

September 2020

Edition 177



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 – 3.30 pm,
Wednesday 8.30 am – 1.00 pm,
Saturday 10.00 am – 12.30 pm.

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 Robert Stafford-Baker.

Parish Clerk - Kaaren Berry

Parish Council Meetings are normally held on the first Thursday of every month in the Village Hall. During lockdown the parish council are meeting virtually. You are welcome to attend the Open Session that starts at 7.30pm. Please email the clerk for login details.

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

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

Twitter & Instagram - Toppesfield & Gainsford End Community :
Website: <https://e-voice.org.uk/toppesfield-parish-council/>



From the Parish Council



September already! Where did that summer go? For a summer in which little has taken place, I imagine, however, that it will be one that we remember for longer than most others.

At least we are increasingly finding some stability in our lives, and some return to 'normality'.

Many people are back at work, children returned to school early in the month, pubs and restaurants have reopened (albeit with restrictions), many people have taken short breaks and holidays and families have been able to get together more easily.

As you will all know, the Toppesfield & Gainsford End Response Team stood down at the beginning of August. The first thing to do, on behalf of the whole community, is to thank all those volunteers who helped at the shop, bought and collected provisions for the shop, collected and delivered prescriptions, walked dogs, kept an eye out for friends and neighbours and many other acts which kept our community in as good a shape as was possible during this unprecedented time. There are simply too many to name them individually, but I think we all know who they are. So, thank you all sincerely.

There was, in fact, a lot of good which has come out of the past 6 months. One of these is the value of key community businesses such as the shop. As Ann Read points out in her article later in the Newsletter, Toppesfield is a very special parish and one that is admired from the outside and looked on as an exemplar village. As Ann also says, however, this does not happen by accident and to maintain the level of service and to continue being a viable community we all need to think about how we can help. You could get involved with the shop or any of the other groups and societies that are in the village; many of them have articles in the Newsletter.

Do take a look at Nigel Meeks' article about the Neighbourhood Plan, for which work has been continuing during lockdown, albeit at a slower pace. We have all read about the prospect of changes to the national planning system and this makes it all the more important for us, as a community, to determine what sort of development we would be willing to see. The results of the Housing Needs Survey that was carried out earlier in the year have been produced in draft form. Many of you have made suggestions for possible sites and have expressed views about the type of housing you would be happy to see in the village. This will all be shared with you when the full analysis has been done.

Finally, as we return to a more stable life, some regular items on the calendar are starting to reappear. One of these is the Harvest Service on October 4th, at 11:00am. Why not come and celebrate the harvest and catch up with others who you may not have seen for some time?

Our next Newsletter will be published early in November. If you would like to include an article do let Kaaren Berry know by 20th October.

With Thanks

As we emerge from lock down and adopt the 'new normal', we would just like to say how much we appreciated the work of all the volunteers who delivered our food and prescriptions and made shielding under lock down possible.

We would also like to say thank you to all those other friends and neighbours including the allotment holders who rescued our plastic sheets and weighted them down during the winter gales and gave us plants, the well -wishers with their gifts of bread pudding and wine, acts of kindness such as cutting our grass, mending our front door and obtaining 'special supplies' when they were doing their shopping or out on their travels. Also, for all the offers of help which were so supportive.

A huge Thank You to each and every one of you.

Mike and Mary.

SMILE FOR MADDI

Lockdown has not been easy for Maddi as she was unable to have her usual physiotherapy which is vital for helping keep her mobile. In addition, like many other charities, the Maddi Foundation which is funding research for a gene therapy treatment for Maddi's condition (SPG15) has seen donations fall as fundraising events could not go ahead.

Amazon is a bit of a marmite company, but many of us do use it for just about everything as it's so convenient. But did you know that you can continue to use Amazon and raise funds for the Maddi Foundation at no extra cost to you?

Instead of logging on to Amazon.co.uk, log on to smile.amazon.co.uk using your usual user id and password. Choose the Maddi Foundation as your beneficiary, and shop as usual. Amazon makes a small donation for everything you buy.

Each of us might not raise hundreds of pounds this way, but if the whole community did this, it would make a significant difference.

So, use smile.amazon.co.uk and be a silent fundraiser for Maddi.

Thank you!

Trisha

Paul Thompson Allotments review

Welcome to our new recruits the Lanhams, Lizzy and Tommy, who have taken over the Preston's patch - and are busy digging out the weeds and putting up new fences to keep the rabbits at bay. Lizzy is one to watch! I have spotted her veg box at the front garden with some good produce. We are full to capacity with a waiting list! Long may it last?

