



November 2019

Edition 172



USEFUL NUMBERS

Braintree District Council	01376 552525
Castle Hedingham Surgery	01787 461465
Colchester Hospital	01206 744491
Doctor's Car Service	07845 596092
Freshwell Health Centre	01371 810328
Great Yeldham Surgery	01787 237212
Halstead Hospital	01787 273110
Kaaren Berry, Parish Clerk	077889 55038
Little chestnuts Pre School	079018 80914
Little Hedgehogs Toddlers	01440 785778
PumpHouse Brewery	07801 042545
Rev. Liz Paxton	01787 277270
Sally Croft, Pastoral Assistant	07850 361101
Sible Hedingham Surgery	01787 460612
St Margaret's School	01787 237354
The Green Man	01787 237418
Toppesfield Community Shop	01787 236003
Toppesfield Village Hall Booking Secretary - Daphne Jude	01440 788270
Vets – Great Yeldham	01787 238255

Toppesfield Community Shop
Church Lane, Toppesfield
01787 236003

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

Mon/Tuesday/Thursday/Friday
8.30 am – 4.00 pm,
Wednesday 8.30 am – 1.00 pm,
Saturday 10.00 am– 12.30 pm.

Toppesfield Post Office
Church Lane, Toppesfield

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

Toppesfield Parish Council

Councillors - Alan Collard, Andrew Bull, Amanda Smith, Andrea Chinery,
Boyd Page, Chris Neale and Robert Stafford-Baker.

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 that starts at 7.30pm.

A Parish Councillor will also be available to listen to your views and answer your queries at the Village Markets.

Toppesfield & Gainsford End Parish Newsletter

Published by Toppesfield Parish Council

Editor: Kaaren.berry@kaaren.co.uk

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

Twitter & Instagram - Toppesfield & Gainsford End Community :
Website: www.essexinfo.net/toppesfield-parish-council/

From the Parish Council



Welcome to another packed edition of the Parish Newsletter.

Again, you will see the range of activities taking place in our small community and the number of people involved. Sometimes it's easy to forget that all these things happen because people give their time, skills and enthusiasm to make Toppesfield & Gainsford End such a great place in which to live.

Over the past couple of months, we have seen this work recognised from outside the village. BBC Radio Essex featured the village during September in an edition of its 'Hashtag Essex' programme, including interviews with representatives of various village enterprises. And earlier in October a visit from Helen Mark, the presenter of BBC R4's 'Open Country' focused on the strength of community in Toppesfield; the resulting programme will be aired sometime over the next couple of months.

In this edition of the Newsletter you can read about all that is going on at the Shop, Pub and Brewery, the plans being hatched for next year's VE75 Day, about the preparations being made by several groups for Christmas (including Toppesfield's popular Christmas event on 7th December), the Church Supper Auction and the new Ukulele Club and you can wonder at the achievements of Toppesfield's own 'Lycra Lovelies' those finely tuned athletes who raced around Essex for charity.....and a few beers.

We are grateful to Vic Turner for his great article about the history of the Toppesfield church bells and the work that went into restoring them. The Newsletter would welcome more articles like this for future editions; if you would like to write something, whether it is about the village or a topic or event that you would like to share, please send it to Kaaren Berry.

We have been advised that there have been a few attempted break-ins around the parish over the last month or so. Please be vigilant especially as the nights are drawing in. If you so see anything suspicious do not hesitate to call the police and let Andrew Bull know so he can publicise this on our Facebook page.

Finally, we would like to pay tribute to Ann Read who has just stepped down from organising the Toppesfield & Gainsford End Show after 45 years. The Show has been one of the most popular events in the village and much of this has been down to Ann and her enthusiasm and hard work.

Well done and thank you Ann!

News from St Margaret's Parish Church

Brian Moody and James Blackie

Thank you to everyone who made our Harvest Festival so special, and to David and Paul who hosted a wonderful Harvest Supper afterwards in a packed Green Man.

We're delighted to welcome Rev Justin Tomkins to our benefice. He was appointed earlier this month and will help Rev Liz, especially in the Yeldham parishes, where he will live with his wife Dalena and their children. But he will come to Toppesfield to lead services occasionally – and he's already popped into our shop to say hello!

Highlights of the coming weeks are:

Remembrance Sunday service at 10.45am on **November 10th**, followed by **Remembrance Sunday Lunch** in the Green Man.

Carol Service at 3.00pm on Sunday **December 15th**

Christmas services will as usual be Holy Communion on Christmas Eve at 6.30pm and Family Service on Christmas Day at 11.00am

Otherwise, regular Sunday services will continue every week at 11.00am. And of course the church is open every day through the week for a moment's quiet reflection.

