

TOFT VILLAGE CALENDAR

April 2026



DIARY DATES

St Andrew's Parish Church

5th April 11.00am
EASTER SERVICE
Holy Communion

& on Sunday

May 10th 6.00pm there
will be a sung Evensong.

The Future of the Methodist Chapel

Meeting on Thursday
9th April at 6.30pm in
The People's Hall

Toft

Friendship Club

meeting on 9th April
is the Annual General
Meeting followed by
some entertainment.

Schoolroom Café AGM

Sunday 19th April at
3pm in Toft People's Hall.

The Parish Council

The next meeting will be
on 13th April at 7.00pm
in The People's Hall.

Toft Club

The fabulous Melrose
Quartet will be
performing on Saturday
25th April.

EDITORIAL

I've got a pretty ordinary car. Ordinary, that is, in the sense that it was built by engineers who had a rough idea of the types of terrain and climate it was likely to have to deal with and constructed it accordingly. Now I see I should have bought a dodgem. But it's been fun these past few weeks rashly attempting to negotiate what used to be eminently passable roads of both the town and country variety. After our recent spell of chilly but unremarkable winter weather, it's not unlike skateboarding down an escalator. In-car entertainment is generated by the staccato splintering of tooth enamel and the colourful release of blood as one's nails bite unbidden into one's palms. Minor cracks in the tarmac have become ravines, drain covers rear up like the unruly offspring of Table Mountain, even harmless B roads look as if a hostile enemy power has been mortaring them for days on end and all, it seems, because we had a few frosty nights. Oh, and some rain, although no more than usual. It's nerve-shredding watching other drivers competing in the car slalom event and skittering about the carriageway as if they're tap dancing in a minefield or playing car hopscotch. Everyone has realised that we used to drive on the left but now we drive on what's left and the highway authority's cunning plan to save money by using Nutella and sawdust as a patching material has not been 100% successful.

But that's just spectator sport. Real daredevils chance their arm at Road User Roulette. You spot a typically cavernous pothole. Carrying straight on will almost certainly lose you an axle, a suspension unit or at least a tyre. Swerving to avoid it will take you directly into the path of an oncoming Amazon van. An emergency stop for no obvious reason will surely have you rear ended by the driver behind you. Oh, and you have a third of a second to decide what to do next ...

It could be worse. You could be on a bike or even one of those daringly hip little scooter thingies with the tiny wheels, tiny battery and super-tiny lights.

Despair ye not for I bring tidings of great joy. Observant readers (you know who you are ...) will have noticed something missing from our High Street just recently. That something is any trace of cat's eyes in the road. Instead, these inspired little gadgets have been replaced by neat triangles of tarmac. That's because the entire road is to be re-surfaced, sometime in the next year or so. So the rest of the country's roads might still resemble the far side of the moon but here in Toft we will be floating along a pristine surface you could play chess on. OK, it might be just this village but on a perfect spring day, why go anywhere else?



Photo: Jake Tebbit

THE CHURCH IN TOFT

St Andrew's Parish Church This church extends a warm ecumenical welcome to all.

Assistant Curate Revd Barnabas Leeke 07787 800 888

Lay Minister Mrs Barbara Preece 263466

Churchwardens Mrs Ann Mitchell 262516
Mrs Elizabeth Dolman 262574

Deputy Wardens Jean Verney 263028

SERVICES OF WORSHIP

3rd April 2.00pm Service of meditation for Good Friday led by Revd Robert Dolman

5th April EASTER SUNDAY

6.00am Sunrise Service of Light around a fire at the top of Miller's Road
Barbara Preece

8.30am Holy Communion (BCP)
Revd Prof. Michael Reiss

11.00am EASTER SERVICE Holy Communion
Revd Barnabas Leeke

12th April

11.00am Morning Worship
Mrs Cathy Michell

19th April

8.30am Holy Communion (BCP)
Revd Prof. Michael Reiss

11.00 am Morning Worship
Revd Robert Dolman

26th April

11.00am Holy Communion
Revd Barnabas Leeke

Wednesday morning prayer will discontinue, for the time being anyway, after Easter.

On Wednesday evenings at 8.00pm, via Zoom a service of compline: ID: 899 215 191 or follow the link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/899215191>

Zoom services available at 11.00am on Sundays.

MEETING ID: 823 1147 36

Proud-pied April

'...proud-pied April, dressed in all his trim, hath put a spirit of youth in everything.' So Shakespeare wrote in one of his sonnets. After the dreariness of the winter months, April comes as a source of regeneration and hope. The birds chant their morning prayer and evensong. The earth is clothed with green and colours glow where drabness ruled. The air is warmer. Sunshine illuminates what were dark and often lonely hours. For many there is a new spring in the step. Taking up that theme, Geoffrey Chaucer opened his *Canterbury Tales* by saying that April is the month when folk long to go on pilgrimage.