Special thanks to Braintree District Council groundsman Ashley for keeping the site in super condition with the lawn mowing and strimming works. The place looks fabulous, and is a great asset to the Village for all who wander through the grounds. Some parishioners have commented on the good volunteer works carried out on the heavily overgrown Church graveyard by the allotments Group. Thanks to all that participated - the Evers, R-S-B, Rae Syder, Dave Chapman all working at a social distance - it just needs more volunteers to keep it looking tidy. Some interesting headstones were uncovered.

There is a small group of likeminded souls chewing the cud and burning a few sausages on a Monday evening, on the Lotty, weather permitting at a very social distance. Hand sanitizer is available if needed in the form of carbolic soap and water. Thanks to Richard Van Dulken for the donation of £200 towards the shelter we are looking for further donations up to £600 to get it finished. Sweat capital will build it. We would welcome any donations of timber and or roofing materials.

Community Orchard

The apples and pears are ready along with the walnuts and don't forget to pick the blackberries around the allotment.

Tommo's Tips

Comfrey, is very under rated by both gardeners and farmers. We have lots of wild comfrey on the Allotment perimeter. It will grow in most ground; from sand to heavy clay, wet or dry, sun or shade. It's deep roots draw nutrients up from below to make a plant rich in nutrients, especially potash. Comfrey is versatile and can be used to make a compost activator, seed compost, liquid feed, and fertilising mulch. It's also useful as a food for poultry and livestock ranging from pigs to race horses. It is a very productive fodder crop out-producing many of the more common crops and being higher in minerals and nutrients.

Growing & Using Comfrey for Gardeners

How to Grow Comfrey, Uses & History. I am convinced that anyone growing their own should devote some space to growing comfrey. I call my comfrey patch my compost mine because with a little effort I can produce a great compost activator, a high potash plant food and a liquid that rivals commercially available tomato feed.

Location & Preparing the Comfrey Bed

A comfrey bed is basically a permanent feature with a life span in excess of 20 years on your plot or in your garden so getting the site right is fairly critical. Once established, killing off comfrey is very difficult unless it is totally dug out or poisoned.



Planting, Cultivation, Harvesting & Problems of Comfrey

Ideally plant out offsets in March, April and May or in September. September plantings may not show until the following spring. Late planted offsets in pots can be moved into the greenhouse or a cold frame in late January, early February and will be well along for planting into the ground in early March

Rae Syder's Tip

Plant carrots in sharp sand at least a spit deep for straight veg and easy pulling.

Finally - DOG POO!!!!!!! you know who you are! TAKE IT TO THE BIN

St Margaret's Parish Church

Regular services in church are now back on most Sundays at 11.00am. We are still following government guidelines about social distancing, wearing face coverings and avoiding singing but the church is large enough to welcome everyone who wishes to join us. In particular we plan to hold **Harvest Festival** on **October 4th** and will invite donations of canned goods to send to the local food bank.

Services for Sept and October are:

Sept 13th Family Communion led by Rev Liz 11.00am

Sept 27th Holy Communion led by Rev Graham 11.00am

Oct 4th Harvest Festival 11.00am

Oct 11th Family Communion 11.00am

Oct 25th Holy Communion 11.00am

We still can't open the church for visitors all day during the week but will continue for the time being to be open on Wednesday mornings for private prayer.

Many thanks to the volunteers who have done a great job tidying the overgrown areas of the churchyard. Brambles and impenetrable growth have disappeared revealing some gravestones not visible for many years.



You may have seen this sign recently put up at the lychgate.

One of the 19 members of the parish who died in the First World War, Horace Barber, is buried here in the village. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission has erected the sign to let visitors know that he is here and that our churchyard is an official commemorative site.



Sally's ordination as Deacon takes place on Sept 12th at Chelmsford Cathedral. Because of Covid 19 restrictions on numbers attending we can't go to share in the celebrations but we send our blessings and best wishes for the future to her and her family.

In the last edition of the newsletter we asked readers to consider making a donation or regular payment to St Margaret's because with the long closure and cancellation of fundraising events the church's finances are struggling. Thank you to those who have already done so. If you are still thinking of making a donation, here are the church's bank details again: Toppesfield Parochial Church Council. Sort code 20-97-40. Account no. 20880078.

Toppesfield and Gainsford End Village Show 2020

Normally at this time we would all be looking forward to our annual show held in September. We would be checking out the schedule and deciding what classes we can enter. Of course practising our cooking, keeping and eye on the flowers, fruit and vegetables in the garden, finishing off that special handicraft and art exhibit and searching through the photographs to find that winning entry.