And now is the time to book your place at the famous - some say notorious - **Supper Auction** on Friday **November 15th** at 7.00pm. – your once in a lifetime (until next year) chance to make a priceless purchase, and of course help us to raise funds to maintain the church. To buy tickets, and/or to donate items for the auction, please contact Sally Croft (07850361101).

Rules about gravestones and memorials in the churchyard

In July this year The Diocese of Chelmsford published an updated version of its Churchyard Handbook which sets out guidelines and regulations regarding all aspects of country churchyards, ranging from maintenance, design of gravestones and obtaining consent for them, flowers (fresh please, not artificial), reserving grave spaces to burial of cremated remains, to name but a few.

It is extremely comprehensive and easy to absorb. We have left a copy inside the church on the small table at the back of the pews so that anyone can read it should the need arise. We strongly recommend that it should be consulted before ordering expensive items such as gravestones or memorials to ensure that they are in accordance with the stipulations laid down in the handbook.

If there are any queries James, who is responsible for churchyard matters, will be happy to discuss them (01787 237642).

WHEN 5 BECAME 8

Standing high on the crest of a hill (287 ft.) overlooking the Colne River Valley, Toppesfield Church is dedicated to St. Margaret of Antioch.

St. Margaret's is one of the many stories of virgins martyred after spurning the advances of wicked Roman officials. Because of her refusal and her Christian faith, the provost Olybrius had her tortured. At the end of the first day of torments, she is thrown into prison and assailed by a demon in the shape of a dragon, from whom she saves herself by making the sign of the cross. The following day, after yet more tortures, the heavens open and St. Margaret is granted a crown, a sight which leads 5000 pagans to convert. Olybrius finally puts an end to these affronts by having her beheaded.

The tower of red brick, is of unusual design and has arched windows and battlements with obelisk pinnacles at each corner. A distinguishing feature is the semi-circle troughs between the battlements.

At sometime in the past, there were obelisks in the centre of these troughs but these have now been removed. A tablet in the west wall of the tower tells us that the bricklayer was a Daniel Hill, who erected it in 1699, the former tower of flint and rubble having collapsed on the night of 4th July, 1689. When making slots for the new metal frame to fit into the new rebuilt brick tower, it was discovered that between the inner wall and the outer wall, rubble from the old tower which had collapsed, had been tipped in between to infill the space. It is quite possible, that some of the old flint and rubble tower, is still standing inside the walls of the red brick tower.

CHURCH BELLS HISTORY

The oldest bells in the tower are the second, third and fourth bells cast in 1675 by Antony Bartlet of Whitechapel. His initials first appeared on a bell in Lambourne, Essex in 1640 and his latest know castings are the three at Toppesfield. The fourth treble bell was cast by Henry Pleasant of Sudbury in 1702 and the tenor bell cast by Pack and Chapman in 1779.

Campaigning to augment a ring of five to eight, lower down the tower and in a metal frame, culminated in a very serious period of planning. Four of the old bells were taken to TES Ltd - Taylors Eayre and Smith, the bell founders of Loughborough, for re-welding and re-tuning with four new bells cast at the foundry, three new trebles and a brand new tenor. The old tenor, which was too badly damaged for repair, was left at the top of the tower in its original position. We were also given a bell for the church clock by the church diocese which, interestingly, is a bell cast by Thomas Bartlet in 1617, the father of Antony, who cast our three trebles in 1675. The old wooden frame, probably dates from the middle to the late 19th century and was likely to have been made by a local carpenter. This frame is to remain in its original position with the old tenor.

After seven years of Concerts, Supper Evenings, Barbecues and many other smaller events, which all helped to get four bells repaired and four new bells installed, Toppesfield bells finally came to life on January 19th 2008 when a Dedication and Thanksgiving Service was held. It was conducted by the Bishop of Chelmsford, the Rt. Revd. John Gladwin who, during the service, blessed the tower, the new ringing chamber and the bells old and new. The school children from St. Margaret's, were very much involved in the project, searching out some of its history, learning to ring hand bells and in some cases showing and interest in learning to ring church tower bells.

Since the augmentation of the new bells and ringing chamber, we have had very little interest in this ancient art of bell ringing. It is a hobby, which can take time to learn but if anyone is interested and would like to have a go, our practice night is on a Wednesday from 7.30pm until 9.00pm.

Vic Turner



Toppesfield Community Pub

So what is TCP?

