

TOFT VILLAGE CALENDAR

March 2026



DIARY DATES

The Parish Council

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

Toft Club

Games Night
Friday 6th March

Toft

Friendship Club
2.30pm at
Toft People's Hall.

St Andrew's Parish Church

15th March Service to celebrate Mothering Sunday at 11.00 am

Rangers' Pudding Evening

Wednesday 18th March at Toft People's Hall from 7pm until 8.30pm

The Warm Hub

Mondays from 10.00 to 12.00 at Toft People's Hall until 23rd March

The Future of the Methodist Chapel Meeting

Thursday 9th April at 6.30pm in Toft People's Hall

Editorial

Insider dealing

Being a member of the editorial team of the Toft Village Calendar brings with it privileges and responsibilities. Being on the inside means we get to see all the news before the general readership does; we are ahead of whatever curve is bending its way through village life. The privilege also includes deciding whether something is worth publishing at all. Then there is the final privilege of butchery: cutting bits and ...this is the debatable one ... editing people's grammar.

Whose grammar?

The late Terry Osborne, a countryman known and loved by older Toft residents, wrote down his memories of his early life in Toft. He asked a member of our team to help him edit it for publication on the web and in bits here and there in this organ. He was outraged whenever his grammar was corrected to Standard English. 'This is how I speak and this is how I want it!' he scowled. We left it as it was, his original work, the voice of a countryman. Terry was right. There are grammars of speech, in his case a dialect grammar of South Cambridgeshire, sadly dying out year on year. However, we are dealing with the written grammar of a Calendar that includes significant public information.

Eats, shoots, and, leaves,

This heading makes little sense. It is hirsute with commas. In a less decorated form it is used to illustrate the difference in meaning between 'eats shoots and leaves' (a panda) and 'eats, shoots and leaves' (a cowboy bill-dodger). Strictly speaking, neither version is a sentence, since English constructions require a subject (who/what eats?) to be called 'sentences'. But this whole comma business underlines the fact that punctuation and grammatical constructions have meaning and those meanings are agreed by a social compact which says 'make every effort to communicate clearly and unambiguously so we don't all end up killing each other'. So, dear contributor, if we edit your grammar, it's because we're trying to make sense of what you are getting at. Scorn not the comma, as Wordsworth might have said if we misquoted him.



I saw a hare driving home from Cambridge.

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.

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 March

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

11.00am Morning worship
Mrs Cathy Michell

8th March

11.00am Holy Communion
Revd Barnabas Leeke

15th March MOTHERING SUNDAY

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

11.00 am Special service to celebrate Mothering Sunday
Barbara Preece and Revd Barnabas Leeke

22nd March

11.00am Holy Communion
Revd Barnabas Leeke

29th March

11.00am Holy Communion
Revd Barnabas Leeke

Wednesday morning prayer at St Andrew's at 9.30am until Easter.

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

A Letter from Barnabas



Dear Toft,

As a curate, my time in this training post with the Lordsbridge Team was always going to be limited to a maximum of three and a half years, a time that is rapidly drawing to a close as I begin to look for a permanent position before my contract ends in October this year. The time has flown by so quickly and though I'm looking forward to the challenge of a new community and congregation, I shall miss all I have enjoyed here and especially the unique community spirit of Toft.

My curacy seems particularly ephemeral in the context of the long history of the Christian community in Toft. It is quite sobering to think of all that our parish church has seen over the 800 years or so of its lifetime. Evidence of some of the more dramatic elements of this can be found on display in the church and indeed the building itself has been shaped by the changing ideas and fashions of the times.

As Ann mentioned last month, even this apparently solid and immovable object is subject to the law of entropy. A recent architectural inspection has shown that we need to inject a significant amount of energy (and resources) to ensure that it is protected from the elements, open for all the various functions it provides to the community and passed on to the next generation in good repair. If you are able to help with this, then you can find details for supporting it financially opposite, but there will also be the opportunity to donate time and skills. In particular, we need to complete lengthy grant applications to match our fundraising, so if that is something you have experience in, then please do get in touch!

One way or another we are all just passing through, but by working together we can join the chain of those who have faithfully passed the baton to future generations.