Unfortunately, I cannot see how we can hold the show in any way adhering to all the safety regulations regarding covid-19. Sadly the show has become another victim of covid-19.

However I would like to have the cups back so they are ready for next year when I hope we will be able to have an even bigger and more exiting show. If you do have a cup please can you return it to me at my address 15 Stambourne Road, Toppesfield or you can leave it in the shop for me if that is more convenient.

Keep cooking, gardening, painting, stitching and taking photographs and above all keep safe.

Ann Read



Show 2014

Toppesfield Parish Paths



Hi Everyone

Autumn is coming ! While walking in the last few weeks the landscape has changed dramatically with most of the crops having been harvested and straight away the soil is being prepared for next year's crops and in many cases sown as well. Just a few weeks ago, while walking near Gunces the farmer was cultivating the land and there was a huge flock of gulls following the cultivator obviously searching for juicy worms. It was a beautiful sight. Also near that spot the amazing sight of a field of sunflowers. Sunflowers are such glorious plants. I always think they do look like the sun on a stalk. Their seeds are mainly spread by the birds who find them delicious. Some years ago Fran Laskowski planted some sunflower plants in the little flower bed by the recycling bins and as a result every year the sunflowers pop up all over the place. There is one growing out of the tarmac by the Pumps and a couple in the shop garden. Wonderful.



The hedgerows are now changing with the fruits and seeds beginning to develop. I must say I have taken great joy from watching all the butterflies and bees busy on the bramble flowers. Their work has now provided us with the bunches of delicious blackberries. Fluffy trails of Old Man's Beard decorate the hedgerows with colour added by the rose hips, hawthorne berries and the sloes. The trees too are making sure there are plenty of seeds for the next generation with the abundant sycamore and maple keys, ash keys, acorns, hazel nuts and conkers hanging in clusters.

There are still a few flowers making a late appearance. One of these is chicory, a beautiful clear blue flower. Every year I spot it growing in just one spot on the corner of the footpath leading up from the Yeldham Road to the church yard. There are always just a few plants of it there. There must be something special about the soil that it likes!



Seeing all these signs of Autumn makes me think of the village show. In normal times we would be looking forward to it, usually held in early September, but this year unfortunately it will not happen. However we can still look forward to the glorious Autumn colours to come.

Keep walking and keep safe.

Ann Read.

Toppesfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan

Well despite the current difficulties we have managed to continue limited progress on the Neighbourhood Plan.

As we reported previously, a total of 74 responses, (including 15 online), to the Housing Needs Survey had been received just before the closing date, which represents an excellent response rate of 34%. Laura Atkinson at the Rural Community Council of Essex has presented her draft report, (which we can re-iterate is fully "anonymised" to ensure confidentiality), and provides us with a very good insight into the future housing aspirations within our community. This information is crucial to the successful development of the Neighbourhood Plan.

You may remember for the last newsletter that we are working with the international consultancy AECOM on preparing a draft Design Code to capture the essence of the built environment within the Parish. We have been walking round the parish taking photographs of key building elements that characterise our parish, and that we would wish to see respected in the designs of any small development proposed in the future.

Naturally this is subjective, so we would encourage anyone to send us their views, particularly with photographs, so that we get a full range of thoughts and ideas as to what you consider to be good, and bad, architectural features found in the parish. This will be of immense use to AECOM in their work. Please forward your thoughts to us via email at ToppesfieldNP@gmail.com, or via our FaceBook page, which can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/tgenp>.

Don't forget, we are also still on the lookout for photographs of your favourite landscape features that you would wish to see retained for the future enjoyment of us all. These can also be sent to us at the contact details above.

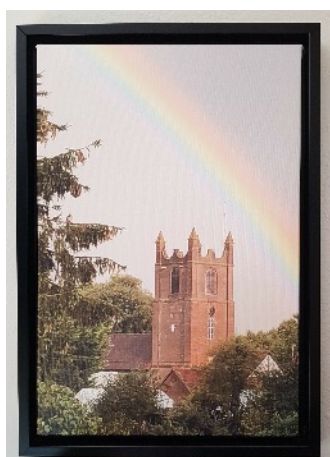
There is also our Instagram page showing the views some people have already submitted. Here is a link to explain how to create an account:
<https://help.instagram.com/155940534568753>

Once you have an account if you search for "toppesfieldviews", you should then be able to click "follow" and then be able to see the page.

The winning three entries from the Toppesfield Views photographic competition are now framed and mounted in the Green Man.

If you have any queries, thoughts or opinions re the Neighbourhood Plan, do please feel to contact us at: ToppesfieldNP@gmail.com.

