

January 2022
Edition 185



USEFUL NUMBERS

Braintree District Council	01376 552525
Colchester Hospital	01206 744491
Doctors Car Service	07845 596092
Freshwell Health Centre	01371 810328
Hedingham Medical Centre:	
Castle Hedingham	01787 461465
Sible Hedingham	01787 460612
Kaaren Berry, Parish Clerk	07341264219
Little Chestnuts Preschool	079018 80914
Little Hedgehogs Toddlers	01440 785778
Pumphouse Brewery	07780 702293
Rev. Liz Paxton	01787 277270
St Margaret's School	01787 237354
The Green Man Public House	01787 237418
Toppesfield Community Shop	01787 236003
Toppesfield Village Hall Booking	
Secretary—Daphne Jude	01440 788270

TOPPESFIELD COMMUNITY SHOP

Church Lane, Toppesfield. Tel: 01787 236003

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

Monday—Friday

8.30 am— 4.00 pm

Saturday—10.00 am—12.30pm

TOPPESFIELD POST OFFICE

Church Lane, Toppesfield

Wednesday— 10.00 am—1pm

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

Toppesfield Parish Council

Councillors — Alan Collard, Amanda Smith, Andrea Chinery, Boyd Page, Chris Neale and Trisha Roberts. There is currently a vacancy for a 7th Parish Councillor, if you are interested in joining the parish council please inform one of the councillors or the parish clerk.

Parish Clerk — Kaaren Berry

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

Toppesfield & Gainsford End Parish Newsletter

Published by Toppesfield Parish Council

Editor: clerk.toppesfieldparishcouncil@gmail.com

Please see our online resources to find out what is happening

Facebook Pages :-

Toppesfield & Gainsford End Community

Toppesfield Village Hall

Toppesfield Village Stores

The Green Man, Toppesfield

Pumphouse Community Brewery

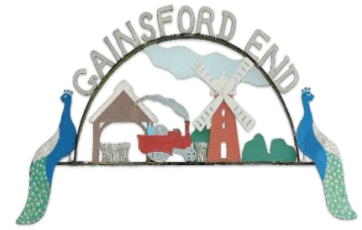
Toppesfield and Gainsford End Neighbourhood and Development Plan

Twitter & Instagram— Toppesfield & Gainsford End Community

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



From the Parish Council



From the Parish Council

First, we would like to wish everyone a very happy 2022.

We are clearly in a better place than we were 12 months ago, following the impressive roll-out of the vaccine programme. For the vaccinated, even if covid is caught, the impact is much less severe than was the case in January last year.

We are looking forward to a busier year in the community in 2022 as the events that used to mark the year – village markets, church fete etc – get re-established. And in addition, we already have two occasions to look forward to in what will be a very busy June.

As everyone knows, this year will see the 70th anniversary of the Queen's coronation and the village will celebrate the landmark between the 2nd and 5th of the month. The parish council is budgeting to provide financial support for this.

An organising group has had an initial meeting and will be coming up with more detailed plans over the coming weeks. No doubt they will also be looking for more people to join them to help make this a memorable occasion, so keep your eyes and ears open for more information. The village has a long tradition of celebrating royal jubilees and weddings; let's make sure we keep that tradition going.

Later in the month on 19th June, Happy's Circus will be coming to Toppesfield. This promises to be a great family event and we understand that tickets are selling quickly. Not only will there be the circus in the Big Tent, but also food stalls and a beer tent selling Pumphouse beers. This year, the 19th June is also Fathers Day, so how better to celebrate than being together at the circus!

You will find the usual range of articles in this edition of the Newsletter with items from the shop and the pub, the church and the brewery and articles about tree planting and the proposed prison complex at Wethersfield air base.

With regard to the latter, there is a brief survey inserted into the Newsletter seeking your views about this proposal. Please take a few minutes of your time to complete this and return it to us. The results will help to inform the parish council's approach to the plans.

