

TOFT VILLAGE CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 2026



EDITORIAL

At a time when we are losing so many native plants and wild animals from our countryside and facing the impact of invasive non-native species, it is gratifying to come across an ecological success story and even more so, one that it is happening in our region.

Farming of American mink in the UK began in 1929 and was finally banned in 2002. Escaped or released mink face no natural threats in UK and they breed prolifically so quickly spread across the UK with disastrous consequences for native wildlife and, in particular, water

voles, which are important freshwater ecosystem elements. Efforts to control mink in Britain have been ongoing for decades but, in most areas, trapping was temporally and geographically discontinuous and, with few exceptions, once the work stopped, the mink returned. One instance is that of Vince Lea's work at the Countryside Regeneration Trust (CRT), where trapping and clearing of mink from the Bourn Brook since 2011 has brought a welcome resurgence in water vole numbers.

However, the big step forward has been the creation in 2019 of the Waterlife Recovery Trust, bringing together interested parties from wildlife conservation (including the CRT), water management, game shooting and fishing. Their ambition has been to bring wildlife back to the waterways and wetlands across East Anglia by eradicating mink populations, using the latest smart trapping technology and deployment strategies. Trapping persistence and rapid resetting are critical elements of the project. When a mink is captured, the smart trap, which operates year-round, immediately sends a signal to volunteers, who quickly remove the animal and reset the trap.

The fieldwork started in 2021, with hundreds of floating traps distributed and maintained across the target counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, whose northern and eastern borders are usefully delineated by the coastline. On the western boundary of the target area a buffer zone of Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire and Essex has also been equipped with traps to restrict movement of mink eastwards into Norfolk and Suffolk.

Over the following four years, East Norfolk and Suffolk have essentially become mink-free though the work continues to ensure complete eradication. Limited mink numbers have occasionally migrated into western Cambridgeshire from Bedfordshire, but the eastern side of the county is now largely mink-free. Hertfordshire and Essex are similarly seeing very low numbers of mink and all five counties are reporting widespread reappearance of iconic water voles and water birds such as kingfisher and moorhen.

Clearly, regional scale mink eradication is possible with coordinated and sustained effort and the pilot project is now expanding into Bedford and Buckinghamshire. Its success is also prompting similar projects elsewhere, raising the possibility of a mink-free UK in the future.



DIARY DATES

The Parish Council

The next meeting will be on 2nd February 2026 at 7.00pm in The People's Hall. All welcome.

Toft Friendship Club [Over 50s Club]

Argentina
an illustrated talk on 11th February at 2.30pm in The People's Hall.

Toft Club

Saturday 21st February at 8.00pm will be showing the film **Ferrari** and on 28th will be hosting a Pudding and Games Evening. Both events in The People's Hall.

Save the date

The Toft Big Breakfast returns on Sunday 17th May.



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 John Quenby 263949
Jean Verney 263028

SERVICES OF WORSHIP

1st February

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

11.00am Morning worship
Revd Priscilla Slusar

8th February

11.00am Holy Communion
Revd Barnabas Leeke

15th February

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

11.00am Morning worship
To be advised

18th February ASH WEDNESDAY

12 noon Dry Drayton
Revd Sue Wyatt and Revd Clare Coates

7.00pm Barton
Revd Charles Fraser and Revd Claire Robertson

22nd February
11.00am Holy Communion
Revd Priscilla Slusar

Wednesday morning prayer at St Andrew's will restart at 9.30am on February 18th.

Also 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

St Andrew's - our Parish Church

The Parish Church, our Parish Church of St Andrew, has been the centre of this community of Toft for more than 800 years. It is where people have come not just for Sunday service, to have their children christened, to be married and to be buried, but just to come. It was largely rebuilt in the 1860s, when the nave as we know it was created, leaving the chancel as its mediaeval self. Those who have lived in the village long enough will know that for the decade up to 2009 we made great demands on everyone to build the north porch and put in a loo, to remove pews to allow for concerts and the coffee and tea making facility, to put in a sound system, to establish a good heating system and to generally mend rooves, windows and pillars. For the last 16 years our twice-annual fetes and some of the concerts have provided enough money for running repairs, insurance and so on BUT last summer did us no favours. The church is a living building, it physically moves with and without water and the extremes of heat and rain have caused our East window to bulge and threaten to fall out, some of our other windows to develop holes and some of the stonework to need work.