In the meantime, please continue to stay safe, and look out for neighbours who may be feeling isolated or have needs that you feel you can help with – obviously with social distancing in mind!



Toppesfield Community Shop

It is hard to have imagined that almost six months on from the initial lock down that we are still having to take the same covid – 19 precautions and sadly I fear we are going to have to continue this for some time to come.

The shop is still open mornings only but we plan to extend opening hours to 3.30pm once more volunteers can be retrained. A huge thank you to the new volunteers who stepped in at the beginning but of course some of those have now gone back to work and some of the original volunteers have now returned . A huge thank you to Trisha for manning the fort and keeping the shelves stocked. Getting supplies is a little easier now and our newly appointed shop manager, Clare Lewin, keeps everything ticking over.

More recently we have offered the opportunity for customers to come into the shop, rather than service at the door, strictly one at a time and wearing a face mask. But a lot of our customers are happy to still be served at the door.

The shop continues to offer amazing services and stock but as was inevitable, as things opened up, our takings have taken a dramatic drop. During lock down we saw a lot of customers who hadn't used the shop before and many of them were agreeably surprised by our range of goods and the competitive prices. So all I can say is please, please keep using your community shop.

Shop AGM

The AGM would normally be held in June or early July but of course this year that was not possible. However all shareholders did receive information and a questionnaire regarding three issues.

1. Extending the shop and demolishing the post office,
2. Employing a manager.
3. Updating the constitution of the shop to a Community Benefit Society.

Fifty forms were returned and all but three of them were in favour of the suggestions. The extension of the shop and demolition of the post office is all part of a much bigger potential village project which is in the very early planning stage at the moment. We do now employ a shop manager and welcome Clare Lewin in this role. We have amended the constitutional rules of the shop which is now a Community Benefit Society.

We do now desperately need more people to become involved in running the shop and sharing the load. There are very exciting times ahead so do please think about getting involved and being part of this village project. Toppesfield is very special in having three Community businesses, The shop, The Brewery and The Green Man. You often hear it said what an amazing village Toppesfield is but this does not happen without people getting involved and supporting these three businesses.

SHOP AGM

The AGM will be held on Tuesday 29th September 2020 at 7.30pm on ZOOM.

If you are a shareholder and wish to be involved in the meeting please email Kaaren Berry at kaaren.berry@kaaren.co.uk so that you can be invited to join the meeting.

Ann Read

In praise of the English language

English has become the most international of all languages. But is also one of the quirkiest when it comes to spellings and pronunciations, as this verse demonstrates:

I take it you already know
Of tough and bough and cough and dough?
Others may stumble but not you,
On hiccough, thorough, laugh and through.
Well done! And now you wish, perhaps,
To learn of less familiar traps.

Beware of heard, a dreadful word,
That looks like beard but sounds like bird.
And dead – it's said like bed not bead-
And for goodness' sake don't call it deed
Watch out for meat and great and threat
(They rhyme with suite and straight and debt).

A moth is not the moth in mother,
Nor both in bother or broth in brother.
And here is not a match for there,
Nor dear and fear for bear and pear.
And then there's dose and rose and lose –
Just look them up – and goose and choose.
And cork and work and card and ward,
And font and front and word and sword,
And do and go and thwart and cart –
Come, come, I've hardly made a start.
A dreadful language? Man alive!
I'd mastered it when I was five.

In the same vein (or do we mean vain?), English has quite a few cases of pairs of words that have the same spelling but different pronunciations and different meanings. They are called heteronyms.

An example is **entrance** which can mean **the way in** or **captivate**, each meaning having a different pronunciation.

How many heteronyms can you think of?

Some examples are on page 14

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



8th May 2021

Designed and created by



AVORIO ANELLO



Tickets
available from
the end of
October 2020



We're ramping up production at the brewery so let us know the beers you love

It's been a busy summer at Pumphouse.

We applied for and were awarded a Covid-19 Emergency Support Grant of over £5000 from Power to Change. A big help at a difficult time!

We started to sell beers to pubs as soon as they reopened; including the New Inn, Colchester, the Lamarsh Lion and of course the Green Man.

The reopening of pubs has meant a slowdown in sales of takeaway draught beer, but we still have plenty of Pumphouse regulars, who like to enjoy their pint at home.

We're ramping up production of bottled beers ready for the Autumn/Winter season and the run up to Christmas. We'll be producing some old favourites like 19 Elms and Imperial Milk Stout.

A major online retailer has expressed interest in taking our bottled beers. They like the beer, they like our story and they have asked us look at refreshing our labelling. We're working on it.