Barnabas



THE CHURCH IN TOFT



REPAIRS TO ST ANDREW'S

Repairs to St Andrew's could cost up to £115,000. We will be applying for grants but evidence of local support is often needed. This is where you can help. Choose one of these methods to donate:

<https://givealittle.co/c/standrewtoftrestoration> or the QR code below.

Bank transfer to: "Toft PCC", Sort code 30-91-56
Account 02251476.

Cheque to "Toft PCC" to 2 Comberton Road, 20 High Street, 40 School Lane or 2 Beldam's Close.

Add a note with a cheque or email standrewtoft@gmail.com for a Gift Aid form.



The Lent group, to which everyone is welcome, will meet on a Thursday morning for the four weeks before Easter: 12th, 19th, 26th March and 2nd April from 10.30am to 12 noon. It will be entitled *What is the Kingdom?* You do not have to come to all four and are welcome whether a church goer or not. The venue is not fixed so if you would like to join us, please contact Barbara or Ann (telephone numbers on opposite page).

We are delighted to congratulate the **Reverend Clare Coates** on her appointment as Lordsbridge Team Rector. She will be welcomed officially into this role on Thursday 19th March at a 7.00pm service. This gives her overall responsibility for all 11 parishes in our Lordsbridge Team.

It is all change at the Diocese. The new Bishop of Ely has been appointed - the **Right Reverend Sarah Clark**, currently acting Bishop of Durham. The Bishop of Huntingdon, currently acting as Bishop of Ely, the **Right Reverend Dr Dagmar Winter**, has been appointed as the new Bishop of Edinburgh. And our congratulations to **Reverend Barnabas Leeke**, who has completed his training as a curate.



THE WARM HUB

The WARM HUB is meeting every Monday from 10.00 to 12.00 at Toft People's Hall until 23rd March. 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.

On Monday 23rd March, to mark the end of the Hub for the summer, we plan to have a buffet lunch. If you have been to the Hub or helped in any way, please do join us at 12.15. It would be helpful to know you are coming for catering numbers and if you have any allergies, etc.

Friendship CLUB

First of all, an apology.

Because of a misunderstanding, Martin was not available to talk to us about Argentina in February. Watch this space for a future talk by Martin!

Our meeting on 11th March is entitled *Shall we try something new?* Usual time of 2.30pm at Toft People's Hall. 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 **Martin Peters**, born and brought up in Toft, the son of Betty, née Jacklin, and Robin Peters, both of whom played major roles in the community life of Toft. Martin's funeral, led by Barbara Preece, will take place at St Andrew's on Thursday, 5th March at 2.00pm, after which he will be buried in the churchyard beside his father. His brother Andrew would appreciate people attending who remember his family. Betty now lives in Skye and is too frail to make the journey.

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 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.

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

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

A member of the public stated that he and his neighbour would support the erection of a new light to be positioned opposite Stoney Lane outside his house.

Another member of the public complained about the speed of traffic travelling along the High Street and pointed out that residents had to cross this road to access bus stops and the village shop and other amenities on the Mount. It was felt that an inordinate amount of traffic calming had been carried out in other villages nearby, Barton for example, and Toft was being overlooked. Cllr Darbyshire assured the meeting that she has applied for a 20mph restriction on numerous occasions and that we were moving up the list, albeit more slowly than desired. She confirmed that another application will be made for this year.

Apologies were received from Cllr Harrison, who was delayed at work.

There were no declarations of interest nor requests for dispensations.

Regarding the proposed sign for dog walkers in Home Meadow, Cllr Darbyshire confirmed that she was awaiting samples and costs from a company.

Disappointingly, yet again, there has been no response from the County Councillor regarding a request for action on the overgrown cycle path. It was resolved that the Clerk would send a letter of complaint on the PC's behalf, requesting at least a response but preferably some support in this matter.

Cllr Yeadon has been informed that the Methodist Chapel will not be up for sale until April. It was resolved that a village-wide meeting will be held for residents to voice their opinions on what action the PC should take.

It was resolved that Parish Online would be asked to design the new website as they were competitively priced with the additional benefit of being linked to the Parish Online mapping service.

Cllr Yeadon confirmed that a new wild cherry tree, courtesy of the Free Trees offer, would be planted in the recreation ground in spring.

Following various actions to adjust the sound level of the musical equipment in the children's recreation ground, a complaint that the equipment is now too quiet has been received. The PC has resolved that no further action will be taken and this matter is now closed.