Our East window is unique. Drop in and have a look if you have never done so. It was created around 1900 from glass taken from the window behind the altar in Christ's College. Some master craftsman, sadly not known, using the remains of the window, created ours and it would be almost impossible to replicate should it actually fall out.

So we must return to raising funds and next month we will put into the Calendar a QR code, bank details and ways to donate. We pray for your support to keep our beautiful church in one piece!

Ann - Churchwarden





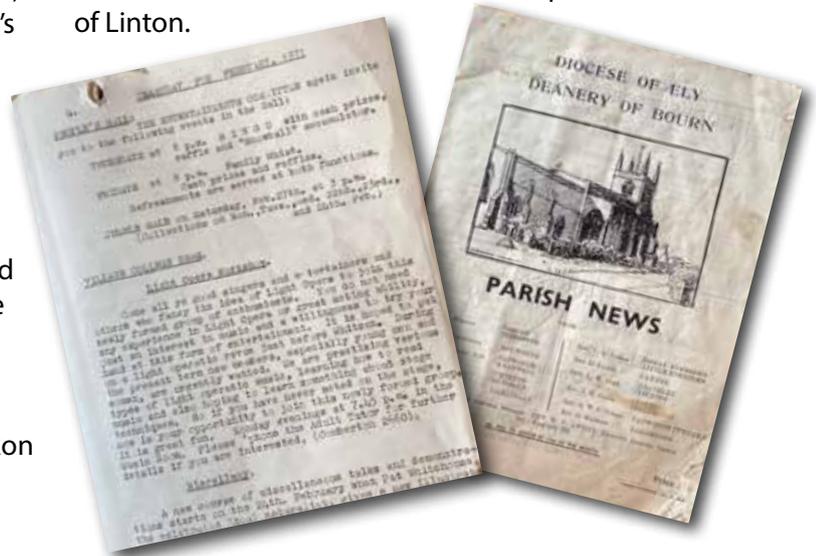
CHURCH IN TOFT DIARY



The Calendar

As a very few of you will remember, in February 1971, two sheets of foolscap, duplicated and folded were delivered to every house in the village. They bore an introduction from the then Rector, Rev. Robert Smith... *it is produced by the Rector and members of the Parish Church but will not be 'laded' ecclesiastically. Indeed, it was felt that it is one small way in which the church could serve the community... the cost per month will be 2 new pence.* This would cover the cost of production. The Editor was Alex Jeffries and that first edition gave reports of village events and details of Church services, St. Andrew's and the Methodist Church, including Sunday School, choir practice, etc., the Mother's Union, Toft WI, Village Fireside, Friendship Club, events at the People's Hall and the Village College and the Barton Guides. It was produced every month, the 2p was dropped and copies delivered free to every house. It became a vertical two-sided single sheet in 1976. In 1983 Mrs Joan Townsend became Editor and in 1988 Margaret Wright took over and it became A4 and occasionally went to three pages. In 1993 the months were marked with seasonal panels on the first page and in 1994 we began to sell advertisements, publishing them every three months. The advent of word processors gave greater clarity and gradually the number of pages in certain months rose. From mid-2001 until July 2005 Ron Meadows updated the look and added photographs.

In 2012 we began to print, rather than duplicate, using Victoire in Bar Hill. So we come to the last 20 years of editorship by Michael Walker with his fun, challenging, delightful and all-round great editorials. Last year for health reasons Michael stood back for 12 months and our present editorial team took over – Mike McCarthy and Cynan Ellis-Evans as Editors alternating months; Jeanne McCarten as Sub-Editor and Jane Tebbit as Designer putting it altogether. Cynan is to step down for the moment and Michael Walker, to whom we owe such a debt of gratitude, will step up to co-edit with Mike. Cynan, too, has done a magnificent job and we thank him as we leave Victoire for new printers – Falcon of Linton.



