sessions open as so many have closed they are no longer a life line for parents as it was years ago but we are still here. We are promoting the sessions with open mornings alongside the pre-school so hopefully numbers will increase.

Art & Craft Club:- We have only a few members but we enjoy a wide range of crafts from needle point – to patchwork knitting to card making and water colours and other paint mediums.... We celebrated our 11th year in October. We meet every Wednesday 7.30 – 9.30pm ish, we took part in our annual Art exhibition at the flower show hopefully over the next few weeks we will be preparing for the next one in September.

The Golden Chestnuts Club:- Numbers are stable on average 10 people attend each session. We celebrated our 2nd year with a lunch time trip to the Toby Carvery in Braintree back in November. We had a Christmas party and exchanged a small token gifts... planning some trips over the summer... Anyone over 50 years are welcome 2pm – 4pm every Friday, only £1.50 including refreshments.

Fit Fun Club:- We meet Tuesdays 3.30pm – 4.30pm and Thursday 2pm – 3pm. On average 6 members attend each session, our age ranges from 19 to 70+ years. We have new members.... We really enjoy our sessions always feel good afterwards.... Planning a walk for the 7th May so the ladies don't miss out.

Thank you

Zoë Hughes

Appendix N

Rob Stafford-Baker talked through the slides showing shots of how the playing fields look now and after possible works have been carried out. Suggestions for the Toppesfield playing field include a path around the

field for walkers all year round, a tarmac area to include a basketball hoop, a fenced off play area for the children, a five aside size football pitch and a cricket pitch. Rob reported these are suggested ideas and nothing has been agreed at this stage. A public meeting / drop in session will be held to gain the views of the residents.



BEFORE



AFTER