Resolved that there would be no further action on grassing the Queen's Platinum Jubilee area at present.

It was unanimously agreed to support in full the Friends of Bourn Brook's request for funding. It was agreed that the PC would make a contribution to support the Haslingfield PC initiative – Potential East West working group. It was resolved that the PC would continue with its membership of ACRE.

Following consideration of a letter from a member of the public to reconsider any proposed changes to the current start/end of the cycle path outside Farmer's End, it was resolved to make no changes but to request that the signage be improved to make it clearer.

In response to a resident's request for another dog bin at the junction of Church Road and Comberton Road, after consideration, the erection of a temporary notice was proposed, requesting dog walkers clear up after their dogs, to be placed on the verge opposite the entrance to the businesses to see if this brought about any improvement. Wording of the notice to be considered at the next meeting.

The finance report was considered and the payment of bills was approved.

Cllr Miles reported that a pane in the bus shelter had been shattered and Cllr Yeadon confirmed he would get this replaced. Cllr Miles reported that Highways had confirmed that they would repair the wire on the surface of the wooden bridge going over Bourn Brook and this work would be carried out within the next 12 weeks.

Cllr Tebbit is to contact the British Heart Foundation to organise setting up a village-wide training session for using the defibrillator.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm.

Toft 1895

PART 1

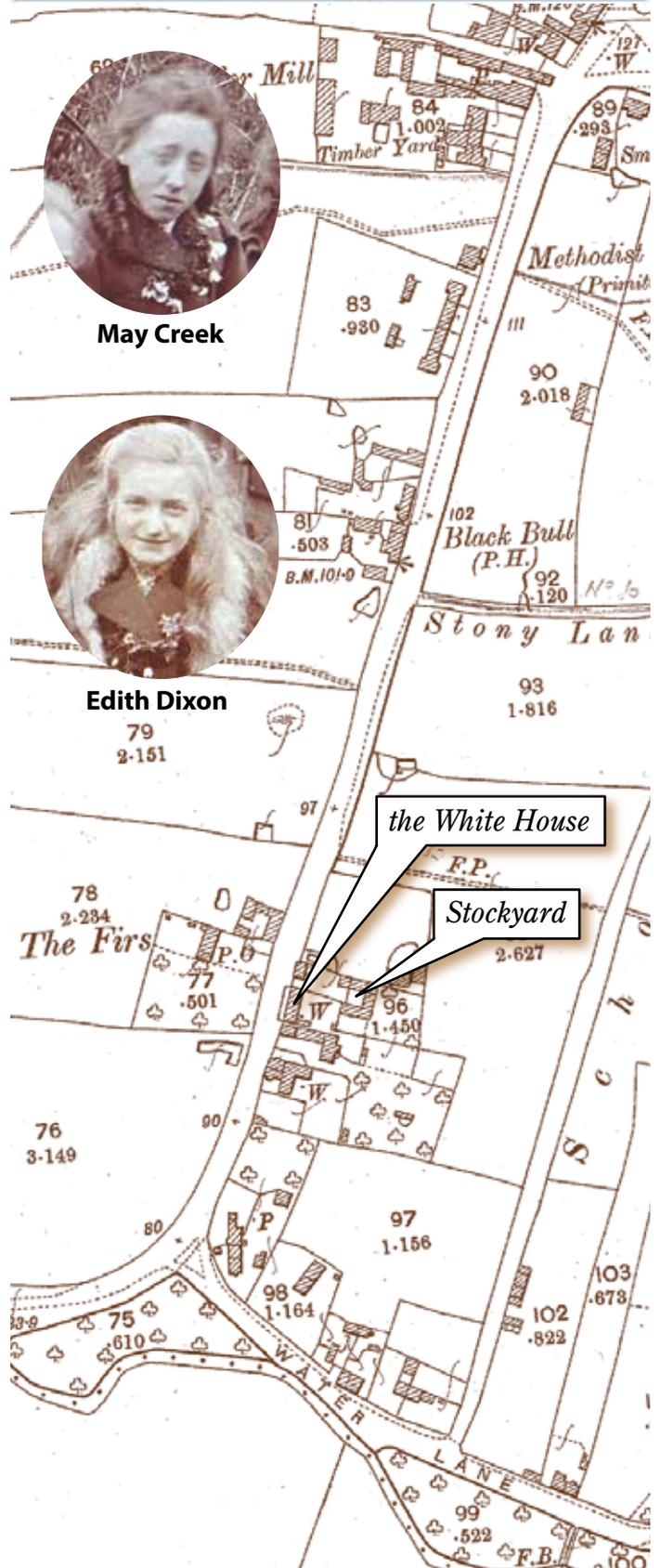
This month, we publish the first part of May Creek's memoir of Toft at the end of the 19th century. Her reminiscences take us on a tour of the village, house by house. Jake Tebbit, May's grandson, provides us with an orientation guide.