If you go to the playing field, you will have seen that some new play equipment has been installed and already seems to be popular with the children. Thanks to Boyd Page for all his work in getting this completed. We are working on further plans to improve the playing field facilities during 2022.

Finally, we both welcome Trisha Roberts to the parish council as a new member and advise that Gemma Mackman has had to step down for personal reasons.

This means that we have a vacancy for a councillor and we would love to hear from you if you are interested in joining. The current parish council term ends in April 2023, so this would be an ideal chance for you to find out if the role suits you without making a longer term commitment.

Parish Council



Toppesfield Parish Paths

Hi Everyone

Happy New Year! I hope you all had an enjoyable Christmas. I have just looked back at January 2021 edition of the newsletter and so sad to see that we are still in the grip of covid. Still walking as ever is so important for us all so do enjoy it.

Oh the wet. The river is brimming its banks and many of the cross field paths are now impassable but still we can find places to walk and things to look out for and enjoy. Fantastic carpets of leaves of all colours still decorate the footpaths and I cannot resist scuffing through them! The leaves are so important to the soil as they rot down, helped by earthworms, other invertebrates, bacteria and fungi to make nutritious compost and fertiliser for the next season.



Another thing that I always like to see is that as the leaves fall off and the trees are left bare you can see the birds nests used this season. Hopefully , with a bit of DIY, they will be reused this coming Spring and perhaps provide some shelter in the Winter.

There are already signs of Spring with the Hazel catkins making an appearance. The catkins are the male flowers shedding pollen. The female flower is just a little tuft of red hairs coming out of a bud and, when pollinated, that is where the nuts will develop. The branches also have a coating of lichen on them to paint the hedgerow.



I did report in the last edition of the newsletter that the bridge over the brook beyond Ollivers has moved again having been repaired earlier in the year. I have reported it to highways ProW team but as yet nothing has been done about it so if walking that way please take care.

Happy New Year.

Ann Read





St Margaret's Church

So much has happened since my last article, the Supper Auction was a tremendous success and we exceeded previous auction fundraising, and in total we made £2,500. A very big thank you to all who were involved with that event.

A lot of you turned out for the tree festival and the turning on of the lights, and we had an amazing number of families come in to take part in our craft session and the Children's tree looked fantastic. And there was a surprise visitor who waved at us all so I must have been good.

As I write this article, we have just had to cancel the Carol concert due to concerns about the rising cases in COVID and being mindful that we have to protect each other. However, we did have a lot of interest in our knitted bauble and pompoms that each had a blessing attached from St Margaret's so you all were very much in our thoughts and prayers.

A very big thank you to Tia Stickland and her husband Tim who organised and coordinated this together with those who knitted a wonderful selection of baubles. Well done to you all.

As I sit here and we are approaching Christmas, and the news and media reporting is full yet again of the rise in COVID cases and the Omicron variant, I am aware of the anxiety and worry that is causing for people. The Church is open for private prayer and I encourage you to take time out and reflect and pray and take your worries to God who will always listen.

In the New Year we have some exciting plans for a Candlemas and Christingle service on Sunday 6th February, and a further Messy Church session in February half term on the theme of Love. So, look out for further details on those on Facebook. I have also started a mailing list for families who want to be kept in contact with events, so if you would like to be added to that please contact me.

May I take this opportunity to wish all of you a joyous, prosperous, and healthy 2022.

And as always if you know anyone in need of a visit, or you would like a visit yourself. Please get in touch.

revcarolinebrown@gmail.com: 01787 469161



A HUGE THANK YOU to all the KNITTERS and CRAFTERS who contributed such beautiful Christmas decorations for St. Margaret's!

A special mention must be made about the contribution made by Judith from Gainsford End who made 23 baubles – phenomenal!

Let's hope that 2022 will be kinder and more settled and wishing everyone a Very Happy New Year.

Tia Stickland.



