COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

COVERING BATTISFORD, COMBS, LITTLE FINBOROUGH AND MOATS TYE

November / December 2026

Contents:

- Santa's Visits to Battisford & Combs
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- And Much More

we will remember
we will remember
we will remember



The next Community Newsletter is due out in early March 2027, with a deadline of Friday 12th February for any articles, including Easter events.

We would love to hear your comments on the newsletter or suggestions for future editions.

If you have any comments, an article or photos you wish to be included, or if you are interested in advertising your business, please get in touch.

communitynewsletter@btinternet.com

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year

Orchard Barn

What happens to all the twigs?

At Orchard Barn, we are very fond of materials that other people might call waste. Small branches pruned from hedges and trees are a perfect example. They are too small for firewood, too useful to burn and far too good to cart away. Instead, we turn them into deadwood screens.

Built between upright posts, layers of twiggy branches gradually become surprisingly substantial screens. They give us somewhere useful to put our prunings, provide valuable habitat for insects and other small creatures, and mean that a material grown at Orchard Barn stays at Orchard Barn. Very little needs to leave the site — and we don't have to buy a fence!

On Saturday 28 November, 10am–1pm, we'll be building more deadwood screens and you're very welcome to come and have a go. No previous experience is needed; we'll show you the basic skills and work together.

It's also a chance to discover more about our community-run project and volunteering at Orchard Barn.



The longest night, the warmest welcome

As the days grow shorter and the old orchard settles into winter, there's a very good reason to gather together at Orchard Barn.

What an extraordinary year it's been! Volunteers of all ages have helped us care for the land, restore an old building, learn traditional skills and create beautiful things from materials grown or gathered right here. There is much to celebrate, and even more to be thankful for.

On Friday 18 December, from 11.30am, we're opening the doors of our lovingly reinstated Long House and inviting you to join us for tea, cake and merriment as we celebrate the approaching Winter Solstice — the shortest day and longest night of the year.



For thousands of years, people have gathered at this turning point in the seasons, welcoming the promise of returning light. What better place to do so than in a building brought back to life by hundreds of helping hands?

Whether you've volunteered with us, visited before or are simply curious about Orchard Barn, we'd love you to come along. Orchard Barn, Bildeston Road, Ringshall, IP14 2LY

To let us know you are coming, or for further information: sarah.orchardbarn@gmail.com

FATHER CHRISTMAS IS COMING…

Wonderful news! I will be visiting again

Combs on Wednesday 9th December 6pm – 9pm
Battisford on Thursday 10th December 6pm – 9pm

I will wave & greet everyone as I collect all your Christmas letters! We are collecting food donations for Stowmarket Food Bank - not cash. Please have your donations ready, or leave on your doorstep & my wonderful Elves will collect them. If you can, the following products would be extra helpful.

SWEET: Christmas Pudding, Cakes or Chocolate Logs, Iced Fruit Bars, Mince pies, Jelly, Custard, Trifle mix, Drinking Chocolate, Angel delight, Selection boxes, Large tubs/Boxes or packets of Chocolates or biscuits.
SAVOURY: Tins of Salmon or Ham or Corned beef, Pringles, Gravy granules, Boxes of Stuffing, Nuts, Cartons of Fruit Juice, Variety packs of cereals, Crisps & any savory snacks.

For donating money, please use

The QR code or use the link **https://donate.kindlink.com**

Bank Transfer to their bank account using the details:
Barclays Bank, Payee STOWMARKET FOODBANK

Sort code 20-82-75
Account 33867331
Ref: FOODBANK



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT
Wishing you a very Merry Christmas xx

SBKC
Stowmarket Bathroom & Kitchen Centre

Bathroom & Kitchen Specialists



Offering a personalised service to both trade & retail customers.

Using state-of-the-art CAD technology to create 3D graphics to help you visualise the perfect design.





With over 30 displays of bathrooms and kitchens in our expansive showroom to inspire you. Committed to offering high-quality products at affordable prices, catering to all budgets without compromising on style.

Please Visit us at
www.stowmarketbathrooms.co.uk
3 Mill Street, Stowupland, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 5BJ
01449 774900

Monday Teas at the Punch Bowl Battisford



Everyone is welcome to come along on the second Monday of every month to enjoy hot drinks and delicious savoury and sweet home-made treats. We meet from 3.00 p.m. until around 4.00 p.m. No need to book, just come along. A small donation towards costs is optional. We look forward to welcoming you soon.

Don't forget: Christmas treats and mulled wine will be on the menu for our December meeting!

Key Contacts

Buses
Suffolk Taxi Bus - call 01449 866899
or go to swifttaxicabs.com
Hadleigh Community Transport Group
(accessible transport) - 01473 826242

Parish Council Chairmen
Battisford - Jon Cook 07592 775059
Combs - Tony Kitson 07711 380597
Lt Finborough - Paul Marriage 01449 612815

District Councillors
Battisford - Dan Pratt 01473 658398
Combs - John Matthissen 01449 258894

County Councillor for Combs (Thedwastre South)
Matt Bentley
matt.bentley@suffolk.gov.uk

County Councillor for Battisford (Bosmere)
Position currently vacant

Doctors' Surgeries
Bildeston Health Centre 01449 720254
Combs Ford Surgery 01449 678333
Needham Market Practice 01449 720666
Stowmarket Violet Hill 01449 776000

Advice
Citizens Advice 0800 144 8848
Samaritans 116 123
Age UK 0800 678 1602
MIND 0300 123 3393

111 (NHS 111) – A non-emergency medical advice line for situations that require urgent guidance but are not life-threatening.