"Toft was a small village as remembered, say 1895 to 1896, when two fresh pupils attended the village's school, Miss Dixon from the Firs (then the post office), Miss Creek from the White House, so named by us after years of living there, most probably called 'Daniel Creek's old place' by the locals, for it was an old place, just three rooms through, the end one being the shop, and three bedrooms all hung around an enormous chimney. From the second to the third bedroom there was a half door. Fortunately, there was stairs in the bedroom which led down to the shop from the third bedroom. No scullery or back kitchen; the sink and copper were in the living room when I remembered it. A well just outside the back door. When this well collapsed, a lean-to was added to the house with an open-hearth fire.

When my sister was born, I stood on a chair to count the passers-by. From that position I recall seeing the people, the crowds at the sale at the Firs, Mrs Wright's sale. The house passed to a Miss Banks, who went to London after the death of her aunt. They were indeed 'poor gentlefolk', who lived in day-to-day conditions as re food and fire. There was no money, just a house and some beautiful old furniture. It was from Mrs Wright that some of my early treasures came, among them 'Camelia', a doll who now is in the Folk Museum at Cambridge.

My next memory was of our stockyard fire, 1895, on the Saturday afternoon while Mr Creek was in Cambridge. It was bitterly cold. The village came en masse, a chain was formed from the well to the stockyard, water freezing on their clothes as they carried it. The young women, Rogers and Collets, in large white aprons stiff as boards when they came into the kitchen for a warm. That night Nellie Collett was born."

toft historical society



toft_telephone_box_seed_swap



Last time I looked there were no seeds in the seed swap...but not for long.

Please bring your spare seeds to share with our community.

It doesn't matter if they have been opened as long as they are reasonably fresh. Tape up your original packet or decant your spare seeds into an envelope.

If you have saved seeds from your garden, bring them along.

In March there will be lots of vegetable and flower seeds at the swap to choose from.

Seed is expensive so please only take what you are going to use.

It's all about give and take.

It's a swap - you give then take

Climbing frame announcement

Toft Parish Council has been provided with the opportunity to apply, subject to community support, for the installation of a climbing wall at Toft recreation ground, which would enhance the playground offering for children and young people in the village. If the application is successful, the funding for the climbing wall and its installation would be met entirely from a National Lottery grant.

If you would like to see a climbing wall installed at Toft recreation ground, please do indicate your support by emailing Ben Stoehr via ben@lgs-services.co.uk by 31st March 2026.



TOFT CAR SCHEME - WHY NOT JOIN US?

If you can drive and have an occasional hour to spare, we'd love to hear from you!

What is the Toft Car Scheme?

Toft Car Scheme is a group of volunteers who provide transport to local GP surgeries, hospitals, opticians, dentists, etc. to Toft residents who would be unable to get there by other means. The coordinator is Naomi Wrycroft (07790 171710).

We would very much welcome other drivers to join us.

Will my costs be covered?

Yes. At current rates, it's 45p per mile.

How often are you asked to do a trip?

It depends. Some drivers do more than others and there's no obligation. The more drivers we have, the fewer trips each one will be asked to do.

Is there a lot of paperwork involved?

No. You fill out a couple of simple forms to register and get a basic DBS* check and send a photo for a badge. Then Naomi takes care of the rest. (It's also wise to tell your car insurer, but in our experience, this shouldn't affect your policy.)

I'm sort of interested but would like to hear from others who do it. Is that possible?

Of course. Two drivers describe their experience of being volunteer drivers, below.