Toppesfield Community Pub Ltd is the owner and landlord of the Green Man. It is a Community Benefit Society and is made up of 154 shareholders with the Management Committee carrying out the business of TCP on their behalf. We are:

Mary-Ann Stevenson, Chair

Peter Moore, Deputy Chair and founding member

Gill Page, Treasurer

Brian Moody (founding member)

James Blackie (founding member)

John Levick (founding member)

Andrew Howells

Alastair Burns

and our latest and very welcome new members Bill and Belinda Littler.

The committee liaises with the tenant, in this case David and Paul Wignall, to ensure that the best outcomes are achieved for customers, tenant and landlord, though the committee has no direct control over the running of the pub itself, which falls to the tenant.

United by a desire to see the Green Man remain open, flourish and serve the wider community, the members of the TCP committee bring extensive experience to the role of managing the pub on behalf of shareholders. TCP has a responsibility to act according to the rules of a Community Benefit Society, and all decisions by the committee are made with these in mind.

One of the major priorities for the committee is the refurbishment of the pub, and as such, it is actively looking to raise funds through grants or sponsorship. Currently a window replacement scheme is being undertaken, which will improve the pub's aesthetics, energy efficiency and overall comfort for customers and tenants. We have already raised over £2000 with donations from shareholders and The Red Barrows.

We had another boost to our window fund lately with £500 being donated by the audience and diners in the pub who were there to see the Red Barrows band Reptile Dysfunction perform and enjoy a Thai curry on Saturday 12th October. A very big thank you to all.

We rely on volunteers to help out wherever possible and would like to say a big thank you to Bernie Stevenson and everyone else who turned up to paint the pub the other weekend. It was a great team effort and I am sure you will agree that the pub now looks a great deal smarter.

Another gift to the pub was the new website developed by Paul Mackman, which is now up and running with a new What's On page and photo gallery coming very soon - www.thegreenmantoppesfield.com

The Toppesfield Fibre Broadband Big Build

Work to deliver full fibre broadband to Toppesfield is ongoing by Openreach with underground ducting work now complete in Harrow Hill (pictured), Camoise Close and Great Yeldham Road along with new poles installed in Church lane, work can soon move to installing new fibre cabling and hardware ready to connect residents to Ultrafast Broadband speeds amongst the fastest in the UK.

A choice of service providers will be available including BT, Sky, Freeola, Spectrum and Zen. Freeola is a local company based in Braintree.

Gainsford End residents are already enjoying the benefits the increased Broadband speeds bring.

The network is scheduled to go live by February 2020.
If you would like more information, please contact
Chris Neale (c_neale@btinternet.com)



75th Anniversary of Victory in Europe 8th May 2020



As many of you will already know, next year is the 75th Anniversary of V.E day . On 8th May 2020 it will be exactly 75 years since the guns fell silent at the end of the war in Europe. Six years of war and destruction had come to an end and millions of people took to the streets to celebrate peace, mourn their loved – ones and to hope for the future.

Friday 8th May 2020, has been designated by the Government as a Bank Holiday to enable as many towns, parishes, districts and communities, along with individuals, voluntary organisations, pubs, clubs and hotels etc, to join in the **VE Day 75** celebrations,

Never wanting Toppesfield to miss out on the chance of a good time we are considering having a street party and a day of celebration, fun and general shenanigans.

If you would like to be part of the organising group or have some suggestions for activities please let me know.

In the next few weeks there will be sign-up sheets posted in the Shop, The Green Man and the Village Hall so you can register your interest in attending . Jacqui Burnett tel.07743 162308



TOPPESFIELD Community Shop

Please note
**OUR NEW WINTER
OPENING HOURS**
from 04/11/2019

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Can you spare the time to
come and help out in
our village stores?
Know someone that can?
No experience needed!

Training given!

Please contact

Tel: 01787 236003

Email: wendygames121@hotmail.com



BREAD
MILK
FRUIT & VEG
FROZEN FOODS

ALL GROCERIES
ICE CREAMS
PET FOOD
PLANTS

NEWSPAPERS - MAGAZINES - CIGARETTES

FRESH MEAT TO ORDER

SANDWICHES - ROLLS - BAGUETTES

COAL - LOGS - KINDLING

STATIONARY - CARDS

OPENING TIMES

(CLOSED FOR LUNCH 1PM - 2PM)

Monday 8.30am - 4.00pm
Tuesday 8.30am - 4.00pm
Wednesday..... 8.30am - 1.00pm
Thursday 8.30am - 4.00pm
Friday 8.30am - 4.00pm
Saturday 10.00am - 12.30pm



WEDNESDAY 10am - 1pm

**Don't forget, if you have an item or service that you would like
us to include in our community shop, please let us know
either instore or message us on our Facebook page**

I am extremely pleased to report that our bread tasting at the village market
on Saturday 5th of October was a resounding success.
Following on from this we shall now be supplying **Tensheds** artisan bread to order.
Tim, Tensheds master baker, specializes in the most amazing Sourdough Bread.