101 – The non-emergency police number
Call 101 to report crimes that are not in progress, suspicious activity, or to contact your local police for advice. This helps keep 999 lines free for genuine emergencies

Battisford & Combs Community EMERGENCY Plan

Battisford and Combs Parish Councils are considering developing a joint Community Emergency Plan to use if an emergency affects our community.
Emergency services, local authorities and other key responders usually manage emergencies using well-rehearsed plans. However, during widespread flooding, field fires, heavy snow or severe storm damage, their response may be delayed, and essential utilities or road access may be disrupted.
In these circumstances, our community must be able to support itself until outside help arrives. A plan will help us respond effectively. As part of this work, we aim to establish a Community Emergency Planning Group made up of volunteers willing to assist during an emergency.
First, however, we need to bring together a small group from both villages to help develop the plan. If you can assist with this, please contact either parish clerk (email addresses below) by 30th November. We know that input from the wider community will be vital.
After this initial stage, we will be seeking help identifying other resources, such as safe spaces, equipment and skills, that could be useful in an emergency. We'll announce the next steps on our noticeboards and websites, and in the next newsletter, so look out for further information if you are able to help.

Many thanks

clerk@battisford-pc.gov.uk
clerk@combsparishcouncil.gov.uk

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

As a result of the Burnham Government's revised plans, District Council elections are scheduled for May 2027, bringing them back into the usual four-year cycle. Parish Council elections will take place alongside them.
More information will follow, but we encourage residents to start thinking about how they might support the community. If you are interested in becoming a parish councillor, you will need nominations from two fellow village residents. You can also put forward someone you feel would be a strong representative for the parish.

BATTISFORD VILLAGE HALL



Battisford Village Hall, Straight Road, Battisford, Stowmarket, IP14 2HP

GENERAL HIRE: £18 FOR THE FIRST HOUR | £9 EACH ADDITIONAL HOUR

CHARITY HIRE: £20 FOR THE SESSION

TO BOOK, CALL: 01449 674852

UPCOMING EVENTS

BUFFET SPICE NIGHT
At Battisford Village Hall
SATURDAY 21ST NOVEMBER 2026
Bar from 7pm | Meal served 7:30pm
Dining is £15 per person
Contact Alison Card to book:
07919 888614 alisoncard@hotmail.com

Christmas WREATH MAKING with bubbles
Friday 27th November 2026
from 7pm | £27 per person
Contact Trudy to book:
07887 932861



Toasty Tuesdays
BATTISFORD VILLAGE HALL
FREE EVENT



Third Tuesday of the month, October-December, 1pm-3pm
battisfordvhmc@gmail.com | 07731897790

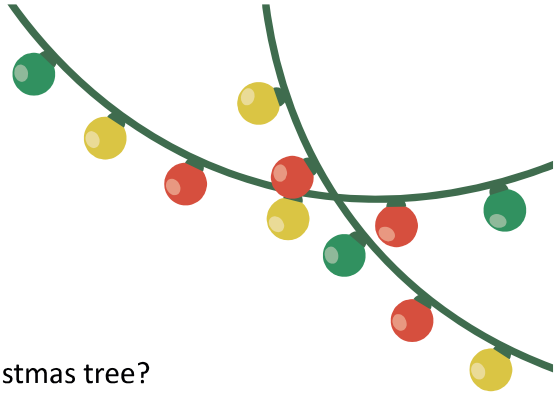
Knitting & Crochet GROUP
First Tuesday of the month,
10am-12pm
a free event at *Battisford Village Hall*
To find out more, Call/Whatsapp: 07731 897790

BATTISFORD VILLAGE HALL
Chinese Night
COMING SOON

For more events info, see village noticeboards, or visit our website: https://www.battisfordvillagehall.co.uk/

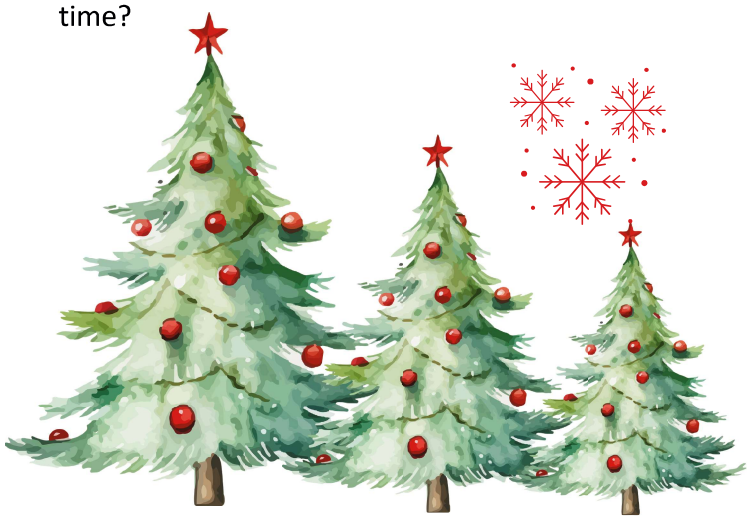
Follow us on Facebook!

CHRISTMAS TRIVIA QUIZ FOR KIDS YOUNG AND OLD!