But that is not the whole story. A modern poet, T. S. Eliot, began his poem *The Wasteland* with the lines, 'April is the cruellest month, breeding lilacs out of the dead land, mixing memory and desire, stirring dull roots with spring rain.' Eliot was writing in 1922 after the Great War, when people had painful memories and were carrying burdens of bleakness and feelings of futility. Somehow springtime intensified their deadness and disillusionment. It was, Eliot says, warmer in winter, when you could shelter and hibernate. Even now we are told that depression is much stronger in the spring months. Today with ancient nations locked in relentless conflict and no clear way to peace in view, the optimism of Shakespeare and Chaucer may not stir the heart. There will be those on the brightest of April days whose spirits will be frozen and whose minds will be filled with despair.

The Easter story embraces both the terror and conflict and the beauty and delight of human experience. The gospels do not whitewash the bitter religious and political dimensions of life nor shirk the stark horror of the passion and the sacrifice of Jesus. But in the stories of the Resurrection they offer hope and in the words of another poet, Henry Vaughan, they show us 'bright shoots of everlastingness'. The towers and spires and domes of our churches witness to a message which can bring hope to everyone.

Robert Dolman



Photo: Mike McCarthy



THE CHURCH IN TOFT



ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDENS

This meeting, open to anyone who lives in the village, will take place on **Sunday, 26th April at 12 noon at St Andrew's**. To be elected a churchwarden, a person must be nominated and seconded in writing before the meeting takes place (forms available from the Church and Elizabeth Dolman).

The election will be followed by the **ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING**, at which all members of the Church Electoral Roll are eligible to be present.



Following our congratulations last month on the completion of his curacy, we now congratulate **Reverend Barnabas Leeke**, who has been appointed as the new Vicar of Trumpington. The exact date of his departure is not presently known.

Unhappily, John Quenby, one of our Deputy Wardens, is unwell at the moment so please do not contact him until further notice

Following the appointment of the Reverend Claire Coates as the Lordsbridge Team Rector, the process for appointing a new, part-time Team Vicar, who will have particular oversight for Comberton and Toft, has restarted.

Date for your Diary On Sunday May 10th 6.00pm there will be a **sung Evensong**, led by Reverend Barnabas Leeke, Janet Tanburn and Toft Choir. This is very special as we have not celebrated Evensong for a number of years and the music is beautiful – do come.

The WARM HUB has now stopped until the clocks change again! It has been a fabulous winter, much enjoyed by those who ran it and those who came!



We are sad to report the death of **Elizabeth Harrison** of Powell Close. She moved here 50 years ago, helped with 1st Toft Cubs, was a member of the Friendship Club and latterly its Chairman and took part in many Social Club events. Her funeral will be on **Friday, April 10th at 12 noon**, followed by refreshments at the People's Hall.

Also we report the death of **Colen Lumley** of Glebe Close. Colen was involved in the Toft Big Dig, was a beautiful artist and much more. There will be a celebration of Colen's life at the Arbory Trust burial ground in Barton on **Monday 13th April at 2.30** followed by a wake at TPH.

FRIENDSHIP CLUB

Our meeting on 9th April is the **Annual General Meeting**, at which we will elect a new Chairman, Treasurer and add to our committee as well as launching the programme for the coming months. This will be followed by entertainment from Barbara and Liz Tomes.

The Friendship club is for over 50s. We meet every month on the 2nd Wednesday at 2.30pm at Toft People's Hall, programme followed by tea and biscuits and we would love to **welcome new members**.

The cost is £20 for the year, which covers your subscription and refreshments. It can be paid in April or in two 'slices' during the year.

TOFT PARISH COUNCIL

Who is on the Council?

The Parish Council is comprised of a Chair and Deputy Chair and five other councillors, all of whom are volunteers. Currently these members are:

	Phone	E-mail
Chair:		
Martin Yeadon	263663	cllr.yeadon@tpc.toft.org.uk
Deputy:		
Elaine Miles	262255	cllr.miles@tpc.toft.org.uk
Avril Coghlan		cllr.coghlan@tpc.toft.org.uk
Emma Darbyshire	07763 463234	cllr.darbyshire@tpc.toft.org.uk
Giles Harrison		cllr.harrison@tpc.toft.org.uk
Sarah Tebbit		cllr.tebbit@tpc.toft.org.uk
Clerk:		
Ben Stoehr	01954 210241	clerk@tpc.toft.org.uk

The Parish Council represents the residents of Toft and aims to support the welfare and interests of its residents and businesses. Each council member takes responsibilities for specific areas covering Highways, Health and Safety, Footpaths, Lot Meadow, The Recreation and Playground area, The Allotments, Climate Change, The People's Hall, the Defibrillator and Welcome Packs.