Please see types and prices, instore or on our Facebook page

These are available to order on or before the specified dates and will then be
delivered, ready for your collection, to our village shop.

Upcoming delivery dates are;

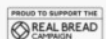
Order by Wednesday 13th November for delivery Saturday 16th November

Order by Wednesday 11th December for delivery Saturday 14th December.



message

TOPPESFIELD VILLAGE STORES telephone 01787 236003



Toppesfield & Gainsford End Neighbourhood Development Plan

The steering group have sought quotes for a Housing Needs Survey to be carried out. These have been considered and have recommended to the Parish Council that the RCCE (Rural Community Council of Essex) are engaged to carry this out.

Quotes are also being sought for a Landscape Character Assessment and a financial request has been made to the Parish Council to access the grants available to commission these surveys/reports.

There are currently 5 members of the Steering Group, however more members are required as well as support from volunteers for specific tasks as they arise. If you would like become involved please speak to the parish clerk or contact the group at ToppesfieldNP@gmail.com.

The Neighbourhood Plan group now has its own Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/tgenp/>) to keep you updated on progress and information will also be placed on the parish website.

Nigel Meek

Just for fun - A Christmas Quiz

1. What did the first ever SMS text message, sent December 3rd 1992 read?
2. Which Christmas carol includes the lyrics 'all seated on the ground, the angel of the Lord came down and glory shone around'?
3. Which American actress plays the Ghost of Christmas Present in the film "Scrooged"?
4. The Beach Boys had a Christmas number one US hit single in 1966 with which song?
5. Which country is Eggnog said to have originated from?
6. Which famous scientist born on Christmas day was the first scientist to be buried in Westminster Abbey in London?
7. What is the name of the little boy in the filmed story of "The Snowman" by Raymond Briggs?
8. Which English author wrote the book "A Christmas Carol"?
9. From which town had Mary and Joseph come before arriving in Bethlehem?
10. Name the Christmas song with the initials "WIAWW"?
11. Which 3 dimensional puzzle, sold by Ideal Toy Corp., was the most popular Christmas gift in 1980?
12. "There's never really been a real hood Christmas movie" is a quote by which American rapper and actor?
13. 'Ilex' is the scientific genus of which type of Christmas foliage?
14. Which spirit based sauce is traditionally poured over Christmas pudding?
15. In the Christmas song 'Jingle Bells', how many horses pulled the sleigh?
16. By what other title is the film "National Lampoons Christmas Vacation" known in the U.K.?
17. In which year did the US postal system first issue Christmas stamps?
18. What "MAW" was a UK Christmas Number One in 1988 for Cliff Richard?
19. "He's making a list and he's checking it twice. He's going to know who's naughty and nice" is taken from which Christmas song?
20. Who played the Grinch in the 2000 film?

Answers can be found on page 22

Toppesfield and Gainsford End Show 14th September 2019

The show was held on Saturday 14th in Toppesfield Village Hall. It was a pleasant day weather wise and once all the exhibits were in place awaiting judging the hall looked wonderful. That is my favourite moment I think as the perfume from the flowers and the cooking smells from the cookery entries all begin to blend.



Very disappointing this year though was a very low entry in the children's classes. We just had one table of exhibits where as usually the stage is lined with tables covered with exhibits. The children's exhibits were sadly missed . So come on kids, get organised next year. Exhibits were down a bit in adult classes too but still made a wonderful show of very high class entries.

Cup Winners in Adult classes :- Oscar Pickess, Jacquie Stafford-Baker, Zoe" Hughes, Ann Read, Jac Watson, Jennie Wiffen, Jill Burton, Chris Hammond, Ros Castle, Ros Passfield and Ian Tarbin.

Cup winners in Children's classes :- Daniel Berry, Sammie Berry, Alora Young and Bill Young.

Congratulations to the cup winners and all the exhibitors. Without you there wouldn't be a show.

The raffle was amazing and I would like to thank all the individual people and local businesses for supporting the show in this way by donating prizes.

East of England Coop, Toppesfield Vineyard, The Green Man, Gainsford Hall Workshop, Darkins, Eary , Plants that Grow , Petals Tea room, and Pumphouse Brewery.