Jeanne writes: *Living in Toft, if you're unable to drive for any reason, getting to a doctor's appointment in, say, Bourn or Comberton – AND back – could be challenging or expensive. So I'm pleased to help out and it doesn't take up too much of my time. Sometimes, weeks go by without a request. I've enjoyed getting to know Toft people better. I often think: what would I do if I couldn't drive and friends or family couldn't help?*

Katherine says: *As a volunteer driver, I've positively enjoyed meeting people - it's been a pleasure to share their company and to make what could otherwise be a difficult journey a little easier for them. I'm called on about once a week but can always say if I'm not available. We're very lucky to have this scheme in Toft – not many neighbouring villages have one.*

What should I do if I want to volunteer?

Contact Naomi Wrycroft on 07790 171710. She'd love to hear from you.

**Disclosure and Barring Service – a check for criminal records to check if a person is unsuitable for a particular activity*



THE HEDGEHOGS ARE (ALMOST) COMING



When tidying up your garden, please spare a thought for our spiky friends and be careful not to disturb any hibernating animals in log and leaf piles. Be extremely careful about using a strimmer or lawn mower or making a bonfire without checking there is nothing still asleep in the vegetation.

In March and April, hedgehogs begin to emerge from hibernation, having potentially lost a third of their body weight over winter. It can take them a few hours or even a few days to adjust to being active again and they may appear a little disoriented for a short time. Naturally, they will be extremely hungry but there will still be a shortage of their natural diet of earthworms, ground beetles, slugs, caterpillars, earwigs and millipedes. So, this is the perfect time to start putting out supplementary food such as meat-based wet dog or cat foods or dry cat/kitten food. Specially-made hedgehog food is also widely available. Those resembling pet food with a high meat content are most suitable. A shallow bowl of water is also extremely beneficial, particularly in the dry weather.

Please let me know if you see a hedgehog. You can put a note through my door, 11 Miller's Road or email me: elainemiles3@gmail.com. I can start to create a map of where our hedgehogs are!

For more information about hedgehogs, visit the charity, Hedgehog Street website: <https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/>



Tel: 01223 264277

www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/library

You may be surprised by how libraries have changed. Of course, we still have hundreds of books, fact and fiction, for all ages to choose from. We also have free Wifi and computers you can use to research family history, look up homework topics or even watch a National Theatre play.

Weekly activities

Warm Space, Your Space will be providing tea, coffee and hot chocolate every Wednesday until **26th March**.

Knit, Sew and Natter group continue to meet in Comberton library, 10:30am to 11:30am; March dates: 2nd, 16th and 30th. April dates: 13th and 27th. May date: 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. March dates: 9th and 23rd.

First Steps Library Club, aged 0 - 4 years. Don't forget on every visit to the library, attending events like Rhymetime, your child will get a special stamp towards getting 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.)

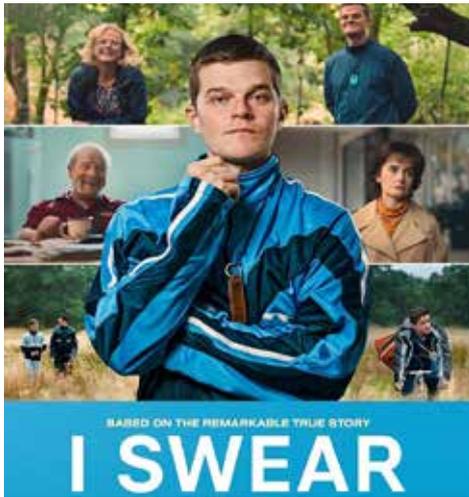
Monday	10am – 5pm (Temporary)
Tuesday	10am – 1pm (Temporary)
Wednesday	10am – 1pm and 2.30pm – 5.30pm
Friday	2.30pm – 5.30pm
Saturday	10am – 1pm

Mobile Library – Visits Toft on the third Friday of the month, 2.00 to 3.00pm by the Village Green.



Toft Club News

The Club's **Annual General Meeting** will take place on Thursday 5th March at 8pm. We invite all members to come along to hear the Annual Report and for the election of the Committee.