TOFT PARISH COUNCIL

(This summary can be found on the Parish Council website: <https://tpc.toft.org.uk>)

The Parish Council met on 2nd March 2026. The next meeting will be on 13th April 2026 at 7.00pm in The People's Hall due to Monday 6th being Easter Monday Bank Holiday. All welcome.

There were no apologies for absence or declarations of interest or requests for dispensations.

The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

Regarding the dogs in field notices, Cllr Darbyshire reported that she had received a quote for the three signs and once she has received and approved the layout, these will be ordered. It was recorded that the need for these signs has become more urgent in the light of an email received from the landowners, Mike and Sarah Tebbit, reporting two incidents of sheep worrying in the Home Meadow field. In one case last month the lamb had been injured to such an extent that it had to be put down and in the second case the lamb was fortunately rescued from the dog before any serious injury occurred. The PC unanimously expressed its dismay at these incidents and an article is to be put in the Calendar urging dog owners to keep their dog on a lead whenever there are sheep in a field.

Cllr Yeadon updated the PC on the progress regarding the acquisition of the Methodist Chapel building. We

still have not been given the price for the building or any commitment that the Methodist Church would allow the time necessary to raise the funds needed to purchase it. This makes it impossible to progress until some level of certainty can be obtained. However, a village meeting has been arranged for 9th April to update residents on the current situation and to gauge the level of support for the Chapel's acquisition. A working group, reporting to the PC, has been established.

Cllr Darbyshire confirmed that the submission for a village-wide 20mph application will be submitted before the deadline at the end of March.

Cllr Tebbit reported that having requested further detailed information from Finding Fitness, she had been sent some images of the climbing wall, which she will circulate to other members of the PC. She is particularly concerned about the finished quality of the climbing wall and it was agreed that some members of the PC would go to local villages where these have been installed so that we can judge the quality before progressing this any further.

Regarding having a police van visit to monitor speeding vehicles in the village, Cllr Darbyshire reported that the police need us to first set up a speed awareness group with a minimum of six people and that only after a period of time collecting evidence could they bring out a van. Cllr Miles reported that Nick Cole, the Speedwatch Coordinator, has contacted the original members with a view to starting up this group again. Once there is a viable group registered with the police, further support can be requested from the police and the PC. (See the notice on page 5.)

In response to the complaint about dog fouling along Church Road, it was agreed that a temporary notice would be erected asking dog walkers to clear up after their dog to see if this made any difference.

It was agreed that the PC would not make any comment on the Local Government Reorganisation, but individuals are free to do so.

The finance report was considered and payment of bills approved.

There were no issues to report on the equipment in the children's play area. Cllr Yeadon reported that the latch on the gate is to be re-positioned to make it more secure.

Regarding health and safety issues around the village, some lights have been reported as not working, one of which is the light on the small green, resulting in a very dark area on the bend and by the shop.

Another issue which has been reported is of two speeding cars. (See the notice on page 5.)

There were no planning applications to consider and no comment was made on the tree works in Glebe Close.

The free cherry tree which is to be planted in the children's playground area is to be delivered to Cllr Yeadon on 3rd March and the planting of it will then be organised.

The Parish Council is very grateful to Katherine James, who has offered to take over the management of the

Queen's Jubilee area and her request for funding to level and seed the grass area was unanimously approved.

It was noted that the damaged pane in the bus shelter is yet to be repaired.

Cllr Darbyshire reported that residents continue to be distressed at the large amount of water that collects on the road outside Beldam's Close despite this having been reported to Highways on many occasions and she will continue to pursue this matter with Highways.

Some illegal advertising signs put on a lamppost on Hardwick Road will be removed.

Cllr Miles reported that the anti-slip surface which was damaged on the wooden bridge over Bourn Brook has been replaced.

No reply has been received from the District Councillor following the letter of complaint which was sent to him requesting his support on dealing with the overgrown brambles on the cycleway.

Cllr Tebbit reported that she is still awaiting a reply from the Heart Foundation for a training session for the Defibrillator.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

NEW SPEEDWATCH GROUP



If cars speeding through our village concern you, come and join the new Speedwatch Group, which is being organised by Nick Cole, Toft SpeedWatch Coordinator.