Delicious refreshments were served . In addition the Dick Ruggles Cricket Match was being played on the Village playing field. A truly village event.

These things do not happen with out a lot of hard work and I would like to thank Maureen Dimmock, Zoe" Hughes, Kaaren Berry, Vicki Wyeth, Chris + Brian Hammond , Andrea Chinery and Eddie Human for their help and support.

I have been involved with organising the show for forty five years and think I have done my bit! I would hate to see the show disappear but do look to finding someone to take over organising it next year. I of course will be happy to help.

ARE YOU THAT PERSON?

Do let me know if you would like to be involved in running a show next year.



Match report Toppesfield CC v Old Southendians CC

The annual match versus the Old Southendians for the Dick Ruggles trophy proved to be a compelling, if low scoring, affair. Played out under blue skies on a warm afternoon, the home side chose to bat first. The youthful combination of Harry Croft and JP Levick kept the scoreboard ticking over for the first few overs, before old hands, Rob Sullivan and Nick Hasler showed their experience, accumulating much-needed runs to push the Toppesfield total to a respectable 111 for 8 wickets down in the allotted 20 overs.

In reply the visitors made a slow start, finding it difficult to pierce the field. Southendian batsman Smith did his best to accelerate the score, hitting some lusty blows and for a while it seemed that the target was achievable. However, the introduction of Rob Sullivan soon put a stop to that when Smith edged a quick ball to slip where it was snaffled by Levick senior, who happened to be paying attention at that moment.

Toppesfield's bowlers did a great job with wickets shared around but special mention to Jacob Taub, who picked up a three-wicket haul. In the field Toppesfield looked lively, took some good catches and generally kept the pressure on the visitors who simply ran out of batsmen, scoring 66 runs in reply to the home side's total.

So Toppesfield retained the Dick Ruggles trophy for another year and in doing so won its first match of the season! A big thanks to Nick Robbins for organising the Old Southendians, despite being unable to play himself, and remember guys, there's always next year!

It was also good to see a fair few supporters in attendance, enjoying the splendid cakes on offer courtesy of the Muckies. Some money was raised, some beer was drunk and a good time was had by all. Cricket – what's not to like?





PUMPHOUSE POST

The BBC and the Prince's Countryside Fund

Along with the village shop and the Green Man, Pumphouse Brewery had a visit from BBC Radio 4's Open Country on Friday 18th October.

Their enthusiastic interest in Toppesfield's community projects was triggered by the grant to the brewery from the Prince's Countryside Fund (our first payment arrived just the day before!).

As well as Anne-Marie and Helen from the BBC, we were delighted to welcome Ellie Jesson from the PCF, who came to see where their money would be making a difference over the next three years.

She met Aaron, our Head Brewer, who will be working five days a week from 1 November, together with Kaaren, now our part time Sales and Admin Assistant and Bill Holland, who came top of several impressive applicants to land the new role of part time Assistant Brewer.

Ellie, the PCF's Operations Manager, also spent time with volunteers and our two new committee members: Graham Kent-Jackson and Tina Mason. Welcome to them both!

Now's the time to buy your Christmas beer

With the Brewery open Monday to Friday from November, it will be easier to pop in and buy or order beer by the bottle, gift pack or pin. We plan to have a card machine installed shortly, so cashless payments can be made in person or over the phone. Just right for the run up to Christmas.

One beer sure to be popular is our Limited Edition 19 Elms Remembrance Ale. It is now on tap at the Green Man and a number of local pubs - and is available by the bottle from the Brewery. Last year it went very quickly, so don't miss out!

We are discussing with the PCF the possibility of developing a special 'Prince's Ale' to celebrate their 10th Anniversary next year. We'll see how that goes and we'll keep you informed.

Come in and see us

We are always happy to welcome new shareholders and volunteers - and of course new customers! Just drop into the Brewery any weekday from the 1 November. You'll be sure of a warm welcome.



St Margaret's School

The crisp autumn mornings signals the return to school. With summer over, an exciting September for St Margaret's awaited us, with a new Headteacher, Mrs Newland and a new teacher for Year 3 & 4, Miss Mill arriving at the school.

We've seen a busy start to the term, with visits from our local Fire Service; the school competing in its first football tournament of the academic year and class two visiting Hedingham Castle. Topics in the class range from the ancient Egyptians through to World War Two. It is great to see the children's imaginations captured as the teachers bring to life the subjects.

We've held a McMillan coffee morning and raised £125.75 for this great charity, it was a great way for families to get to know each other better.

The village as always has been supportive to the school and I'd like to thank David and Paul from The Green Man pub for donating early year toys, Reception class are very grateful.