Just for a bit of fun, answers on the Combs Village website www.combsvillage.org.uk or by scanning the QR code below. Answers can also be obtained by emailing communitynewsletter@btinternet.com

1. Which country started the tradition of putting up a Christmas tree?
2. In which century were Christmas crackers invented?
3. How many reindeer traditionally pull Santa's sleigh?
4. Which famous company is often credited with popularising Santa's red and white suit in their 1930s advertising campaign?
5. In Charles Dickens's "A Christmas Carol" what are the names of the three spirits that visit Ebenezer Scrooge on Christmas Eve?
6. What do children get from Santa if they're on his "Naughty List"?
7. Which iconic song has been the Christmas number one in both 1975 and 1991?
8. How many gifts in total were given in "The Twelve Days of Christmas" song?
9. What is the best selling Christmas song ever?
10. In which country is fried chicken (including KFC!) a popular dish to eat on Christmas Day?
11. Since 1947, which American sport has been traditionally played on Christmas Day?
12. In "How The Grinch Stole Christmas" what is the name of Grinch's dog?
13. Which Christmas carol was the first song ever broadcast from space?
14. Which UK monarch delivered the first Christmas broadcast to the BBC in 1932?
15. Which toy has been one of the most popular Christmas gifts for children of all time?



Scan this QR code for the answers



OAKS MEADOW PROJECT

Bildeston Road, Little Finborough IP14 2LA

Now that we are coming to the end of another busy year, it is time to reflect on all that has happened on Oaks Meadow in 2026.

The Trustees have steered the charity throughout, making sure that this community facility meets the needs of all visitors to the meadow. The Focus Group have put the FUN in fundraising, ensuring that the running costs can be met. The Education Group have led young nature explorers on a discovery of their natural world. The Project Group has, and continues to work on plans for a community room on the site. The Volunteer Group have worked tirelessly throughout the year, tending to the trees, plants, gardens and general maintenance.

Every single one of these volunteers live within this community and Oaks Meadow Project CIO is extremely grateful for their time and commitment to the charity.

If you would like to join one of the teams, email oaksmeadow@gmail.com

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 17TH 7:30PM

AT BATTISFORD & DISTRICT CRICKET CLUB

Please join us to hear more about our 2026 activities and the exciting plans for 2027.







The Annual Macmillan Coffee Morning was held on Saturday 26th September in Battisford Village Hall.

I am so grateful to all those who came along, had a 'cuppa', piece of cake and supported the event.

Thank you to everyone who made such gorgeous cakes and savouries – we had a fabulous selection. (I do have a plastic container and some small platters left over that I'm looking for their home, please give me a call if you think they belong to you).

Thank you to everyone who donated raffle prizes, be it individuals or local businesses – we had many lovely prizes.

The Coffee Morning wouldn't happen if it wasn't for my group of trusted helpers – before, on the day and afterwards - thank you.

The beautiful table flowers were very kindly sourced and arranged by a neighbour and her family – thank you.

I am so very, very pleased to say that the amount raised was £2,101.60 - This is a massive amount to raise, I am, and I know Macmillan Cancer Support will be very grateful.

Over the past six years we have now raised in total a massive £9,205.48 - such an enormous amount from local villages.

Marion Davey
01449 613920 / 07957 585504

Wild Heritage Suffolk

What a summer!
In a year when temperatures in Suffolk hit 37 degrees C, when the rain stayed away and ponds and reservoirs shrank, when wildfires tore through our countryside, you could be forgiven for thinking it was not a good year to establish a community garden and run a twelve-week gardening project, on an exposed south facing hilltop with no shade and no water…….
However, this is just what Wild Heritage Suffolk did at Oaks Meadow this summer. And we had a ball.
Our community gardening project, Let It Grow, funded by Mid Suffolk Council, had the dual role of nourishing both plants and people. Over a three-month period, it welcomed a range of participants, all of whom were encountering difficulties of some kind and created a space for people to learn and for plants to grow. Not only did the participants and volunteers learn about sowing seeds and raising and harvesting a variety of herbs and veg and flowers, but also to build relationships and find companionship. Together the participants, volunteers and the Let It Grow team created a happy, encouraging and productive summer project. Let It Grow, which we plan to run annually, culminated in a joyous Garden Party celebrating the many fruits of our labours. We were delighted to welcome friends and families as well as distinguished guests Alan Edwards, Deputy Mayor of Stowmarket Town Council and leading District Councillors, Lorraine Baker and Andy Mellor from Mid Suffolk. To cap it all, members of the magnificent King Driscolls, joined the party creating a magical musical finale to a fabulous event.





Wild Suffolk Heritage relocated to Oaks Meadow only a year ago. Let It Grow was our first major project on site, but we have been actively supporting the development of this brilliant community open space in other ways too. We have installed raised growing beds, an accessible route from the car park, a six-cubic-metre rainwater harvesting system, as well as composting facilities. Tools have been bought and the Wild Hut, our outdoor classroom, houses a community library of gardening and wellbeing books, and provides a welcoming space for learning and events.
Much has been achieved in a relatively short period and under very difficult growing conditions. And there is still a lot to do. The summer project has helped to identify the infrastructure, crop choices and growing approaches needed to make the site more climate resilient.
We can't do it alone. We welcome your help and ideas. If you are interested in shaping the future of the new garden or could give some time to a bit of watering and weeding, we would be delighted to hear from you.
This winter we plan to organise occasional volunteer days. We will post information about dates for this on our website www.wildheritagesuffolk.com or you can let us know that you are interested by email us directly at info@wildheritagesuffolk,com and request more information.

Winter Commemorations and Celebrations at Little Finborough Church

Everyone is invited to join us; you will be most welcome!

REMEMBRANCE – Sunday 8th November at 3pm

This service is to commemorate and express our gratitude for the sacrifice of those who served our country in war. Some local people gave their lives and others suffered upheavals and losses which affected them for the rest of their lives. Our service will include a two-minute silence to remember them and reflect on their sacrifice.

CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT – Tuesday 22nd December at 7pm

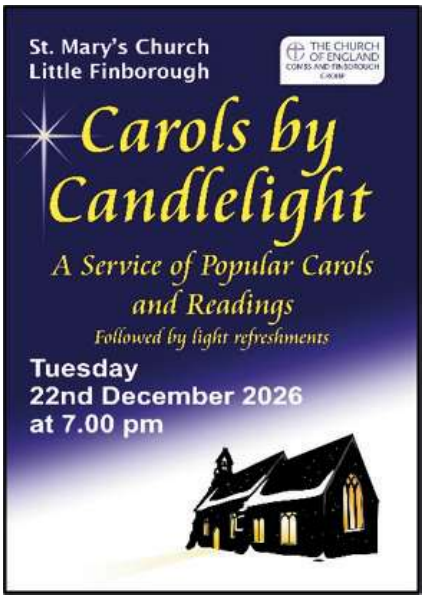
The Little Finborough Carol Service is always much anticipated and to many local people it represents the start of the Christmas festivities. The service will include popular Christmas Carols and readings telling the story of Christ's coming at Christmas. Come along and get your Christmas off to a warm-hearted start.

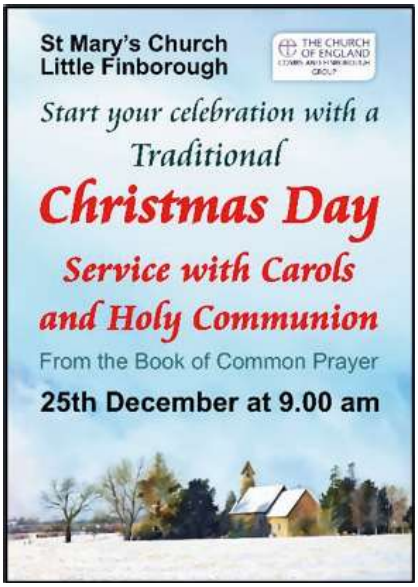
The theme for this year's Christmas decorations in the church is the popular carol The Twelve Days Of Christmas. Please come to see how it has been represented, either at the Carol Service or just look in any day. The church is usually open between 8am and 4pm.

CHRISTMAS DAY HOLY COMMUNION– Thursday 25th December at 9am

Begin your Christmas Day in the traditional way. Join us at Little Finborough Church for Holy Communion, to sing carols and celebrate the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ.







Christmas Cheer at The Punch Bowl 

The festive season is almost here, and we're looking forward to celebrating with our wonderful community at The Punch Bowl. From seasonal food and festive entertainment to a sparkling New Year's Eve party and a family-friendly New Year's Day walk, there's plenty to enjoy throughout December and into 2027.

Festive Food

Our festive menu has arrived, packed with seasonal flavours, comforting favourites and Christmas-inspired twists on classic dishes. Whether you're meeting friends, enjoying a family meal or simply treating yourself during the Christmas countdown, we'd love to welcome you for some festive cheer.

Christmas Music & Entertainment 🎶

We have two special events to help get everyone into the festive spirit:

Wednesday 16 December, from 6pm – Christmas Carols

Join friends, neighbours and fellow villagers for an evening of traditional Christmas carols, festive community spirit and seasonal magic.

Friday 18 December – Christmas Sing-Along with Amber

Amber will lead an evening of upbeat Christmas favourites and feel-good tunes. Come along ready to sing, smile and enjoy a fun-filled festive gathering.

Sparkle & Glam New Year's Eve Party ✨

See out 2026 in style at our Sparkle & Glam Disco with DJ Trav. Expect great music, festive drinks and a lively atmosphere to welcome in the New Year. No tickets are required, simply turn up and join the celebration. Please note that this is a drinks-only event, with no food service available.

New Year's Day Winter Walk 🥾🐾

Start 2027 with some fresh air and good company on our relaxed New Year's Day winter walk. We'll set off at 11am and return to the pub around midday. Afterwards, warm up with friends and enjoy a hearty serving of bangers and mash from 1pm. The walk is designed to be fun, inclusive and suitable for all ages, with well-behaved dogs welcome too.

Christmas & New Year Opening Hours

· Christmas Eve: 12pm to late (festive menu available)
· Christmas Day: 12pm to 2.30pm (drinks only)
· Boxing Day: 12pm to 4pm (drinks only)
· Sunday 27 December: 12pm to 9pm (drinks only)
· Monday 28 December: 12pm to 9pm (drinks only)
· Tuesday 29 December: Closed
· Wednesday 30 December: 6pm to 10pm (drinks only)
· New Year's Eve: 7pm to late (drinks only)
· New Year's Day: 12pm to 5pm, with winter walk from 11am and bangers and mash from 1pm
· Saturday 2 January onwards: Normal opening hours resume.

Please follow our social media channels for any updates over the festive period. Thank You ❤️

As a community pub, The Punch Bowl is about much more than food and drink. It's a place where people come together, make memories and enjoy good company. We're incredibly grateful for your support throughout the year and look forward to sharing the festive season with you.

From everyone at The Punch Bowl, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy New Year. We hope to raise a glass with you soon.

See you at the pub! 🥂

Battisford and District Gardening Club

The days are shorter, the rain keeps falling but we have some good reasons to get out of the house.

We are into our Autumn/Winter schedule. All meetings are held in the Battisford Village Hall and start at 7.30pm, unless stated otherwise.