Local volunteering opportunity

On Sunday 19 June, the Happy's Circus will be coming to Toppesfield. This is a professional circus. The big top will be in the village playing fields. There will be lots going on including a beer tent and hot food available. The big top takes x600 people. It will be a brilliant event. It is being run by Little Chestnuts pre-school. It is a fundraising event as we are hoping to raise money with a view to securing our own building for the pre-school in the future. It will also be a wonderful family, community day.

We are looking for volunteers to assist us on the day. There will be lots of different roles from assisting with car parking, ticket collection to litter picking. This could be a good opportunity for any local groups to get involved such as Scouts or those working towards the volunteering aspect of their Duke of Edinburgh award. We also hope that there may be some kind spirited villagers who are willing to help out. This is a huge undertaking and we are only a committee of 5!

We thank you in advance for any assistance that you can give. If you are interested please contact Andrea on manager@littlechestnutspre-school.co.uk

Andrea, Victoria, Laura, Lizzie and Fran

Wethersfield Airfield Prison Proposal Update

Well, many people think that following the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) Consultation that closed December 8th, there is nothing happening as we await the Planning Application. That couldn't be further from the truth!

Many Parish Councils, as well as many individuals, responded to the Consultation document. Several Parish Councils met and as a result the Wethersfield Airbase Scrutiny Committee (WASC) has been formed to consider, respond, suggest and actively engage with all stakeholders in connection with development proposals involving Wethersfield. The Committee is formed under the statute of the Local Government Act 1972 Section 102 and is made up of representatives from various affected Parish Councils.

The MoJ has proposed the extent of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) needed to support the Planning Application in a Scoping Opinion letter to Braintree District Council (BDC). There is a structure to an EIA for a development of this size, and the MoJ has proposed to BDC that some of the sections of the EIA need not be completed. If BDC (the authority that will receive the Planning Application) agrees, this means that specific areas of investigation will not be carried out.

This Scoping Opinion letter was sent to Finchingfield Parish Council for comment but the response has been made by WASC on behalf of all involved Parish Councils. The following is an extract from the response:

“The WASC considers that this site should never have been selected as a possibility for prisons of this scale. The location has poor accessibility, will have a dramatic impact on the landscape, ecology and character of the surrounding countryside, cause untold loss of amenity caused by increased traffic over a very wide area which is characterized by country lanes, open varied countryside, historic villages, scattered farmsteads. The proposals are wholly contrary to local and national planning policy and at odds with current and emerging prisons strategy - the site should have been discounted at an earlier stage. Had this been a scheme by a housing developer it is inconceivable that this scheme would have been entertained.”

The Scoping Opinion letter itself actually says:

“The policies map shows that the application site is not allocated for development and is located in a ‘countryside area’. There are three Protected Wildlife Sites identified at the site within the Development Plan. The site is not allocated for development in the emerging Draft Proposals Map. The site was not considered as a development site in the emerging Local Plan. The proposed development is contrary to the Development Plan and the policies in the emerging Local Plan.”

If you would like a full copy of the Scoping proposal and/or the WASC response, please contact me.

Parish Council activities are controlled in detail by legislation so that activities such as fundraising or very swift reactions may be difficult or simply not possible. In recognition of that, and in order to involve as many people as possible in trying to stop the proposed development, a group of people from the villages which will be affected by the proposed development got together in early December to form a Residents' Association – Stop Wethersfield Airfield Prison or SWAP. Membership of this Association will open early in the new year, but it has already been active.

A SWAP page has been established in Facebook, Instagram (SWAP Wethersfield), and there is a Twitter account. All of these social media pages contain a lot of information. (Please note that an earlier FB page, open to all, may be taken down shortly.)

Wethersfield Airfield Prison Proposal Update cont..

SWAP founder members put questions to Braintree District Council at the December meeting and held a demonstration outside their offices, a protest was held in Finchingfield, a Parliamentary Petition has been started <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/603619>, more suitable alternative uses for the airfield have been developed, and many, many letters have been written. The Chair of SWAP has experience in fighting against – and winning – large unsuitable developments and there are lots of people with relevant skills involved.

The two groups – WASC and SWAP – will be working very closely together throughout what might be a very long process.