This term the school held its inaugural Parent's Forum, which was hosted by the Headteacher and one of my fellow governors. There were some great topics discussed, which ranged from RE lessons, Forest School, Swimming and e-Safety. The school are keen to listen to the parents views and how we can continue to shape our vision and improve the school for the children. This Forum will be a regular feature on the calendar.

As a governing board supporting a small school, every member of the board is hugely important and bring with them different skills. At present we are looking to recruit a governor with financial/accounting background. If you know anyone in the community who would be interested please contact me via the school.

Helen Kent-Jackson

Chair of Governors - St Margaret's COfE - Toppesfield

In Flanders Fields

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

JOHN MCCRAE





Little Chestnut's Pre-School

Little Chestnut's Pre-School has had a great start to the new school term, after saying goodbye to our not so little chestnuts in July, it was lovely to welcome back our returning little chestnuts and welcome some new children from our neighbouring villages.

As the sun continued to shine into September, the children had lots of fun with their brand new 3-seater circular bike, two new tricycles and two scooters; this was with huge thanks to The Red Barrows who kindly donated £500 to the pre-school. Continuing with the Community Spirit, we held a Macmillan Coffee Morning and raised a fantastic £110, thank you to all those who came and donated.

As we head into the beautiful colours of autumn and with chiller days ahead, we will be welcoming one and all to warm up at our coffee morning on Friday 29th November 9-11am. For those with little ones, or for the child in you, there will be; winter arts and crafts, investigation and messy play.

And, dare I say with Christmas countdown in full swing, please join us for our Christmas Market on Saturday 14th December 2-4pm where you will find all your festive treats, from local handicraft gifts to local food and drink. There will also be the chance to have your Christmas all wrapped up, with our 'Win Christmas' raffle and a beautiful Nativity by our own little chestnuts.

We are so fortunate to have a Pre-School in such a community spirited village as without all your support, Little Chestnuts would not have managed to keep thriving for 45 years. We would like to take this opportunity to say thank you and we look forward in continuing to help your Little Chestnuts to grow for many more years to come.

Laura Hughes
Committee Secretary
On Behalf of Little Chestnuts Pre-School & Committee.

Winter Coffee Morning and Play



Friday 29th November
9am-11am.

Winter arts and crafts, Investigation and Messy play

Little Chestnuts Christmas Market and Nativity



Saturday 14th December 2pm-4pm.

Locally Produced Christmas Gifts, Food,
Drink, Raffle and Lots of Christmas Cheer.

Toppesfield Allotments

The fruit has been picked. The squirrels have had the walnuts and the chickens are still laying. It's all happening at the Toppesfield Community Allotments and Orchards.

Some allotmentee's have moved on: farewell to Eddy who is moving to a new home. He has been a valued colleague.

The allotments that are not used and are causing a nuisance with weeds will be cleared and offered to others if there is no attempt to get them under control before the New Year. It is not fair to others that tend their plots and have to battle with seeds from weeds from unattended allotments.

We have a great facility in the village. Anyone who wants a plot of whatever size or wants to share with a friend or neighbour please feel free to contact me via the Parish Council.

Its a great way to combat depression. A healthy dose of fresh air and some chat therapy can help. We can help to get you started.

Tommo's tips

No time to rest. There is just enough daylight to clear and tidy up the allotment of any old crops in preparation for next year. Don't leave the remains of summer crops to rot and harbour overwintering pests and diseases. Wait for a clear, crisp, sunny day and go for it. You'll feel shattered but a lot better at the end of the exercise.

Start to harvest winter cabbage, Brussels sprouts, leeks and parsnips, wait until after a frost for the parsnips because the chilling effect turns the starches into sugars and this gives them their natural sweetness. Pick the Brussels sprouts working from the bottom of the stalk upwards to make sure that all of the sprouts get a chance to swell. At the same time snap off any yellowing leaves at their base to ensure that there is good air circulation around the plants. It also makes the sprouts easier to pick on a cold, wet and frosty day.

Dog walkers are always welcome, but remember we have Poo bins at the pathway.

Also it is unacceptable to leave dog mess in the middle of any public pathway in the parish.

If you could please flick it into the side that would be an improvement.

Please be a good responsible owner. It's not the dogs at fault!

Paul Thompson



THE GREEN MAN TOPPESFIELD

We would like to say thank you for welcoming us to the village and making us feel welcome.

We are planning to hold something different each Saturday. The second Saturday of each month will be a curry night, the third Saturday there will be live music, the fourth Saturday is to be a themed food night and the first Saturday is still waiting for confirmation.