- 2 Nov 2026: Hellebores talk by Chris Wiley.
- 28 Nov 2026: Wreath making. Village Hall. FULLY BOOKED
- 7 Dec 2026: Annual Christmas Quiz at Cricket Club.
- 4 Jan 2027: The secret lives of garden wildlife - Tony Brown 1pm (at Cricket Club) Soup to be served beforehand) Tony shares more of his wonderful photographs
- 22 Jan 2027: Visit to NT Anglesey Abbey, Cambs for a guided tour of their snowdrops
- 1 Feb 2027: Gardening with grasses by Tim Fuller Many people are unsure of what to do with grasses in the garden and they end up in a bed on their own, not the best way to use them. This talk will aid the selection of good garden grasses and suggest ways to include them in the garden. Tim Fuller runs The Plantsman's Preference nursery in South Lopham Diss.
- 1 Mar 2027 Caring for our animals at Colchester Zoo – Andy Moore. Not quite gardening related (but who knows!). Andy is a very knowledgeable and interesting speaker and brings along with him many funny happenings from zoo life!
- 5 Apr 2027: Trees for all seasons – Jim Paine from Walnut Tree Garden Nursery. He will be bringing along some plants to sell
- Summer is the time to visit gardens and eat cake
- May 2027: Visit to Sarah Cooke's National Collection of Cedric Morris irises at Shelley. Date still to be arranged for when the irises are at their best Garden
- 7 Jun 2027: Visit to Porters Lodge garden and tea room, Cavenham, Bury St Edmunds This was Britain’s Best Back Garden in 2004 Full details to follow
- 5 Jul 2027 - Visit to 5 Parklands Green , Fornham St Genevieve, Bury St Edmunds 1½ acres of gardens developed since the 1980s for all year interest.

For more details see the website battisfordgardeningclub.org.uk, or drop me a message denis@wicking.me



Would you like to help with the newsletter? We welcome volunteers for a range of tasks, including generating ideas, compiling articles, editing, managing advertisers, and organising printing and distribution. No prior experience is required—just an interest in the local community.
For more information, please contact communitynewsletter@btinternet.com



Litter Pick

Thank you to everyone who helped with the Litter Pick on Saturday 10th October. We collected over 20 bags of rubbish, mostly drink cans and fast food wrappers! Our next litter pick will be held in March 2027 so watch out for dates in the next newsletter, on the village noticeboards and websites









Infinite Potential Fitness

We are your local private training space providing Small Group Personal Training, Hyrox and Bootcamp.

We support members on their fitness journey and are helping people in the local area to become fitter, healthier and happier. Want to build your confidence in yourself, find new friends and be part of a community where everything is coach lead.

Contact us below now. We would love to help.
Beth & Sam

HQ, The Glovers Building, Combs Tannery, Tannery Road, Combs, Stowmarket IP14 2EN





Winners in 2023 & 2024

info@infinitepotentialfitness.com INFINITE POTENTIAL FITNESS @INFINITEPOTENTIAL_FITNESS

Battisford Parish Council

www.battisford-pc.gov.uk
clerk@battisford-pc.gov.uk
joncook@battisford-pc.gov.uk

We have had three meetings since our last report. We were pleased to welcome Adrian Cope as a new councillor in October, meaning we have our full complement of seven councillors.

The Play Area working group has started looking at replacing some of the play equipment at the Village Green. It is now over 30 years old, has been well used and has a limited life span. We have been advised to replace some of it within 2-3 years. The working group is keen to hear your views on what new equipment you would like to see installed. If you have ideas, maybe you are a parent or grandparent who uses the Play Area, please get in touch, by email to battisfordpa10@gmail.com or use the QR codes on the notices at the Play Area and Noticeboards. Some ideas could be a roundabout, inground trampoline or activity net climber, alongside the current favourites. We are also looking for more people to join the working group. The next meeting is at the Punchbowl on 20th January 2027 at 7.00 p.m. Fund raising is starting with grant applications and more immediately an Auction of Promises on 5th June 2027. Please see more details about this in this Newsletter.

Still with the Play Area, we are pleased to now have a volunteer to help with regular inspections of the play equipment and carry out some maintenance. We have working parties on occasional Saturday mornings and welcome help on these days. A small group made a big difference at the October working party. Imagine what we could do with more help. It is a very pleasant place to spend an active couple of hours.

The Community Speed watch initiative has been progressed by Cllr Eleanor Newman. She met with the police lead from the Suffolk Constabulary who gave advice and identified safe areas around the village for the Speed watch volunteers to use. Although we are at an early stage, a coordinator and team of 6 (or more) volunteers will soon be sought to scope and run the scheme. Please contact the Parish Clerk or Cllr Newman on eleanornewman@battisford-pc.gov.uk should you have any comment or interest in volunteering.

Cemetery maintenance is ongoing, with some tree removal and the Councillors undertaking working parties. Some headstones had fallen and were repaired, but unfortunately some have again failed the topple test and will need to be repaired again. It is the responsibility of the owner of the memorial to reinstate a headstone, but the Parish Council has recently undertaken this for safety reasons.

An important reminder that grants can be made to local projects by the Parish Council through an application form. Please see the poster on our Facebook page or go on our website as this also has the policy and the application form or contact the Clerk.

We thank District Councillor Dan Pratt for his continued helpful support and advice to the Parish Council. The County Councillor elected in May did not attend any Parish Council meetings, send any reports or respond to emails and he resigned in September.

We had a successful Litter Pick on a sunny 10th October. Many thanks to all those who volunteered.

Two additional benches are being installed within the Play Area. One is a memorial seat from the Durrant family and the other a donation from the helpers and regulars of the Monday Teas. Many thanks for both these very welcome seats.

The Parish Council is going to be working with Combs Parish Council to develop a Community Emergency Plan. Please see more details in this Newsletter.

Finally, a big thank you to all the residents who regularly litter pick, help quietly with projects or volunteer to maintain some of the Parish Council assets, such as the defibrillators and the Play Area. A very Happy and peaceful Christmas and New Year to you all.