Hope is not lost!

Please keep in touch by using the social media pages detailed above, joining SWAP once it is open to membership, responding to any Planning Applications, signing the petition and writing letters – to Braintree District Council, to James Cleverly, to the Ministry of Justice and others.



Firstly, we would like to extend our thanks to David and Paul for their efforts during their tenure and what must have been an extremely challenging couple of years. The committee wish them the very best of luck in their next endeavours and we look forward to working with them over their 6 month notice period to ensure a stable and smooth transition.

As you may have already noticed, we have begun advertising for both a new tenant and for a manager in tandem to see what interest is generated. We believe the quality of candidates will be an important deciding factor in the final choice.

If you'd like to be kept up to date with our progress, please email: committee@toppesfieldcommunitypub.co.uk to join our distribution list.

The Next Village Markets will be held at

Toppesfield Village Hall on

Saturday 5th February

Saturday 5th March

10.30 am – 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.

Please continue to be respectful of social distancing and mask wearing.



Phone for reservations, functions, or event catering 01787 237418

Follow us at @greenmantopps

Enquiries:

info@thegreenmantoppesfield.com

We hope you had a restful break over the holiday period and were able to unite with friends and family. We enjoyed seeing our customers over the festive days and celebrating with you all again at our New Year's Eve celebrations with live music performance from Retro Duo. We wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for your custom and support during an extremely challenging time. Having reflected on this time and our future, we have handed our notice as landlords of the pub. Until our departure, we will very much be continuing with business as usual with plenty more in store!

Serving

Super value Thursday lunch club, up to 3-courses only £12

Smaller dishes prepared for children

Special meal or fancy something off the menu, we are always up for a challenge – just ask and give us notice!

HOURS

SERVING

Tuesday	No food service
Wednesday*	Pizza night 5 pm - 8 pm
Thursday*	Lunch club 12 - 2 pm
Friday*	Coffee & cake 2 - 5 pm Chip shop 5 - 8 pm
Saturday*	Breakfast 10 am - 12 pm
Sunday	Roast 12 - 4 pm
*Wed - Sat	A la carte 5 - 8 pm

OPEN Tuesday to Thursday 5 - 11 pm | Friday 2 - 11 pm
Saturday 10 am - 11 pm | Sunday 12 - 7 pm

Events

Every Tuesday is pool night, anyone welcome 7 – 11 pm

Enter our monthly quiz night just £5 a team, pre-registration is advisable for free chips and dips. Please note a date change at your request, now every 3rd Saturday, next quiz night 15th Jan

Event Catering – We can help support you for ANY event catering. David has catered for the royals, rich and famous and up to 10,000 people, we have no limits. Let us take away the stress hosting your event at ours, or we can set you up at a venue of your choice, let us take the stress away. We can deliver buffets for celebrations, prepare a dinner party in your house, prepare a roast for you to finish in the oven and dish up (taking all the credit), from buffet to gourmet, ploughman's to fish platters, fun 'have a go' pizza making kits, all bespoke to you. Tell us what you're looking for.

Work from home the pub – Enjoy our quiet dining room without the distractions at home, desk space and WiFi, and a FULL bar of refreshments on tap! £20 for 4 hours between Mon to Fri 9 to 5.

Take away & delivery – Let us make your dinners a little easier. We are now officially offering our Wednesday pizza and Friday chip shop evening menus as collection, or delivery to the immediate area. Take advantage of a meal out, at home, whilst supporting your local pub with minimal miles!

Support us – It's been a really challenging time for hospitality and supporting your local couldn't be easier. Something at different times throughout the week, prices to suit any budget, collection, delivery and our flexible approach to our food and service. Try something you haven't before, our door is open Tuesday to Sunday.

PUMPHOUSE

BREWERY

Thank you to all our customers for making Christmas so successful.

**We had eight different beers available, in large stocks,
and sold every single bottle.**

**Draught beer was being taken home, in kegs and pins, right up to the afternoon of
Christmas Eve.**

We really appreciate the positive feedback.