The **March film** will be on Saturday 21st - we are showing the 2025 release, *I Swear*. Starring Robert Aramayo and Maxine Peake, the film tells the true story of Tourette Syndrome campaigner, John Davidson. It is a funny and moving account of his experiences from adolescence to early adulthood and explores what was a little known and entirely misunderstood condition in 1980s Britain. 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** (<https://melrosequartet.co.uk/>), 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>

All of our regular events are taking place in March: **Toft Art** is on Thursday 5th after the AGM, **Games Night** is on Friday 6th, **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 and we have more music with the **Slow Session** on Saturday 28th – a chance to play as well as listen to music.

The Hall Committee have put together a mock-up in the Club Room, showing the proposed decoration for the room and have a couple of samples of new chairs. We are looking for feedback on these so please let us have your views.

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

Toft Young People's Corner

If your child or young person has done something creative such as a poem, a piece of craftwork, drawing/painting or photograph, we'd love to hear from you. This month, Amy Standley (age 10) shares a poem she wrote.

The Coming of Spring

I look out my frosty window at the garden below
A shoot has finally broken the icy surface,
I grab a coat and run down Miller's Road to find my friends.

I look around, my breath rising in the cold air
like smoke from a dragon's last gasp.
Redwings moan in the bare hedges of Toft Woods.
A bulb emerges from the ground,
its colourful petals bursting with life.
A patch of sunlight breaks through the trees above.
The Redwings stop. Then silence.

A rainbow stretches across the grey sky
and the Redwings take off,
a blur of birds scatter all around,
I walk back home and I look out my window
and three daffodils smile back at me.
I knew Spring was coming.
It was just about time.



invite you to their

Pudding Evening

Wednesday 18 March

At Toft People's Hall
from 7pm until 8.30pm

Raising funds for Rangers'

Girlguiding international visits
1stbartonrangers@gmail.com

1st Toft Brownies

World Thinking Day

On February 22nd 2026, Girlguiding celebrated 100 years of World Thinking Day - a celebration of 10 million Girl Guides and Girl Scouts to think of and celebrate their sisters all around the world. The theme for 2026 is 'Our Friendship'.

1st Toft Brownies have been exploring where they fit within Girlguiding, including trying to blow bubbles inside bubbles (not easy!) and finding out about 'Brownies' and their names in other countries. On February 22nd, we joined girls within Toft District for the Centenary Celebration for crafts, games and activities inspired by friendship, adventure and the global Guiding community.

1st Toft Brownies meet every Thursday (term time) from 6pm to 7.15pm at Toft People's Hall.

We have spaces for girls aged 7 to 10 who would like to make new friends, try something new and have fun!

For more information, see the Girl Guiding website www.girlguiding.org.uk or email toftbrownies@hotmail.co.uk

'I had never climbed before. I was scared of heights. But I climbed and rang the bell all by myself and felt really proud of myself'

Poonam

Brownies
1st Toft Brownies

**Girls have nonstop fun,
learning and adventure**
for ages 7 to 10

At Brownies, we welcome all girls to explore their creative side, get out into the great outdoors and start to learn to look after themselves, others and the world we live in.


Girlguiding
Registered charity number: Exempted from registration

Join a local Brownies group girlguiding.org.uk/joinus

The Three Horseshoes, Madingley

a little gem almost on our doorstep



'There is such a thing,' said one of the gang in a puzzled tone, 'as "Dry January". I read about it.' There was a collective frowning of the assembled brows. 'How's that work, then?' we chorused. 'It's when people stop drinking for a whole month. It's a thing, apparently.' Our gobs were jointly and severally smacked. 'How on earth, then, are our poor publicans to keep the wolf from the door?' we wondered.

Flushed with righteousness, we bundled on our coats, ready to sally to the rescue of the first pub that came to mind. That happened to be The Three Horseshoes at Madingley, whose threshold we crossed on a bleak January Sunday morning. It's a ten-minute drive from here, although make that twenty if you want to avoid potholes and roadworks. There's a carpark either side and an 'al fresco' area at the front, understandably deserted when we visited. It's been serving the village since at least 1765, although what you can see only dates from 1975. It's currently in the hands of the Cambs Cuisine group, whose several local outlets steer a tricky course between pub and restaurant, with varying degrees of success. Inside, you have a pretty good impersonation of an Olde Englishe Pub. Beams, flagstones, log burner, plus, for extra verisimilitude on this occasion, a wet but happy labrador snoozing in front of it.