The Warm Hub

is meeting every Monday from 10.00 to 12.00 at Toft Peoples Hall.

Come and Join us for chat, games friendship and refreshment, all **for free.**

We would love to see you there - you'll be guaranteed a warm welcome.



S₁, C₃, R₁, A₁, B₃, B₃, L₁, E₁

Feel free to bring a friend

T₁
I₁
E₁
S₁

Friendship CLUB

11th February 2.30pm at Toft People's Hall.

Argentina

An Illustrated talk by Martin Sebborn, Visitors welcome.

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.

All welcome.

We are sad to report the death of **Ken Daniels**, who lived in Hardwick but was a member of the Church in Toft for some years and who will be buried in our churchyard.

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	<i>cllr.yeadon@tpc.toft.org.uk</i>
Deputy:		
Elaine Miles	262255	<i>cllr.miles@tpc.toft.org.uk</i>
Avril Coghlan		<i>cllr.coghlan@tpc.toft.org.uk</i>
Emma Darbyshire	07763 463234	<i>cllr.darbyshire@tpc.toft.org.uk</i>
Giles Harrison		<i>cllr.harrison@tpc.toft.org.uk</i>
Sarah Tebbit		<i>cllr.tebbit@tpc.toft.org.uk</i>
Clerk:		
Ben Stoehr	01954 210241	<i>clerk@tpc.toft.org.uk</i>

The Parish Council met on 5th January 2026. The next meeting will be on 2nd February 2026 at 7.00pm in The People's Hall. All welcome.

Cllr Harris has resigned from the Council due to family commitments. The PC would like to thank her for her work while in office. This leaves a vacancy on the Parish Council and should anyone wish to apply, please contact the Chair, Cllr Yeadon. (*cllr.yeadon@tpc.toft.org.uk* / 01223 263663)

Apologies were received from Cllr Tebbit, who was out of the parish.

The minutes from the last meeting were approved.

Having discussed the notice for Home Meadow with the landowners, it was agreed that we would include the request for users 'to please keep to the footpath'. It was also decided that a separate sign explaining the heritage of the meadow should be erected and that this could be something we could do for other areas of special interest in the village. The PC is to contact the Historical Society for their help in this matter.

No response has been received from the County Councillor regarding the overgrown cycleway but the PC will continue to lobby him for support.

Cllr Yeadon has received a message regarding the Methodist Chapel and our enquiry regarding the likely sale price, which was simply that we would be informed when this was ready. Cllr Yeadon had pointed out that the property was empty and he was told that it was checked weekly to ensure that everything was secure and intact.

Due to new regulations regarding security, the PC needs to find a new website provider and the Clerk is to send a list of providers who specialise in designing websites for parish councils. Once the PC has agreed

on a provider, councillors will be provided with new passwords and email addresses.

The PC has requested the District Council and the County Council assess the quality of illumination provided by street lighting in some areas of the village. Some improvements have been agreed, which mainly involves cutting back trees and vegetation which currently shrouds the streetlights. **However, the PC is also considering the addition of a new street light near Stoney Lane and if you have any comments regarding this, please get in touch with the Parish Council.**

Following the rejection by the Management Company of an additional bin and noticeboard at the Birdlings, Cllr Coghlan has agreed to raise the issue on the residents' WhatsApp group to see if there is any interest in pursuing this further.

Regarding highways matters, Cllr Darbyshire is to submit again the village-wide 20mph request, which was rejected last year along with a request for another speed camera, requested by many residents, to be erected on the western side of the High Street.

The PC decided not to make any response to the Greater Cambridge Local Plan consultation or the RECAP Resource and Waste Strategy, though individuals are encouraged to respond should they wish to do so.

The finance report was considered and approved.

Having declared an interest in a tree works application on a property adjacent to his, Cllr Yeadon left the room when the tree works application was considered. There were no objections to the work being carried out.

Following the resignation of Cllr Harris, Cllr Yeadon has agreed to take over the responsibility of the children's playground until a new councillor can be found. There were no playground reports to consider.