Jane Pope - janepope@battisford-pc.gov.uk
Vice Chair Battisford Parish Council

November is a time of remembrance and reflection, providing an opportunity to recognise and remember those who have served, and continue to serve, in the Armed Forces.
It is also important to recognise their families, and those who provide care and support to them. This period gives everyone a chance to reflect on their service, commitment and on occasion sacrifice, and to ensure that their contributions are remembered and valued.
At Mid Suffolk Citizens Advice, we are proud of our strong connection with the Armed Forces community and recognise the importance of continuing to support those who have served, and those who remain connected to the Armed Forces.
Our commitment is summed up in our motto: “You served us. Now we are here for you.” Since 2025, through our Veteran Connect Project, we have been committed to ensuring that members of the Armed Forces community know that support is available and that they do not have to navigate challenges alone. During this time, we have had the privilege of working with individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences.

We provide free advice on:

- Benefits & Tax Credits
- Universal Credit
- Consumer
- Education
- Employment
- Managing Finances
- Health
- Housing Rights
- Legal
- Money Advice & Debt
- Relationships & Family

Our service is designed to connect veterans, serving personnel and members of the wider Armed Forces community with the right organisations and services, helping them access the support they need and deserve. By providing guidance and connecting people with appropriate sources of support, we aim to make it easier for individuals to navigate the services available to them and take the next steps towards improved wellbeing and stability.

Citizens Advice Mid Suffolk can provide in depth advice on this issue and much more, including debt, finances, employment, benefits and family/relationships. You can contact them by phone on 01449 676060, visit in person at Milton House, 5 Milton Road South, Stowmarket IP14 1EZ or use the contact form at midsuffolkcab.org.uk/contact-us. Opening hours are Monday-Thursday 9.30am – 3.30pm and Friday 9.30am – 12.30pm.

MID SUFFOLK

Christmas and New Year Waste Collection Schedule 2026-27

Refuse (general rubbish), paper and card, recycling, and food waste collections

Collections will take place as normal up to, and including, Thursday 24 December 2026.

From Friday 25 December 2026 to Saturday 16 January 2027, refuse, paper and card, recycling, and food waste collections, will be on an amended schedule, as below.

From Monday 18 January 2027, these collections will return to the normal schedule.

	Usual collection date	Amended collection date	Change
Paper and Card / Food Waste	Monday 21 December 2026	No Change	None
	Tuesday 22 December 2026	No Change	None
	Wednesday 23 December 2026	No Change	None
	Thursday 24 December 2026	No Change	None
	Friday 25 December 2026	Tuesday 29 December 2026	4 days later
Recycling / Food Waste	Monday 28 December 2026	Wednesday 30 December 2026	2 days later
	Tuesday 29 December 2026	Thursday 31 December 2026	2 days later
	Wednesday 30 December 2026	Saturday 2 January 2027	3 days later
	Thursday 31 December 2026	Monday 4 January 2027	4 days later
	Friday 1 January 2027	Tuesday 5 January 2027	4 days later
Refuse / Food Waste	Monday 4 January 2027	Wednesday 6 January 2027	2 days later
	Tuesday 5 January 2027	Thursday 7 January 2027	2 days later
	Wednesday 6 January 2027	Friday 8 January 2027	2 days later
	Thursday 7 January 2027	Saturday 9 January 2027	2 days later
	Friday 8 January 2027	Monday 11 January 2027	3 days later
Paper and Card / Food Waste	Monday 11 January 2027	Tuesday 12 January 2027	1 day later
	Tuesday 12 January 2027	Wednesday 13 January 2027	1 day later
	Wednesday 13 January 2027	Thursday 14 January 2027	1 day later
	Thursday 14 January 2027	Friday 15 January 2027	1 day later
	Friday 15 January 2027	Saturday 16 January 2027	1 day later

Garden waste (brown bin) collections

Collections will take place as normal up to, and including, Thursday 24 December 2026.

The collection that would have taken place on Friday 25 December 2026 will take place on Tuesday 29 December 2026 instead.

From Monday 28 December 2026 to Sunday 10 January 2027, there will be no scheduled garden waste collections.

From Monday 11 January 2027, garden waste collections will return to the normal schedule.

Please put your bins out by 6.00am

To check for delays or report a missed collection
Online: www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/bins-and-recycling
Phone: 0300 1234 000 (option 4)

Scan for more information

Village Hall News

Many Hands Make Light Work.
We are looking for volunteers to help the Village Hall Committee. This could be on an occasional or regular basis and include tasks like decorating the Hall for events, serving behind the bar, taking notes at meetings, putting up posters, helping prepare food, or anything else you can offer. To add your name to our volunteers list, email battisfordvhmc@gmail.co.uk or whatsapp 07919 888614

A Big Thank You
A big thank you to Dean Williams and Trudy Mudd, who stood down from the committee at the last AGM. Their dedication as Chairperson and Secretary respectively, benefited not only the Village Hall but the whole community. We are pleased to say that although they are no longer officially on the committee, they are still sharing their expertise with us and volunteering their time to help when they can.

Community Tuesdays
Community Tuesdays offers free hall hire for events run by you for local people to attend free of charge. Sessions can be weekly, monthly or even just a one off. Some ideas include toddler groups, crafting groups, boardgaming or dance sessions. The Village Hall has its own carpet bowls and table tennis equipment that groups could make use of. Any ideas will be considered. For more information, or if you have an idea for an event you would like to run, please contact us by messaging 07731 897790.
Knitting & Crochet Group. First Tuesday of the month. 10am to midday.
Toasty Tuesdays; October to April on the 3rd Tuesday of the month 1pm-3pm.



Battisford & District Cricket Club

The cricket season has come to an end and the teams all did well and held onto their position in the respective divisions. We were able to celebrate at our end of season awards which was well supported. You may have seen the plea to help to purchase a new roller earlier in the year and we are very grateful to Combs and Battisford parish councils, District Cllr Daniel Pratt, a local charity based in Ipswich and many individual contributors who helped raise the funds needed!. Our groundskeeper is very pleased with his new acquisition!!