For more information, email Nick on:
csw.toft@outlook.com

Anti-social behaviour

A blue Corsa-style car and a small VW have been speeding along Brookside, Church Road and School Lane on a regular basis and it was felt that the driver/occupant could be visiting someone in the village. This is extremely dangerous for the driver and any occupants as well as pedestrians, pets and wildlife. If you can get the number plate, please report it to the police or if you know the perpetrator, ask them to stop this anti-social behaviour.

Sheep Worrying in Home Meadow field

There have been two appalling attacks on lambs recently by a dog. One lamb was so seriously injured it had to be put down. The other one was rescued before it was seriously injured.



If you are walking your dog in a field where there are sheep, **YOU MUST KEEP YOUR DOG ON A LEAD BY LAW.**

In England and Wales, the **Dogs (Protection of Livestock) Act 1953** makes it a criminal offence for a dog to 'worry' sheep (i.e. chasing, attacking or being at large in a field with them) on agricultural land. The law was strengthened in December 2025 by the **Dogs (Protection of Livestock) (Amendment) Act 2025**, which takes effect on March 18 2026, increasing penalties to unlimited fines and expanding to cover other livestock like camelids (e.g. llamas, alpacas).

Key Legal and Safety Points:

- **Definition of Worrying:** This includes attacking, chasing, or being off-lead/not under close control in a field where sheep are present.
- **Penalties:** Under the new 2025 Act, owners can face unlimited fines and police have powers to seize dogs.
- **Farmers' Rights:** Farmers are legally permitted to shoot a dog that is endangering their sheep if no other means of stopping it is available.
- **Liability:** The owner or person in charge of the dog is responsible, even if the dog is usually well-behaved.
- **Prevention:** Keep dogs on a lead around livestock, ensure property is secure to prevent escape and, if walking in rural areas, be aware that sheep may be present.

Fun and games at the Murder Mystery Evening



Cast of the popular Murder Mystery evening held at the People's Hall on 31st January. The audience tried to guess who dunnit while enjoying a sumptuous three-course dinner.

The Future of the Methodist Chapel

As you may be aware, the Chapel has now closed and the Methodist Church are looking to sell the facility. The building has been well used as a community building in the recent past with many groups and organisations using it.

Should we purchase it as a community building?

On **Thursday 9th April at 6.30pm** we will be holding a community meeting in Toft People's Hall to update you on the current situation and to gather the views of the community to see if there is the appetite to take on the significant challenge to purchase and manage such a facility.

We hope you can attend.

COMBERTON HERITAGE SOCIETY

Annual General Meeting

Our meeting this month is at 8.00pm on **Tuesday 28th April** and will be held, as usual, at Comberton Village Hall. There is limited on-site parking.

There will be no speaker but a social event will be held after the AGM.

Leave Thieves Out in the Cold

Toft residents will not need telling that the price of heating oil has sky-rocketed recently and, at the time of writing, it looks possible that it will stay high for quite some time. Police advise that this has made oil theft a far more enticing prospect for both opportunist and professional thieves. Look on your oil as you would any other cash investment and don't make it easy for them.



Below are three websites that have some useful tips and tricks to help you - Google will help you find plenty more.

<https://certasenergy.co.uk/news/domestic-guides/heating-oil-anti-theft-guide/>

<https://www.crownoil.co.uk/guides/fuel-theft-guide/>

<https://www.oiltankchange.co.uk/blog/ultimate-guide-on-how-to-protect-yourself-from-heating-oil-theft-this-winter/>

Toft 1895

PART 2

Continuing our serialisation of May Creek's handwritten memoir, she now leads us up the High Street from the lower end, towards the village green.