The Thursday Lunch Club offers lunches from 12pm – 2pm where alternate weeks a meat or fish dish is being served.

Moving a little further ahead and to December we will be offering a traditional Christmas Dinner during December. This will be Soup for Starters, Followed by a Traditional Christmas Dinner and Christmas Pudding for £22.50 per head.

We can also cater for parties. For more information, enquiries or bookings please contact David or Paul at the pub.

Christmas Eve we will be open from 4pm – 9pm. Further details of opening times over the festive period will be available nearer the time.

If you would like to eat out on Christmas day we will be offering a 7 course dinner for £70 per head. This will be served from between 12pm and 4pm. Booking is essential and a deposit is required. Limited numbers are available, again all enquiries to David and Paul at the Pub.

The Menu will be:



Melon and Serrano Ham

Soup

Sorbet

Mixed Bird Plate

**Slices of Turkey, Duck and Goose
with roast potatoes,
sprouts, carrots and braised leeks.
A vegetarian option is also available.**

**Christmas Pudding Stuffed Baked
Apples**

Cheese Board and a Glass of Port

Coffee and Mince Pies



We look forward to seeing you soon
David and Paul

The Green Man, Church Lane, Toppesfield CO9 4DR. Telephone 01787 237418

Men in tights (well shorts)

After several months of serious training Toppesfield Remedial Cycling Club (TRCC) made its first foray into 'sportive' cycling when it entered the Essex 100 ride at the beginning of September. Organised by Action Medical Research, a children's charity that saves lives through medical research, the ride started and finished at the Colchester United football ground and in between wound its way around the splendid Essex countryside.

Looking every inch the pro-outfit it had become, the team set off about 7.30am. Mercifully the weather was kind, even if the inter-team banter was not. On its way through Toppesfield the TRCC peloton was greeted by well-wishers who had lined the road to see the village's finest power down the Causeway.

Spirits remained high throughout as the route took in Gosfield, Saling, Bocking and a few more settlements before the team headed back towards Colchester. The only blot on the landscape was Wormingford Hill, which really is quite steep if you've already ridden 90 miles.

Driven on by the thought of finally getting out of the saddle, the riders crossed the finishing line at around 4.00pm and immediately took on post-ride refreshments in order to rehydrate...oh and wait for Ali Burns who somehow had become detached from the main group.

All in all a great showing from TRCC and, thanks to Richard Millgate, were able to raise over £1200 for charitable causes.

Roll on the next challenge!



Red Hot Ukes @ The Green Man – Your New Ukulele Club

A Ukulele is a very sociable musical instrument. Even sensible adults are getting together in pubs, churches, school halls, lounges, kitchens, etc. all over the country to play their ukes! You don't have to know how to play ukulele – but it helps! You don't have to be sober – but it helps! It's an opportunity to let your hair down and have fun!

So we now have a ukulele club based in The Green Man, our Community Pub. Singing and playing along to many types of music from pop, ballads, folk music, etc.etc. We meet fortnightly, on alternate Thursdays from 7.30pm – 9.30pm. There is no fee for joining in, but, as it's in our Community pub, we buy at least one drink. We sing from Song Books each containing 50 songs. (Available at cost price £3.00 each). Further details are on our website: www.redhotukes.co.uk. including song lists from Books 1 and 2.

Some of us are gathering to have an early evening meal before the Club Night. The menu is simple, and an evening extension of the Community Lunch served on Thursday.

We have a great facility in Toppesfield for Community use, and this is one example of how we can extend its use and help to make the pub viable. We received the following message after our first Club Night: *"I popped into the pub last night and thought your ukulele gathering sounded really good and it was lovely to see the pub being used for this."*

If you would like to join the "Red Hot Ukes @ The Green Man" Ukulele Club, you'll need a Ukulele and a tuner – THAT'S ALL! Of course, if you're not already a player, you'll need a little guidance on how to play. We can arrange to give you support. It's really easy! There are only 4 strings to worry about – and no need to worry at all! A starter set can be obtained for under £40.00 new, and much less on E-bay! We can help you. So, if you're interested, come along to a Club Night (next ones are on Thursdays 24th October, 7th November, 21st November, etc. fortnightly) and see what fun we're having. The very best way to learn is to join in with our Club Nights! The Ukulele Club is for over 18s only (adults!) and our coaching sessions would be intended primarily to grow club membership. (N.B. There is no upper limit on age but we cannot take on children.)

More details on our website: www.redhotukes.co.uk. or contact Malcolm Braithwaite on 01787 238138 if you have any questions.