Regarding matters of health and safety, Cllr Miles reported that the wire covering the wooden bridge over the brook has come away at the end of the bridge near the wooden kissing gate. She will report this but, in the meantime, pedestrians should take care when crossing the bridge.

Cllr Harrison raised the matter of the poor signage indicating the end/beginning of the cycleway on the Comberton Road. This is randomly situated at the bus stop sign by Farmer's End/opposite Church Road and a recent incident involving a car leaving the drive at Farmer's End and a cyclist who was cycling on the pavement beyond this restriction has highlighted how dangerous this is. Highways are to be contacted to request that the sign indicating the beginning/end of the cycleway is moved and situated on the eastern side of the Hardwick Road and Comberton Road junction and cyclists travelling from Comberton will be asked to dismount.

Cllr Darbyshire reported that the pothole on School Lane has been repaired.

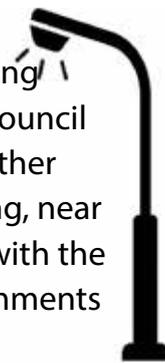
Cllr Coghlan reported that residents at the Birdlings have raised the issue of increasing the frequency of buses into Cambridge but following years of lobbying regarding the service, Cllr Darbyshire informed the meeting that the current frequency of one per hour is likely to be as good as it gets based on the numbers who use it. She pointed out that it had improved and was well-used, particularly at peak times.

The meeting ended at 8.40pm.

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

NEW STREET LIGHT IN SCHOOL LANE

In reponse to comments received about the lack of light at night along parts of School Lane, the Parish Council is considering the addition of another light, approximately half-way along, near Stoney Lane. Please get in touch with the Parish Council if you have any comments for or against this proposal.



Management Committee

Vacancy

Bookings' Secretary

All the events at the People's Hall depend on a team of dedicated volunteers to maintain and run the building.

A key role in the smooth running of the hall is the **Bookings' Secretary**.

If you have access to a computer and a little free time, please consider volunteering.

The Bookings' Secretary does not deal with money.

Sally Roberts has been quietly and efficiently doing this role for many years and has outlined the work involved below.

- Be the contact point for booking the hall via websites.
- Check date, time and other needs, for instance kitchen or bar.
- Manage the Hire Agreement and Conditions of Hire, both forms online.
- If all in order, confirm booking and arrange key entry.
- Initiate paper trail, enter in diary.
- Monthly, list hirers for the treasurer to invoice.
- Produce 'Word' information sheet listing bookings. This is circulated to the cleaners and published on the village noticeboard by the Chairman.

If you feel you could take on this pivotal role for the village, please contact

jake@tebbitdesign.co.uk or info@tph.toft.org.uk

Without volunteers the People's Hall would not be the thriving venue we have enjoyed for over 25 years.

What happens to our hedgehogs on the long dark winter period?

Hedgehogs, of course, hibernate during winter - as we believe many animals do - but, in fact, there are only three mammal groups that truly hibernate in the UK: bats, hedgehogs and hazel dormice.

Other animals like badgers foxes, shrews, frogs and insects, use other strategies like torpor, migration, or just finding shelter, but they aren't true hibernators like the main three. Think of torpor as a short nap, while hibernation is a deep, long winter's sleep with periodic awakenings.

Hibernation

Hedgehogs hibernate between October or November to around mid-March to April, but it depends on the weather. If it's mild, they might still be active into December. They become immobile, their bodies cool and their normal physiological activities are slowed down, e.g. their heart rate decreases considerably from approximately 190 per minute to a faint 20 per minute, the body temperature, which is normally 35°C drops to 10°C or less and respiration almost stops (they will breathe about once every few minutes).