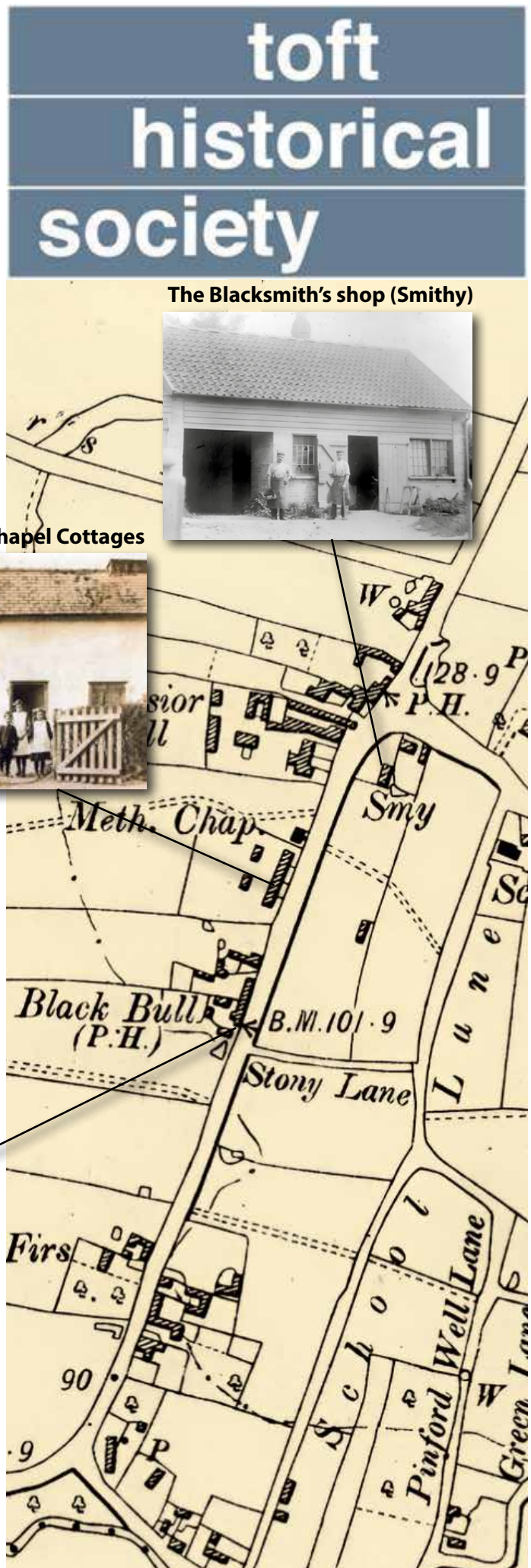
As you go up the street, on the right was an old cottage storeroom for bran and pollard, etc. On the left, Mr Dixon's large barn, his 'storehouse'; on the right a tall stile with a walk across to the lanes and the church. On the left, a huge lime tree and a stile that led through 'Bull Close' to Sandy Path and Caldecote. Then there was Stoney lane, a favourite haunt in violet time. On the left, the Bull, where the Davies family lived, six girls and one boy, Willy. No houses on the right, just the blacksmith's shop on the corner by the green. On the left beyond the Bull, two cottages, where Fred Sparks and Jakins the roadman lived, then the yard and buildings where Mr James Warboys had some cattle and a few black Minorca hens, then a block of four cottages: number 1, an old couple named Rayner that I had to go and see when there was a fresh calved cow to take them a beastling pudding*.

Number 2, the Sparks family, Charlie and his wife Harriet and father, who was known as 'Uppy'. Number 3, Mrs Sparks senior, our Chapel keeper, mother of Frank Sparks, Mrs Wilmot and others. Number 4, the Papworth clan, Joe Papworth, commonly called 'Dubby' because of the way he walked, Mrs P. and a large family: little Louie, Flo (Mrs Allen), Tilda (another Mrs Allen), Charlie and Bertha, who had a TB hip.



The Black Bull

* a traditional British dairy dish made from the first milk produced by a cow after giving birth to a calf. When baked or boiled, it made a pudding similar to an egg custard. It was typically sweetened with sugar and flavoured with spices like nutmeg, ginger or allspice and sometimes included dried fruit like raisins.



Toft Club News

We are holding a **Casino Night** on Saturday 4th April – come along and enjoy the tables – all games played with tokens and a prize for the most successful person on the night. We are finalising details, so check out the website for more information.



The **April film** will be on Saturday 18th – we are showing the 2025 release, *The Choral*, written by Alan Bennett and Stephen Beresford. It stars Ralph Fiennes and tells the fictional story of a town in Yorkshire during World War 1, the arrival of Dr Guthrie as choirmaster and the disruption he causes. Doors open at 7:30pm and the film starts promptly at 8pm. Film Club membership is £12 for the year or evening membership is £3.00.

We are excited to be welcoming the wonderful **Melrose Quartet** (<https://melrosequartet.co.uk/>) to Toft on Saturday 25th. This promises to be an evening of magical music, performed by some of the country's best musicians – a night not to be missed. Tickets are just £18 and on sale on the website here: <https://toft.club/gigs>

All of our regular events are taking place in April: **Toft Art** is on Thursday 2nd, **Games Night** is on Friday 3rd (start time 7pm), **Toft Quiz** on Thursday 9th, **Carpent Bowls** on Friday 10th, **Table Tennis** on Thursday 16th and **Toft Bingo** on the 23rd. Our popular monthly **Open Mic / Music Night** is on Saturday 11th.