Ukulele Club Red Hot Ukes@The Green Man

Thursday 24th October @ 7.30pm

"The Green Man Community Pub"

Church Street, Toppesfield CO9 4DR

Beer and Food available
Club Night from 6.30pm
Playing from 7.30 – 9.30pm

For further details:
www.redhotukes.co.uk.

Fit Fun Club

We continue to meet on a Tuesday from 3.30pm for an hour in the village hall and work out to salsacise and other exercise DVD's.

On a Thursday will be meeting at 2.30pm outside the village shop for an hour of walking and talking.

We are also starting to meet on a Wednesday evening at 8.30pm at the village hall—please keep an eye out for posters as to dates we will be meeting in November. An ideal way to help lose a few pounds before Christmas. Scales will be available for free weighing in (this is optional)

Fit Fun salsacise is only £3.00 a session for more details contact Zoe on 01440 785778.

Dog fouling in the churchyard

Two separate complaints have been received recently about dogs fouling the churchyard. One was from a lady visiting the village to attend the grave of a relation and she was very upset to find dog mess around the grave.

The paths through the churchyard are very busy, being used by children on their way to school amongst many others.

If you are walking your dog PLEASE clean up after it; there really is no excuse for not cleaning up after your dog. Bins are provided in the village for dog waste: please use them.

Village Markets for the rest of this year will be held on:

Saturday 2nd November

Saturday 7th December – Christmas Market

The markets are held in Toppesfield Village Hall from 10.30 am - 12.30 pm

Please pop along to see what is on offer from fresh meat, jams, pastries and cakes to handmade crafts, jewellery and much more. Or pop in for a tasty bacon roll and a cuppa with friends.

Looking for more local trades.....

Following last months request for local trades to be included in the Welcome Pack which are being put together to give to new residents and to be included on a directory within the Parish website only one responded.

Therefore a second request is being made - if you would like your business to be included please email the parish clerk at kaaren.berry@kaaren.co.uk with your company name, contact details and a brief description of what your business offers.

Thank you

Kaaren

Pop Up Café



**Saturday 23rd November
10am –12noon.**

Toppesfield Village Hall.

Raising money for



Enjoy the festive season with Friends and Family

Toppesfield Christmas Lights Festival



SATURDAY 7TH DECEMBER

SWITCH ON 6:30PM

Christmas Tree Festival in the Church: 5:30pm • Arts & Crafts in the Village Hall 5:30pm • Switching on the Lights, Fireworks and Refreshments at the pump 6:30 • A special visit from Father Christmas and Friends 7pm

Christmas Quiz Answers:

1. Merry Christmas!
2. While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night
3. Carol Kane
4. Good Vibrations
5. England (East Anglia)
6. Sir Isaac Newton
7. James
8. Charles Dickens
9. Nazareth
10. Walking in a Winter Wonderland
11. Rubik's Cube
12. Ice Cube
13. Holly
14. Brandy Sauce
15. One
16. National Lampoons Winter Holidays
17. 1962
18. Mistletoe and Wine
19. Santa Claus is Coming to Town
20. Jim Carrey

What's on at Toppesfield Village Hall?

We have a lot of different activities going on in the Village Hall and we are always willing to take on new clubs and your own ideas. Our hope is that we reach as many of you as possible with the information of what's going on so that you can choose and enjoy a new activity.

We put information on our page and on the Toppesfield Village web site. We also put information on Facebook. We put posters on the boards in Toppesfield and Gainsford End and on the board in the shop and of course here, in the newsletter.

However we know the best way of getting information around is to ask you to tell anyone you know about something you have seen and think they would like to do.

Below is a list of what is on each day.

Monday

Pre School

Junior Dance

Parent Toddler Group

Tuesday

Pre School

Fit Fun

Indoor Bowls

Wednesday

Pre School

Self Defence

Thursday

Pre School

Fit Fun

Tai Chi type exercise

Puppy Training class

Friday

Pre School

At weekends there are private hires and also one off events for all to enjoy.

Call Sheila on 07553243453

Or

Frances on 07809237789

for further details and contacts

The Green Man Toppesfield

Your Community Pub

Opening Times:

Mon: Closed

Tues: 17:00 - 23:00

Weds: 17:00 - 23:00

Thurs: 12:00 - 23:00

Fri: 14:00 - 23:00

Sat: 12:00 - 23:00

Sun: 12:00 - 20:00

Telephone: 01787 237418

Address: Church Lane, Toppesfield, Essex. CO9 4DR

Email: info@thegreenmantoppesfield.com

'Or Just pop in for a chat'