Towards the end of autumn, hedgehogs consider the best places to build nests (called hibernacula). Favourite sites are under hedges and roots of trees, in piles of brushwood, inside compost heaps or in old rabbit burrows and underneath timber buildings and sheds. The nest itself is ramshackle in appearance but well-constructed from old dry leaves, grass and other vegetation and forms a compact dome 30-60cm in diameter with walls up to 10cm thick. Provision of a "hedgehog house" in your garden is a great idea but don't be tempted to keep a healthy hedgehog in a shed or garage as if the hedgehog becomes too warm or not cold enough, this interferes with hibernation. The optimum temperature for hibernation is 4 degrees Celsius. Hibernating at 10 degrees means their fat reserves will be used up twice as fast. However, if the temperature falls too low and their body starts to freeze, their body functions must "switch-on" again and this may rouse the animal to activity. The best advice is they should remain in the wild unless they are sick, injured, underweight or orphaned, in which cases, contact a local expert such as Shepreth Animal Hospital 07947 361187 / swcc@sheprethwildlifepark.co.uk

Information and graphics taken from *The British Hedgehog Preservation Society* <https://www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk/>



Nature Diary

The Time of Quiet



JANUARY, FEBRUARY – the quiet months. Nature too, like us, needs a time of quiet, a time to marshal resources, build up strength and energy and prepare for the frenzied activity of springtime. Out in the fields, few birds can be heard and dry bare brown stems poke up above the half-ploughed ground. Trees stretch bare branches to the sky, punctuated only by bunches of desiccated ash keys and solitary brittle leaves that still cling on despite the recent gales. Tiny humps along their stems show buds still tightly furled, not ready yet to swell and greet the sun. Colours are muted and any green in the hedges is lichen, not leaves. Across the landscape variable colours signify the different crops: blue-green of oilseed rape, fresher green of new-sprung wheat. Underfoot the ground is damp, no longer frozen but not soggy, smelling simply of wet leaves and good earth, ready for the new growth to come. On the allotments the veggie beds stand silent and ready, just a few remaining leeks still to harvest. Artichoke seedheads, now in disarray, provide a few remaining meals for passing finches. Redwings and fieldfares startle from the bushes where they feed on any berries still left – the last to go are the hips, clearly less palatable than the haws and other fruits.

But now at last the streams are full and there's a merrier sound of running water to fill the silence of the open fields. Nearby, tits, chaffinches and dunnocks cheep and chirp, seeking out insects in the sheltering hedge; a jay sounds the alarm, followed by an anxious blackbird. Life is there and only needs to be listened out for.

So nature holds its breath – as do we – awaiting the blessings of a warmer sun and longer days.

Katherine James

Friends of the Bourn Brook

Update by Cynan Ellis Evans – February 2026

Bourn Brook Health Status

In many rural settings, agricultural runoff from catchments are often a major source of pollutants. However, in Bourn Brook over recent decades the main source has been the Bourn Water Treatment Plant, where treated sewage effluent is released every few hours year-round into Bourn Brook just downstream from Bourn Golf Club. For much of the year this effluent is diluted upon entering the brook but the stream now regularly runs dry each summer in its upper reaches so the lower reaches are in large part undiluted treated effluent. Even treated effluent still contains a cocktail of chemicals like pharmaceuticals, pesticides from veterinary flea treatments, nutrients and household cleaning products we've washed down our drains and ultimately released to our waterways. All of these chemicals impact the brook ecosystem in various ways.

The health of England's rivers and streams is assessed using a scale of High, Good, Moderate, Poor or Bad. In 2024 only around 15% of water courses in England were rated as Good in ecological health terms and none achieved a Good rating for chemical health. FOBB monitoring studies throughout 2024 rated the treated effluent entering Bourn Brook as, at best, Poor in terms of phosphate concentrations. The long-awaited installation of a phosphate removal unit at the treatment plant in December 2024 substantially reduced the phosphate levels measured entering the Brook throughout 2025 and the rating was now Moderate (or, as Anglian Water would say, Acceptable!). Our work on the ecological health of the stream using the Riverfly assessment system (counting the variety and numbers of freshwater invertebrates at a specific site) gave an ecological rating approximating to Moderate in 2024 and this was maintained in 2025.



Some localised and short-term spikes in phosphate and/or microbial pathogens (e.g. E. coli) were observed in the brook in both 2024 and 2025, particularly in and around Bourn village as well as one site in a drainage ditch in Toft parish. These occasional incidents may be due, in part, to agricultural runoff whilst the E. coli spikes may be due to septic tank leakage or disposal into an open drain and require further study. One of the E.coli events at Alms Hill Bridge, Bourn justified calling out Anglian Water but they could not trace the origin of the pollution.