Here's just one example, kindly sent in by Richard Mortimer from Saffron Walden:



**“I have to just say that your 19 Elms is one of the finest
Best Bitters that I have ever enjoyed (and I have sought out
and enjoyed very,
very many over the past 45 years).**

**It is a superb beer, please don't change it, please carry on
making it.**

**If I could drink nothing else but 19 Elms for the
remainder of my life I would die a
happy man.”**

We're working hard to rebuild stocks. To find out what's brewing in 2022

please visit our Facebook page:

@Pumphousecommunitybrewery

or call in to the brewery.

We're open Monday - Friday 10 - 4.

Happy New Year!



St. Margaret's C of E Primary School



Welcome back and a Happy New Year to you all! We hope you all managed to enjoy some restful time over the Christmas Period.

We were very busy before Christmas, with the children releasing a Nativity video on our website. Even though it is not really the Christmas season anymore, why not take a look at how well they did? Please click on the link:

[St. Margaret's School Nativity 2021](#)



We are also on social media now. Please follow us on:

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

Twitter: @StMargaretsTopp

Instagram: stmargaretstopp

We hope to post lots of exciting updates about what is going on in school here.

We look forward to keeping you up to date with our news in future issues of the magazine.

ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY GROUP

A few more trees planted ...well, 300 actually!

If you walk around the playing field any time soon you're likely to see what looks like a thicket of bamboo canes across the bottom of the field, alongside the eastern edge and along the fence bordering the school playing field. These support the 300 native hedging tree whips which were planted between Christmas and the New Year by a stalwart small band of volunteers.

Well done to Victoria, George, Bill and Alora, to Andy and Rosie and to the Collards.



Bill and Alora with 2 of their helpers

Four other families had planned to join in but were hit by omicron or had other commitments and so have to wait for another opportunity.

Fortunately for them, there will be another chance since we have 30 more to plant and a number of other associated jobs to do before leaving nature to get on with her part!

We are also planning to put up the bird boxes that some children made at Messy Church during the February half term.

It will be fascinating to see what happens during the summer and early autumn - hopefully some more insect life if some plants blossom and bear fruit, and more birds nesting and raising their young. This is all part and parcel of our efforts to create a green wildlife corridor between the pond in the corner of the playing field and the pond in the school field.



Alora explaining how it should be done



Old Clippings relating to the parish appear when you least expect them.

Here's one that was found when a parishioner was researching some old football results.

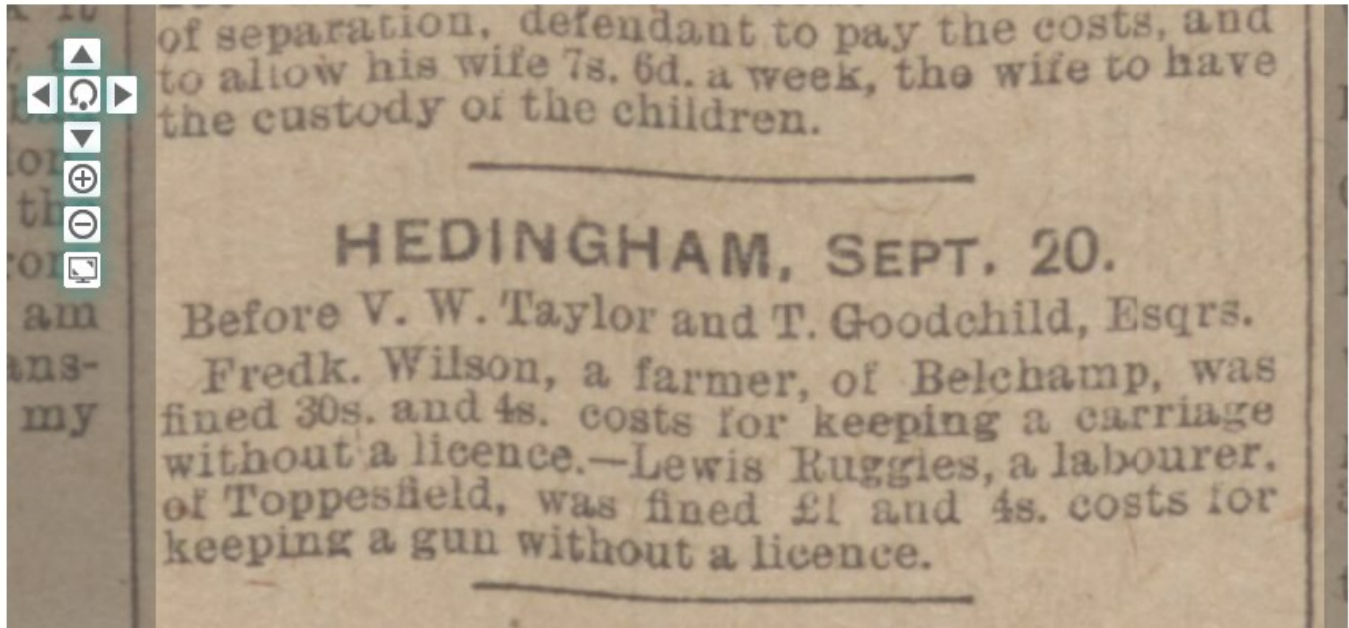
If you find any others articles that you may wish to share with the parish now please email the parish clerk on:
clerk.toppesfieldparishcouncil@gmail.com