The clientèle looked a cheerful, comfortably upholstered bunch, pleased to be out of the winter cold, but it was evident that this place was using a fair bit of elastic when describing itself as a pub. Where was the dartboard, the shove-ha'penny players, the hastily

scribbled notice about the cancelled Kwiz Nite, the old codgers enjoying a game of dommies in the corner? Nowhere. Like so many places, the Three Horseshoes had been deserted by the pub-going classes and re-occupied by the 4WD crowd. Well, a business needs customers and if this is how to get them, then who am I to cavil? Either way, it didn't look as if Dry January had really grabbed Madingley's collective imagination, which was all to the good.

We settled down and ordered drinks, which arrived promptly. The place was busy but not too busy - the young, attentive staff had enough to occupy them without being overwhelmed and our order was taken within a few minutes of arrival. I'd opted for a starter, more out of nosiness than hunger. It featured 'pickled gooseberries' and I just needed to see what these were like and find out why anyone would do that to a gooseberry. Turns out that it's so that we still have a use for a lovely word like 'piquant'. It being a Sunday, roasts were the order of the day, although you could order 'off-the-card' if you persisted. Between us we managed all the meat offerings plus a vegetarian treat ('Chestnut Wellington', which was a lot nicer than it sounds). It was all pretty good - no complaints from our seasoned noshers. Dessert menus always sound lovely and these actually were. They came exactly as ordered and with a just-right gap between courses. On this showing, The Three Horseshoes is a little gem almost on our doorstep. Nowhere is cheap nowadays but this was at least reasonable. Four of us paid £139 including drinks. Would I go again? It's a definite possibility...

Toft Village Calendar welcomes back Michael Walker as a member of the editorial team. Michael stepped back in 2024 after some twenty years of editing the Calendar single-handedly owing to health reasons. We are delighted that he has recovered to his former energetic self. He will alternate with Mike McCarthy in content editing and writing editorials.



Over two sessions of the Warm Hub, in February 2026, on a piece of pink paper taken from the art box, we wrote a community poem. The poem arrives now, gathered from the notes and responses to two questions: What do you think of when you think of snowdrops? What do you feel?

ON SNOWDROPS: A WARM HUB FOUND POEM

Snowdrop: Latin name, galanthus. Spring
Is coming. Here comes
The Longstowe snowdrop,

The snowdrop walk at Frog Hall,
Candlemas Bells along the mossy wall
Of St Andrew's church.

They multiply.
They extend.
You leave them alone and they're off!

Snowdrop: It just fits. One
Snowdrop fits with the others.
You turn the corner and there they are.

At the end of winter, they surprise us.
At the end of winter, a snowdrop
Brings a new beginning.

In Bulgaria, they rub the leaves
On their temples to relieve pain.
Did you know that?

Snowdrops bring hope,
Yet the way they hang
Their heads is melancholic.

That said, you very rarely
See a single snowdrop
On a bank or ditch.

They are wild.
They are pure.
They are the same.



A remarkable discovery at Wandlebury

Archaeologists working at Wandlebury Country Park, cared for by Cambridge Past, Present & Future, have uncovered one of the most significant archaeological finds ever discovered on the site: a burial pit containing the remains of at least ten individuals, dating back more than 1,100 years.

The discovery was made during a student training excavation led by the Cambridge Archaeological Unit,



working in partnership with Cambridge Past, Present & Future and the University of Cambridge. What began as a carefully planned learning excavation has revealed compelling evidence of extreme violence during a turbulent period in early medieval Cambridgeshire. Archaeologists believe the remains may represent the aftermath of a mass execution, a violent skirmish, or a combination of both.

You can see the project on *Digging for Britain* on the BBC iPlayer series 13 episode 5.

The **SCHOOLROOM** Community Café

The Café continues to be busy and last month we welcomed several new faces, who gave very enthusiastic feedback about the Café.

Two of our long-standing volunteers, Emma Derbyshire, who has baked delicious cakes for us right from the start of the Café, and Pam Welch, who has been a regular cashier, have recently stepped down and Gill Pugh is stepping down as a team leader, whilst continuing to provide admin support. We are therefore urgently seeking more helpers to join us, especially to serve food and drink on Wednesdays.

Please get in touch if you'd like to know more. It's a great way to get more involved in your community and make new friends.

BIN COLLECTIONS FOR MARCH

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

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 March.

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