The Club is always open every Thursday and Friday evening from 8pm, plus most Saturday evenings and there is always a warm welcome where you can meet up with friends and enjoy a drink.

Keep up to date here:

Website: <https://toft.club>

Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Toft-Social>

The **SCHOOLROOM** Community Café

The Café will be holding its AGM on Sunday April 19 at 3pm in Toft People's Hall. Everyone is welcome to come and hear how the Café is doing and to contribute their views and suggestions if they wish.

The AGM will follow on from a lunch to say 'thank you' to all our Café volunteers - details will be sent out separately to all those concerned.

You may notice a few changes in the Café. We are reviewing our menu for the (hopefully) warmer weather and will introduce some more 'specials'. Suggestions always welcome! Fresh decor and new furniture are on their way thanks to the efforts of the Hall Committee. And we're delighted to welcome Claire Leadbetter as a new team leader.

It's great to see the Café so busy but more help in the kitchen would be very welcome. Could you help once a month on a Wednesday morning for 2 hours with the washing up/dishwashing, for example? Contact Gill at gill.ppugh@gmail.com for further details.

News from The People's Hall clubroom refurbishment

Homes wanted for the Club chairs

Due to the refurbishment of the social area at Toft People's Hall, we have eight comfy chairs in need of rehoming. If you would like to have one, please make us an offer.

Contact: carol@sebborn.com



Do you have upholstery skills?

I am looking for someone to help to re-upholster the chairs from the meeting rooms at The People's Hall and repurpose them for our soon to be newly-decorated clubroom.

Any offers would be gratefully received.

Contact: jane@tebbitdesign.co.uk



Wildlife Trust for Beds, Cambs & Northants

Photo: Common dog violet Gamlingay Wood, Chris Gomersall, 2020VISION

April is an exciting time for wildlife. Some wildflowers will have been out since March and others, like red campion, greater stitchwort, cowslips, wood anemones and bluebells will just be starting. At this time of year, you might find three different types of violets in some of our woodland reserves. You can tell them apart by looking at the spur (the part of the flower that sticks out the back) and the sepals (these are the parts that protect the bud before it opens).

- Early dog violet has a straight spur which is darker than the main flower petals. The sepals are long and pointed.
- Sweet violet has a spur with a bent end and blunt sepals (and smells nice!)
- Common dog violet has a spur with a bent end, which is paler than the main flower petals. The sepals are long and pointed.



Resident birds will already be raising chicks. They might have been working on their nests since February. Common migrant birds like the chiffchaff, swallow and blackcap will just be arriving.

Wildlife Trust BCN events are a great way to learn about native wildlife and tickets are cheaper for members. Here are upcoming events in Cambourne and Trumpington Meadows. Other events and booking links can be found at wildlifebcn.org/events.

Wed 1st April, 10-12 Cambourne
Wild in the Woods: dens, sticks & tools

Tues 14th April, 10-11.30 Cambourne
Seasonal stroll: spring wildflowers

Fri 24th April, 11-12.15 Trumpington Meadows
Seasonal stroll: spring wildflowers

Sat 25th April 10-12 Trumpington Meadows
Wild in the Meadows: outdoor art

Please check our website for more information about which nature reserves have temporary closures. Note the default for most of our reserves is that dogs must be on leads. There are some reserves where dogs are not allowed at all (Hayley Wood has just been added to this list) and some where there are very specific places where they can be off-lead (like parts of Trumpington Meadows).

Local enquiries

Rebecca.Neal@wildlifebcn.org Facebook: @

BeccaBadgerWTBCN

TrumpingtonMeadows@wildlifebcn.org Facebook: @

TrumpingtonMeadowsNatureReserve

General enquiries

cambridgeshire@wildlifebcn.org

@wildlifebcn

www.wildlifebcn.org

NATURE DIARY

The Experience of Spring

Recently heard on the radio: 'Walking in nature is good for mental wellbeing.' (Well, who would have guessed?) But also: 'Writing about nature is good in the same way.' I pondered why that would be. It is, of course, about *observation*. Like artists, who must learn to draw through observation, writers too must observe, whether it's people's characters, life's events or changes in the landscape. And that requires undistracted focus/attention.

So what has there been in nature to observe over the last few weeks?

Flowers, naturally: first the aconites with their pale yellow flowers followed by feathery green leaves, then the delicate snowdrops shining out from under hedges, beneath walls. Strident yellow and purple crocuses opening up to the sun's rays and finally, the glorious golden trumpets of daffodils standing along paths and highways like attendant soldiers to the march of spring.