At the end of August we held an inter club legends v youngsters game which was very well supported and we hope to make this a regular fixture. Some of those who played probably took a few days to recover from the aches and pains !

The square has been reseeded and the grass is growing well, the main challenge being to keep the rabbits from eating the lovely new grass.

The bar remains open on Monday (5-7pm) and Friday nights (5-7.30pm approx) and we will be holding a number of events in the closed season. The first being a cheese and wine event on 20th November 6.45 pm with a selection of wines being provided by Nethergate wines. Tickets must be booked in advance as spaces are limited.

We are also holding our AGM on Friday 13th November 7.30pm so anyone who is interested in finding out more about the club or possibly helping out from an admin / social/ bar or grounds perspective is very welcome to come along.

Sadly one of our founding members and significant supporter of the club Michael Wynn Jones passed away recently. Michael was player, captain and club captain and together with Delia also helped secure the clubs future by purchasing the current ground from Greene King. He continued his connection with the club until very recently. He was a true part of the fabric of the club and will be very much missed by everyone at BDCC.



For any more details on the above please contact
secretary@battisfordcricket.co.uk or
Julia Stephens-Row club administrator on 07449310295

Combs Parish Council Update

Dear Residents

Autumn has well and truly set in after a record breaking summer and brings with it a few changes at your parish council.

Cllr Cliff Ratcliffe has stepped down, freeing him up to apply his considerable talents elsewhere. Cliff brought with him a rare combination of intellectual gifts and practical skills and we shall miss his drive and commitment.

We say farewell to Suzanne Ottewell who has distinguished herself first as a councillor and more recently as parish clerk (whilst also editing this newsletter). Suzanne has a busy year ahead of her that will require her full attention and it is with unreserved gratitude that we thank both Cliff and her for their contributions and wish them both all success as they apply themselves to new challenges.

I'm pleased to report that we've appointed Ange Maloney as the new parish clerk. She already fulfils this role for Ringshall and Drinkstone and has hit the ground running, impressing all us councillors with her knowledge and application.

You may have noticed that we've replaced some of our decaying notice boards thanks to a generous grant secured for us by our former county councillor Kay Oakes and by indefatigable work by Cllr Alan Tomlinson to get it over the line.

There are potentially two big projects about to be kicked off. The first, the drawing up of a Community Emergency Plan, is covered later in the newsletter. I'm also delighted to report that we've at last secured a grant for a Neighbourhood Development Plan, contingent on us obtaining agreement of the geographic footprint such a plan would address. Both projects will need help and support from the wider community; and both could prove very enjoyable to get involved in. I'll be in touch …

With my best wishes.

Tony Kitson

Chair, Combs Parish Council
(cllr.t.kitson@combsparishcouncil.gov.uk)

St Marys Battisford



Grateful thanks from Stowmarket Food Bank for the several boxes of provisions contributed through our Harvest Festival service in October. Thanks, too, to Doreen for her spectacular dahlias and to Claire for arranging them so beautifully.

Our services in November will be: Morning Prayer on 1st at 11.00 and 9.00 a.m. Holy Communion on 8th , Remembrance Sunday, followed by the Service of Remembrance at 10.45 a.m.at the Wear Road British/American Memorial, Ringshall (park through Gate 3 on the perimeter track as directed) where wreaths will be laid and the names of those from the villages, lost in conflict, will be read out as we remember them.

In December, January and February our services will follow the usual pattern-----Morning Prayer at 11.00 a.m. on the first Sunday of the month and Holy Communion at 11.15 a.m. on the second. We join Ringshall at 9.00a.m. on the fourth Sunday.

“Carols by Candlelight” will be held, as ever, at 5.00p.m. on Christmas Eve (24th is a Thursday this year) and we would be delighted if you could join us, to start the festivities with the story of Christmas, told in the words of familiar carols.

Our Christmas Fayre will be at the Punch Bowl again on Saturday 12th December from 9.00a.m.---11.30. We would be most grateful for any contributions of cakes, tombola prizes, draw prizes or gifts, but most of all would welcome your presence to share a warm and sociable village “get-together” with hot drinks available from the bar.

Caroline will be making fresh wreaths as usual (in bio-degradable oasis) and would welcome pre-orders by 1st December if possible (Phone: 07547943160).

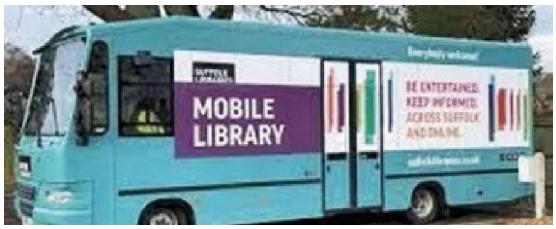






Mobile Post Office
Outside the Punch Bowl Inn every Friday
13.45—14.45

It provides all the facilities of a general post office



Ipswich Mobile Library
Outside St Mary's Church, Church Rd, Battisford @ 11.35 - 11.55
Every 4 weeks, on a Thursday
The next visits are
26th November
24th December
21st January
18th February
18th March
Further details can be found on https://suffolkcommunitylibraries.co.uk/visit/mobile-libraries/

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Letter from the Rector at Combs and Little Finborough



As I write this I've already seen many Christmas adverts on television so we're obviously hurtling towards the festive season! 2026 has been another busy year across the villages that make up our benefice of seven parish churches. And now we turn to one of the most important times of the Christian calendar, the birth of Jesus, on the 25th December.