Expansion of Brook Studies

Since starting FOBB in early 2024, we have been collaborating with the Wildlife Trust (Ruth Hawksley) and the Countryside Regeneration Trust (Vince Lea) and received funding support from Toft Parish Council. In 2025 we became involved in developing a new collaborative programme (the Cam Catchment Partnership, CCP) centred on the River Cam and its tributaries. It involves citizen science river groups such as FOBB, farmers, water companies and government agencies. Bourn Brook has been identified as one of CCP's six major study areas and a Bourn Brook Group, including FOBB, is being assembled to develop a programme of activities, with FOBB's monitoring underpinning this work. The larger group will in future be able to potentially bid into funding opportunities for more ambitious work programmes including stream restoration, flood management and wetland schemes, so broadening our capability to ultimately improve the status of this key feature of our local landscape.

If you would like to join the Friends of Bourn Brook, help with riverfly monitoring, share your observations of the flora and fauna around our village stream or would like to join us pulling out Himalayan balsam, contact: janetebbit@icloud.com.



Bourn Brook in flood - Ann Miles

Toft Club News

On Saturday 28th we are holding a **Pudding and Games Evening**. Come along and have a delicious pudding and then spend the rest of the evening playing games – both board games and some interactive Wii games on the big screen! Or just come along for the games! Puddings just £3 – tickets on sale from the Club. Doors open at 7pm

The **February film** will be on Saturday 21st, when we will be showing the 2023 release *Ferrari*. Starring Adam Driver, the film is set in the summer of 1957, with Enzo Ferrari's auto empire in crisis, the ex-racer turned entrepreneur pushes himself and his drivers to the edge as they launch into the Mille Miglia, a treacherous 1,000-mile race across Italy. 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.



Tickets are on sale for the wonderful **Melrose Quartet** (above), who are performing here in Toft on Saturday 25th April. 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>

Most of our regular events are taking place in February, **Toft Art** is on Thursday 5th, **Toft Quiz** on Thursday 12th, **Carpet Bowls** on Friday 13th, **Table Tennis** on Thursday 19th and **Toft Bingo** on the 26th. Our popular monthly Open Mic / Music Night is on Saturday 14th.

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.

A note for your diary: the **Club AGM** will take place on Thursday 5th March at 8pm. There'll be more details next month and on the website.

Keep up to date here:

Website: <https://toft.club>

Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ToftSocial>

THE SCHOOLROOM COMMUNITY CAFÉ



We've been enjoying a wide range of homemade soups recently in the Café, from chunky minestrone to smooth creamy celeriac with truffle oil, warming butternut squash and the fragrant ginger and coconut spices of Indian daal. Just right for these miserable winter days.

Plans are in hand to hold a thank you lunch for our hard-working volunteers, to be followed by our AGM. The AGM will be open to everyone and will provide an opportunity to feed in any views or comments about the Café. Further details will be posted next month.

More helpers are always welcome, especially to serve in the kitchen, for one Wednesday a month or to bake a cake or make soup (all expenses reimbursed).

Gill



**NHS FREE Hearing Aid Maintenance
& Battery Collection over a cuppa**

HARDWICK 2026

**The Cabin, St. Mary's Church,
50 Main St. CB23 7QS**

10am – 12pm

4th Wed Quarterly

**Feb 25th / May 27th / Aug 26th
Nov 25th**



Cambridgeshire Deaf Association 01223 416141 or
riley.astrup@cambsdeaf.org for enquiries & volunteering opportunities.

A unique step back in time

Toft 1895

Toft Historical Society was recently handed a document that gives us a detailed picture of Toft in 1895. The document covers 16 pages of handwritten description of the houses that stood in Toft at that time and the people who lived in them. The author is very perceptive and clearly aware of the historical value of the exercise.

Who wrote it?