Birds, too: the garden robin shouts each morning from the rooftop, the blue tits have returned to raid the feeders and peck among the still-bare branches of bushes and trees. Out in the fields the yaffle (green woodpecker) sounds loud and clear and among the taller trees other woodpeckers beat out their rat-a-tat-tat. The rooks are already squabbling high in the trees as they reclaim their nesting sites, while the last few fieldfares and redwings sped away to the north weeks ago, back to their breeding grounds in cooler climes. And then .. larks can be heard again high up on the hill, a welcome return of song that will take us on into the summer.

What will *you* 'observe' in the coming days? Why not stop for a moment and take time to breathe in the multitude scents in the air, hear the many birdsongs, see the emergence of new flowers, the unfurling of leaves on the trees. There's so much to see, to feel, to hear, to smell with the coming of warmer days.



The Green Woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Toft Spring Feast 2026



The theme of this year's Spring Feast is 'The Toft Odyssey', where we look back at 2,000 years of the building of our community to become what it is today, from Roman times to 2026.

The programme will include:

Friday 1st May, at Toft People's Hall

8.00pm: Toft Club kicks off the Feast weekend with an evening of video, to include 'The Toft Odyssey'. A light-hearted romp through 2,000 years of Toft history, combining comic scenes with serious history. You're probably in it, so don't miss it! There will also be a video from the (in)famous RicMar Studios – unpredictable, as always! Free entry, all welcome.

Saturday 2nd May, all at Toft People's Hall

12.00pm (outdoors, weather permitting): Maypole dancing workshop. Whether you're a beginner or an expert, come along, learn the ropes and practise for Sunday. All ages welcome.

2.00pm – 5.00pm: Exhibition of old and new photographs and prints tracing changes over many years in the village buildings, public and private. Come and see if your house is featured – it may be.

4.00pm – 4.30pm: A re-showing of 'The Toft Odyssey' (25-minute video – see above).

Entry is free to the exhibition and film.

Sunday 3rd May

This year will be a little different to previous years.

12.45pm: A bring-your-own picnic lunch in Lot Meadow before arriving at the village green for Maypole dancing at 2.00pm as usual, followed by well dressing, a short service and tea at St Andrew's.

BIG BREAKFAST

Sunday, May 17th, 2026 from 9.00am to 12.00pm

Please put the date in your diaries.

Please step forward to help as we plan this amazing annual Toft event.

We are looking for people to volunteer to

* bake or make breakfast goods/bread or cakes, etc.

* provide Fairtrade goods like oranges or bananas, coffee or tea

* come on the day to set up or serve food/drink or wash up or cook or clear up (from 8.00 to 10.30 or from 10.30 to 1.00)

Email: linda.hollow@btconnect.com to let us know what you can do/give asap.

For all the people of Toft with all profits being given to Farm Africa and Fairtrade.

Enjoy a delicious breakfast – pay what you can!

THE BIG TOFT BREAKFAST

LOCAL & FAIRTRADE PRODUCE

Toft People's Hall
Sunday 17 May

9.00am-12.00 noon



Come, eat and enjoy a great big breakfast that does you good...and does good to others

Organised by the Women of Toft

Proceeds will be divided between Fairtrade and Farm Africa



Arthur Rank Hospice Charity

making every moment count

Support with grief in Cambridge

Arthur Rank Hospice Charity has a range of Bereavement support both online at arhc.org.uk/bereavementsupport and face to face:

- 'GriefChat' a free service available Monday-Friday, 9am-9pm (except Bank Holidays).
- The Sue Ryder 'Grief Kind' Space every Friday between 10am and 12 noon at The Bistro, Arthur Rank Hospice. It is open to anyone over 18 who has experienced a bereavement.
- 'Understanding Grief sessions' are available online and face to face. See the website arhc.org.uk/understandinggrief for sessions in April and beyond.

For more information, please telephone 01223 675777.

Free Legal Advice and Will Writing Sessions

Arthur Rank Hospice Charity in Cambridge offers free legal advice and Will writing sessions.

For more information visit arhc.org.uk/iwill or speak to Rachael, Future Gifts Manager on 01223 675881 or email r.brown@arhc.org.uk

Walk to support Hospice Care

Arthur Rank Hospice Charity's Star Shine Night Walk is back for 2026. You can book two unforgettable sunset walks on Saturday 16 May in Wisbech and Saturday 20 June in Cambridge. Sign up now at arhc.org.uk/SSNW and be part of something truly special.