Preparing for Christmas can be quite stressful and this year, while we're still experiencing a cost of living crisis, that pressure can overwhelm us. We can run ourselves into the ground trying to find the perfect present and preparing a Christmas feast for our family and friends. The most important thing to us though is time, time to spend with our loved ones, time to spend volunteering with those who are struggling, time just to be ourselves and to prepare to welcome the birth of Jesus.

We will be hosting a number of Christmas services across our seven parishes and there should be something for everyone. Details can be found elsewhere in the magazine but if you find the busyness of Christmas just too much, please do think about joining us at our candlelit, quiet service of Holy Communion at 6pm on Christmas Eve at St Mary's,Combs. We look forward to welcoming you at one of our Christingle, Carol, or Crib services so do please come and join us as we prepare to celebrate the coming of Jesus into the world.
Sending all good wishes to you all for a very happy Christmas and a peaceful new year.

With blessings
Revd Sarah

Combs & Battisford Fete

It's been a couple of years since our last Fete back in the summer of 2024. Since then, we have unfortunately had a number of long-term committee members step down and enjoy a well-deserved rest.

We have tried to get new committee members to keep the Fete alive, but sadly no one has stepped forward.

Due to this, the current committee would like to hold a meeting on Wednesday the 13th of January at 7:30 at the Punch Bowl.

We would like to invite past committee members along to discuss the future of the Fete and the current financial position.

If you have any questions prior to the meeting, please e-mail rachie.finn@googlemail.com

We look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

Best Wishes,

Combs and Battisford Fete Committee



Combs Green IP14 2NP
from 10am – 12 noon
on the 2nd Thursday of each month

Next visits are
12th November
10th December
14th January
11th February
11th March

At the Rural Coffee Caravan we know that isolation doesn't have to mean loneliness. To ward off loneliness people of all ages need connection.

We would like to offer you the opportunity for a catch up with your neighbours! Simply come for some company and we'll put the kettle on for you, providing free tea, coffee, biscuits or cake, and plenty of cheer. Or come and chat with us to see if there are any concerns we might be able to help you find answers to. We have access to a raft of information on local activities, services and organisations to help you stay happy, healthy, independent at home, and more connected to others in your area. All Welcome! We look forward to seeing you.

For further info, visit our website
www.ruralcoffeecaravan.org.uk
or call 01284 663472

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NEW FOR 2026!!

We are increasing ourhome and giftware selection! Throughout the year we will be adding locally sourced crafts and gifts, to compliment our existing collection of scented candles, DCUK ducks and natural blankets

Need a new bed or mattress?

We are extending our mattress and bed collection with names like Julian Bowen and Durabeds. High sleepers, Divans, Ottoman bases, Wooden and metal frames, we can offer them all.



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Combs Tannery, Tannery Road, Combs, IP14 2EN

Email; sales@pureflooring.co.uk

Dates for your diary

Further details can be found inside this newsletter

Every Monday	Zumba Classes at Battisford Village Hall
Every Wednesday	Snooker Club at Battisford Village Hall
Every Thursday	Yoga Classes at Battisford Village Hall
Every Friday	Mobile Post Office outside The Punch Bowl
2nd Monday of the month	Afternoon Tea at The Punch Bowl
2nd Monday of the month	Combs Parish Council Meeting
3rd Monday of the month	Dolly's Pizza Truck outside The Punch Bowl
1st Tuesday of the month	Knitting & Crochet Group at Battisford Village Hall
3rd Tuesday of the month	Battisford Parish Council Meeting (excl December)
3rd Tuesday of the month	Toasty Tuesday at Battisford Village Hall (from Oct – April)
2nd Thursday of the month	Rural Coffee Caravan at Combs Green

November 26

Monday	2nd	Gardening Club – Hellebores talk by Chris Wiley
Sunday	8th	Remembrance Sunday Services
Friday	13th	Cricket Club AGM
Tuesday	17th	Oaks Meadow AGM
Friday	20th	Cheese & Wine Evening at the Cricket Club
Saturday	21st	Battisford Village Hall Buffet Spice Night
Thursday	26th	Mobile Library outside St Mary's Church Battisford
Friday	27th	Wreath Making at Battisford Village Hall
Monday	30th	Community Emergency Plan deadline

December 26

Monday	7th	Gardening Club – Christmas Quiz at The Cricket Club
Wednesday	9th	Santa's Visit to Combs for Stowmarket Food Bank
Thursday	10th	Santa's Visit to Battisford for Stowmarket Food Bank
Saturday	12th	St Mary's Battisford Christmas Fayre at The Punch Bowl
Wednesday	16th	Christmas Carols at The Punch Bowl
Friday	18th	Christmas sing-along with Amber at The Punch Bowl
Friday	18th	Tea, Cakes & Merriment at Orchard Barn
Tuesday	22nd	Carols by Candlelight at Little Finborough Church
Thursday	24th	Quiet services of Holy Communion at St Mary's Combs
Thursday	24th	Carols by Candlelight at St Mary's Battisford
Thursday	24th	Mobile Library outside St Mary's Church Battisford
Friday	25th	Christmas Day Holy Communion at Little Finborough Church
Thursday	31st	Sparkle & Glam NY's Eve Party at The Punch Bowl

January 27

Friday	1st	NYD Walk from The Punch Bowl
Monday	4th	Gardening Club – Secret Lives of Garden Wildlife talk
Tuesday	19th	Battisford Play Area Questionnaire deadline
Thursday	21st	Mobile Library outside St Mary's Church Battisford
Friday	22nd	Gardening Club – Visit to NT Anglesey Abbey

February 27

Monday	1st	Gardening Club – Gardening with Grasses
Thursday	18th	Mobile Library outside St Mary's Church Battisford