We received the manuscript from Diana Tebbit. At first it was not clear who the author was, as no name appears on the document. But some detective work and information from several people, including Mary Coppin, Jackie Thorpe (née Collett) and Ann Mitchell helped to build a picture of the author. Most convincingly, Jake Tebbit concluded that various references to people pointed to the author being his grandmother, May Creek. The document refers, for example, to her Aunt Alice (pictured).

The long view

The document is long and detailed. Over the coming months we will publish it in serial form. If you live in one of the houses mentioned, it will tell you about the people who occupied your house 130 years ago. But it is of interest and value to us all. Modern Toft can better be understood by such a detailed portrait of its past.



Jake's grandmother's Aunt Alice

COMBERTON HERITAGE SOCIETY

Our meeting this month will be on Tuesday 24th February, when Honor Ridout will give a talk entitled

Three Architects: Raised in and Raised our city

The three architects: Essex, Wilkins and Humfrey. All in different ways "Cambridge Men" with interesting stories, who designed buildings, many of which are still an important part of the Cambridge scene.

Honor Ridout is the Chair of the Cambridgeshire Association for Local History and a former City Tourist Officer. The meeting will be at 8pm in Comberton Village Hall. All visitors most welcome.



**Wildlife Trust for
Beds, Cambs
& Northants**

Update: Feb 2026

Look out for early signs of spring on our nature reserves in February:

- **Frogs, toads, and newts** may migrate in late Feb if the weather is mild. If you find an animal at risk, please don't move it far, and use gloves or wet hands.
- **Great spotted woodpeckers** can be heard drumming in woods in late winter.
- **Lesser celandine** is a low-growing wildflower found in woodlands. It flowers late winter into early spring and has long, bright yellow, glossy, petals and heart-shaped leaves.
- **Rooks and herons** both nest communally, and early, in tall trees.
- **Peacock and brimstone butterflies** overwinter as adults and can be seen throughout winter on warm days.
- **White-tailed and buff-tailed bumblebee** are often the first queens to emerge and can be huge!



Here are a few things you can do to help wildlife when visiting nature reserves or other wilder green spaces:

Keep your dog out of the water Topical flea treatment can affect aquatic invertebrates and the food chain they are part of, plus dogs disturb sediment, which then covers aquatic plants and reduces their ability to oxygenate the water.

Avoid muddy paths If you know it will be especially muddy, please walk elsewhere to avoid churning paths. If you end up on a muddy path, please stick to the middle so you don't spread the damage. It helps if you wear appropriate footwear.

Record and report The Wildlife Trust BCN is always happy to hear about positive wildlife encounters; send us a photo if you can! It would be great if you could submit a formal wildlife record via the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Environmental Records Centre.

This year we are trialling a few community volunteering days suitable for adults and families with children aged 7+. Booking is essential, so please get in touch if you want to come along.

- Wednesday 18th February 9.30-12.30 Cambourne Nature Reserve
- Thursday 19th February 9.30-12.30 Trumpington Meadows Nature Reserve

Local enquiries

Rebecca.Neal@wildlifebcn.org
Facebook: @BeccaBadgerWTBCN
TrumpingtonMeadows@wildlifebcn.org
Facebook: @TrumpingtonMeadowsNatureReserve

General enquiries

cambridgeshire@wildlifebcn.org
@wildlifebcn
www.wildlifebcn.org

Ditch the Gym Guilt, Try Something Gentler at Wandlebury

Wandlebury Country Park is open every day throughout winter and February is one of the easiest months to visit. The park is quieter, the paths are clear and the landscape feels open and spacious - ideal for unhurried walks, family outings or a simple change of scene.

For families, winter visits mean children have space to run and the park's long views and woodland paths make it easy to turn a walk into an informal adventure. A short loop can be enough, with time left to warm up afterwards at the pop-up café (open Thurs-Sun).

Without the busyness of spring and summer, the historic shape of Wandlebury is easier to see. The Iron Age hillfort and the way the Ring ditch follows older boundaries all become clearer in winter.

For those who enjoy company there is the weekly Healthy Walking Group every Thursday. These free walks offer a low-pressure way to explore the park with others, with two different paces to choose from and time afterwards for coffee and conversation.