Would you like to volunteer?

The Charity has a range of volunteer roles. To find out more please visit arhc.org.uk/volunteer or call 01223 675872.

'Fill a bag' shopping event

Shoppers will have the opportunity to fill a pre-provided recyclable bag with pre-loved women's, men's and children's clothes for just £5 at the Hospice on Friday 24 April 3pm - 6pm, Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 10am - 2pm. For more information, please visit: <https://www.arhc.org.uk/retail-sale>

BIN COLLECTIONS FOR APRIL

Black Bin: 2nd, 16th 30th

Blue Bin: 9th, 23rd

Green Bin: 9th, 23rd

ADVERTISERS

Advertisements are published quarterly. Copy for inclusion in the next available edition of the Calendar must reach us by 17th April at the very latest. Advertisements will NOT be published unless full payment has been received in advance. Please note: Quarter-page adverts MUST be Portrait-style, half-page adverts MUST be Landscape style. In the first instance, advertisers should contact Jean Verney at: calendaradstoft@gmail.com to discuss their requirements.

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

Alcoholics Anonymous: 0845 769 7555
Anglian Water (for sewage): 08457 145 145
(Emergency number for burst water pipes: 01223 706050)
Ashcroft Veterinary Surgery: 01954 210250
Bourn GPs' Surgery: 01954 719313
Cambridge AIDS help-line: (01223) 508805
Cambs County Council: 0345 045 5200
Cambridge Dial a Ride 01223 506335
Cambridge Water: 01223 706050
Care Network Cambridgeshire 01954 211919.
Citizens Advice Bureau: 0844 848 7979
Comberton GPs' Surgery: 01223 262500
Comberton Village College: 01223 262503
Community Warden (Age UK CAP) 07812 495997
County Councillor Michael Atkins 07968 264637
CVC Community Education: 01223 264721
District Councillor: Lina Nieto 07506 420655
Household Waste/Pest Control: 0345 045 0063
Lifespan Health Care, Family and Child Team: 01223 264460
MP pippa.heydings.mp@parliament.uk
Meridian Primary School: 01223 262423
Police: 101 (Emergencies: 999)
(Local Beat Officer is PCSO Sam Kennedy)
Road/Pothole Reporting: 0345 045 5212
Street Lighting: 0800 7838 247
Street Cleaning: 03450 450 063
South Cambs District Council: 01954 713 000
South Cambs Fire and Rescue: 01480 444 500
Toft Car Scheme: 07790 171710
Trading Standards: 0345 0455206
UK Power Networks (Emergencies): 0800 31 63 105

SOME USEFUL WEBSITE ADDRESSES

Cambridgeshire Constabulary:
<https://www.cambs.police.uk/contact/af/contact-us->
Cambridge City Food Bank:
<https://cambridgecity.foodbank.org.uk/>
South Cambridgeshire District Council:
<http://www.scambs.gov.uk>
Toft Parish Council: <https://tpc.toft.org.uk>
Toft Shop: <http://www.toftshop.co.uk>
Toft Village Website: <http://www.toft.org.uk>

A call for contributions

We hope you're enjoying the Toft Village Calendar and all the usual content. One of recent new features we have included is 'What I'm Reading': let people know in just a few sentences (doesn't have to be more than 50-100 words) what you're reading and why you're enjoying it – or disliking it. And if you'd like to write a guest editorial, we'll consider contributions of 300-500 words on any topic. Naturally, we reserve the right to not publish any offensive, politically-biased or inappropriate material; otherwise, feel free to offer a view of the world that would interest Calendar readers. And if you have any other ideas for the Calendar, let us know. Send all contributions and ideas to calendareditor@toft.org.uk.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CALENDAR

The Calendar is always pleased to receive contributions from readers, advertisers and fund raisers. We reserve the right to edit, amend, abridge or otherwise butcher any submissions to accord with technical or editorial requirements, or sometimes just on a whim. We do not normally accept anonymous contributions or those using pen names.

Contributors are asked to note that all text formatting is removed from items on receipt. Please send your written contributions as Word documents, if possible, or just plain text.

Please avoid sending PDFs unless you have no other option. Graphics (if essential) are best submitted as PNG or JPEG files.

Please ALWAYS send your contributions to calendareditor@toft.org.uk - never to an individual member of the editorial and design team.

Many thanks.

And, finally...Please remember that contributions for the next issue of the Calendar must reach the Editor by 18th April.

Many thanks to all who contributed to this edition.

Email: calendareditor@toft.org.uk

Post: The Gig House, The Old Horse Yard, Comberton Road, Toft CB23 2RY