Do please tell us the beers you love best, and let us know if you have ideas for something new you would like us to try. We really appreciate your feedback.

Your Community Brewery needs You

Could you spare some time to assist with: labelling bottles, making local deliveries, working in our retail 'shop'? Do you have relevant professional skills, e.g. helping us complete our chiller room, developing branding & marketing or building our social media platforms?

And of course, for as little as £50, you can join us a shareholder of Pumphouse brewery.

We are expecting to add to our committee over the next month or so, as two people have expressed an interest in joining us. We'll keep you informed.

Last, and by no means least, we were sorry to see Mike James step down from the committee at our virtual AGM in July. Mike had been integral to the brewery since the very beginning and his input has been invaluable to us. We will miss him but he has promised to keep drinking the beers!

If you would like to volunteer, invest, (or simply buy some excellent beer!) please call in at the brewery, visit our Facebook page, or email: pumphousecommunitybrewery@gmail.com

Toppesfield Village Hall

Like many organisations recently we finally held our AGM in strange circumstances. Sanitised on entry, gave details for track & trace, sat 2 metres apart with masks on, no drinks or nibbles after, and exit via one way system.

It was a sad way to say farewell to our resigning chairperson Shelia Braithwaite, who we all agreed has done an amazing job leading the committee for all the work involved in getting the hall looking so good after its major refurbishments over the last 3 years. Just as importantly Sheila was the instigator in getting the structure of the committee to the level needed to comply with all the rules and regulations needed these days or in her words 'policies and procedures', She has left the hall in a much better state and hopefully we can continue her good work while she rests on her laurels – or looks for another challenge to conquer.

The rest of committee was re-elected and following positions elected

Chair – Andrea Chinery
Treasurer – Frances Winter
Vice-chair – Wendy Ames
Minutes secretary – Jean Bagnall (agreed post AGM)
Booking secretary – Daphne Jude
Linda Bowen
Maureen Dimmock
Kim Stephens
Sue Chapman

The hall has stood idle for some months apart from the chatter of pre-school who returned in June, and are already back for the autumn term. However despite many restrictions we are now in a position to welcome back our regular hirers if they chose too, albeit with them having to comply with all the requirements from government, our requests plus their own common sense for all our safety. Sadly we are not in a position to hold our large village events or private hires yet but fingers crossed life will get back to some normality and our community can once again benefit from this resource.

We are looking to put back all the portraits of the hall patrons involved in the initial founding of the hall some nearly 60 years ago. Thanks to Val & Brian Moody for the safekeeping of Lady Plummer during our refurbishments but it is now time to 'bring her home,' alongside some old photos of Lord Sainsbury we found and have had framed. So keep a look out for our own 'rogue's gallery' when you next visit!

Frances Winter

Some suggested answers

Heteronyms

Appropriate	Bass	Bow	Buffet	Close	Console	Content
Drawer	Entrance	Incense	Intimate	Lead	Minute	Moped
Number	Proceeds	Recount	Refuse	Resent	Sewer	Sow
Tear	Wound	Wind	Windy			

How did you do?

More than 20 – excellent; 15 – 20 – very good; 10 -14 – good;
5- 9 – OK for first effort; Less than 5 – Oh dear!

Need Help with a Problem?

**Our friendly team is here to help you.
You can contact us in a number of ways**

Telephone: 0344 499 4719

Website: <http://citizensadvice.org.uk>

Help to Claim: 0800144 84444

**We're Citizens Advice and
we're here for everyone**



**Braintree
Halstead
& Witham**



Kitty's Childminding Service

Level 3 Diploma for the Early Years Practitioner
Level 3 Supporting Teaching & Learning in Schools

Toppesfield Based (CO9)

7:30 am to 6:00pm Monday to Friday

Saturday craft lessons available

Contact me on:

07541636137 or katrinaobrien89@gmail.com



The Green Man Toppesfield



Your Community Pub is open

We are serving food 5 days a week

Don't forget our Thursday Lunch Club, 3 courses for £12 - please remember to book to avoid disappointment. Our Thursday menu changes each week so check out our Facebook page or give us a call to see what's on.

Opening Times:

Mon: Closed

Tues: 5pm - Close

Weds: 5pm - Close

Thurs: 12pm - 2pm and 5pm - Close

Fri: 2pm - Close

Sat: 12pm - Close

Sun: 12pm - Close

Close is when on-one is using the pub or 11pm



Telephone: 01787 237418

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

Email: info@thegreenmantoppesfield.com

<https://www.facebook.com/greenmantopps/>