The park remains one of Cambridge's most distinctive green spaces, shaped by centuries of use and care. February is a good moment to reconnect with it, quietly, and on your own terms.

Healthy Walking Groups

Every week

- 10am – experienced walkers
- 10.30am – less experienced walkers

Free to attend (parking charges apply, parking is free for CPPF members) No booking required.

For those less mobile we have a mobility scooter which is free to hire visit <https://cambridgeppf.org/wandlebury-mobility/> to book.



Wandlebury Country Park

At this chilly time of year, there's always a warm welcome in the library. Warm Space, Your Space will be providing tea, coffee and hot chocolate every Wednesday until 26th March.

February is LGBTQ+ History Month. Read the rainbow in your library!



In the National Year of Reading 2026 (<https://goallin.org.uk>) there's no better way to get little ones off to a flying start than with stories and the first week of February is National Storytelling Week.

Weekly activities

Knit, Sew and Natter group continues to meet in Comberton Library, 10.30am to 11.30am. March dates: 2nd, 16th and 30th. April dates: 13th and 27th. May dates: 13th. June dates: 10th and 24th. Then every other Monday onwards. Newcomers warmly welcome.

Rhymetime 10.30am – 11am for children between 0 to 4 years of age. February dates: 9th and 23rd. March dates: 9th and 23rd. April dates: 20th. Also, come and join the First Steps Library Club, aged 0 - 4 years. On every visit to the library, attending events like Rhymetime, your child will get a special stamp towards a certificate.

Lego Time with Duplo. Every Saturday from 10.30am. Come and have fun building and exploring your imagination. All children accompanied by an adult. It is a free event.

Opening hours (excluding bank holidays, etc.)

Monday	10am – 5pm (Temporary)
Tuesday	10am – 1pm (Temporary)
Wednesday	10am – 1pm and 2.30pm – 5.30pm
Friday	2.30pm – 5.30pm
Saturday	10am – 1pm

2026 TOFT BIG BREAKFAST

is coming soon!

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

Put the date in your diaries now.

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
to let us know what you can do/give
asap.

**For all the people of Toft with all
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**Enjoy a delicious breakfast – pay
what you can!**

MUSIC CAFÉ

at St Mary's Church Comberton,
Church Lane, CB23 7ED

Saturday afternoons 2.30 - 4.00pm

January 24th

February 28th

March 28th

& April 25th

(4th Saturday of the month)

Anyone playing an instrument can email
musicalliz@btinternet.com beforehand,
to get onto the programme.

Children also welcome to apply through
their teacher or parent/carer.

refreshments
& music from local musicians
starting at 3 pm.

Entry free, but donations welcome.

Lifts offered to those without
transport musicalliz@btinternet.com

07889 271166



HARDWICK

169 St Neots Road, Hardwick
Cambridgeshire, CB23 7QJ
Tel: 01954 210250

Monday - Friday - 8.30 to 10.30am - 4.30 to 7.00pm

Saturday - 9.00am to 11.00am

Sunday - 10.00am to 11.00am

PAPWORTH

Unit 1, Pendrill Court, Ermine Street North
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Saturday - 12.00pm to 1.30pm

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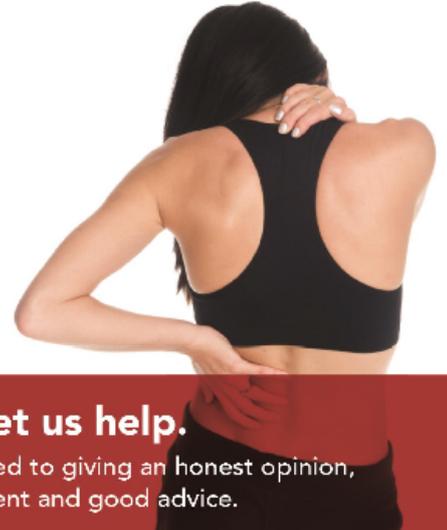
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BIN COLLECTIONS FOR FEBRUARY

Black Bin: 5th, 19th
Blue Bin: 12th, 26th
Green Bin: 12th

NOTICE TO 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 February.

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