Essex Newsman - Saturday 24 September 1910

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'Late autumn view at Toppesfield'





ABOUT US

We are a family of 4, our children are Callum who is 6yrs old and Chloe who is 4. Both are pupils at St Margret's Primary School in Toppesfield, Callum is currently going through a diagnosis for a condition called Neurofibromatosis (NF1)

Complications may include:

- Tumours growing along nerves on the skin and inside the body
- Bone Deformities/Scoliosis (eg Curvature of the spine)
- Sight Problems/Blindness
- Social Skill Difficulties (eg Autistic Spectrum Disorder)
- Attention and Impulsivity (eg ADD/ADHD)

The condition is incurable and will involve constant testing and monitoring for the rest of his life.

ABOUT THE CHALLENGE

Callum's dad was discussing Callum's condition to his friend and co-worker Andy Cooper, who was inspired to do something. So he came up with the idea to walk the 4 highest peaks, in 4 days for 4 reasons.

Each of the team have been effected directly or indirectly by the charities that we have chosen to support.

The group of friends will be walking a total of 34 miles, driving over 1800 miles over 4 days.

We hope we can count on your support to follow our journey, raise awareness and donate

SCAN ME TO DONATE



VISIT FOR MORE INFO : WWW.4PEAKS4REASONS.CO.UK



Danaher Animal Home

Please say hello to this trio of beauties Avery, Evelyn and Harriet, these girls have arrived in our care after unfortunately losing their previous owner.

Although these girls are very nervous at the moment and choose to hide away from sight, after some time in the right home being shown patience and regular gentle handling they should tame to be super sweet, more confident versions of themselves. If you have the nice calm, cosy indoor home that these girls are constantly dreaming of please submit an interest form for them on our website www.danaheranimalhome.org.uk.

There is also the possibility of adding our trio of girls to a lone sow or neutered boar to provide them with company.

Ref. Numbers: 16708 - 16710

Ages: Evelyn - 10 Months
Harriet - 10 Months
Avery - 1 Year

Breed: Guinea Pig

Gender: Female



Little Chestnuts Pre-school brings
Happy's Circus
to Toppesfield



Sunday 19th June 2022
@Toppesfield Park 1.30pm

There are still a few Early bird tickets available at £8 per ticket.
All tickets after that £10 per ticket.
Children 2 years and under can sit on laps free entry.



Tickets available from

manager@littlechestnutspre-school.co.uk

collection from the village hall

Toppesfield

CASH ONLY.

There will also be a beer tent and hot food stalls