

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

COVERING BATTISFORD, COMBS, LITTLE
FINBOROUGH AND MOATS TYE

March 2025



CONTENTS INCLUDING:

- Spring Litter Pick
- Easter Events
- Book Swap
- Green Energy Solutions Information event
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- And Much More

Don't forget the
clocks go
forward by 1
hour on Sunday
30th March

The next Community Newsletter is due out early July 2025, with a deadline of Friday 20th June for any articles.

If you have any comments, an article or photos you wish to be included in the next newsletter or are interested in advertising, please get in touch
communitynewsletter@btinternet.com

EMAIL: [COMMUNITYNEWSLETTER @BTINTERNET.COM](mailto:COMMUNITYNEWSLETTER@BTINTERNET.COM)



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 4th Thursday
The next visits are
20th March; 17th April; 15th May;
12th June and 10th July

Further details can be found on
suffolklibraries.co.uk

The New Highway Code

What does it mean for you?

Pedestrians have Highest Priority		All other road users should travel with the safety of pedestrians in mind
Car drivers must leave 1.5 metres when giving way to cyclists, and more when travelling at above 30mph		Car drivers should give priority to cyclists on roundabouts
Car drivers must leave 2 metres when passing horses and pedestrians walking in the road		Car drivers should not honk their horn or rev their engine when driving near horses
Car drivers must leave 1.5 metres when giving way to motorbikes, and more when travelling at above 30mph		Responsible to drive safely around horses cyclists and pedestrians
Car drivers should give way to pedestrians crossing at junctions		Use the "Dutch Reach" method when opening car doors
Large Vehicles have Lowest Priority		They should take care for the safety of every mode of transport above them on the chart

ENABLELAW

Please remember the Highway code
when driving on our country roads
and be respectful to other road users.

Great British Spring Clean

Join us for a Litter Pick

Battisford on SATURDAY 22nd MARCH –
meeting at the Village Green @ 9.30am

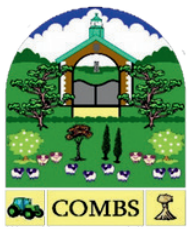
Combs on SUNDAY 23rd MARCH – meeting
at the Tannery car park @ 9.30am

Bags, grabbers and high viz jackets will be provided
but please bring your own if you have them

**Come and help for 1 – 1.5 hours. It's great fun; you get to meet
new people and it makes a huge difference to our villages.**

For more information please contact
clerk@battisford-pc.gov.uk Tel: 07864 742341 or
combsparishcouncil@gmail.com Tel: 07502 297884





COMBS PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman's Message - Combs

Dear Residents of Combs

What is it, if I may be nosy for a moment, that you like best about living in Combs? The relative peace and quiet? The important historical buildings like Model Farm, the Tannery and St Mary's Church? The varied styles of housing along the main roads? The countryside views? Experiencing the changes of the seasons in very tangible ways? Maybe it's simply the 'feel' of the place?

For me it's being able to walk out of my front door and, within 5 minutes, find myself in the countryside, surrounded by wonderful views and finding a tranquillity I struggle to locate elsewhere.

Whatever it is that we like about living here I imagine we'd all like to keep it much as it is. That isn't always possible as the national interests that I wrote about in the last edition of the Newsletter – housing and energy – will inevitably appear on our doorstep.

However, we needn't be unduly pessimistic. I also wrote that I thought that 2025 could prove to herald the start of a new chapter in the life of the parish. We councillors have been examining ways by which we can try to secure some control and attempt to shape those inevitable developments in ways we would prefer as a community. Please see our article on the opposite page where we propose a way that we, as a community, can try to protect those things in Combs that we all hold dear.

Tony Kitson
Chairman, Combs Parish Council
Email: combsparishcouncil@gmail.com



Reduce - Reuse - Recycle

Did you know that old clothes & shoes can be recycled at Battsford Village Hall?

And that both the Punch Bowl & the Cricket Club have recycling bins for all those empty glass bottles & jars?

Other ways of recycling can be found at midsuffolk.gov.uk



Residents of Combs: your Parish needs you . . .

Nationally, house building is accelerating and as we have seen in the areas to the north and east of Stowmarket rural areas have not been exempt.

How can we as residents take some control over the future of our Parish?

Your parish council has been examining how we can have a better say in how many, where, and what type of houses are built over a given time.

We believe the best way to protect our parish – its character, open spaces, historical buildings, heritage assets, important views and public rights of way – is the writing and approval by the local authority of something called a Neighbourhood Plan. This is a recognised official document that, if approved, carries actual legal force.

Producing such a plan will need support from across the community to gather supporting evidence and will ultimately require a clear expression of endorsement from residents for it to be approved.

We will be writing to all households in Combs with further information by late Spring. This is an important opportunity to shape our future and we welcome your involvement and support in this matter.

Your Parish Council

BOOK EXCHANGE

"Open a book, open your mind, and discover a world of wonders."

BOOK EXCHANGE

You may have noticed that other villages are using redundant telephone boxes as book exchanges or to house an AED defibrillator.

As there is no longer a phone box at Queens Close, the idea of using the bus shelter in Park Rd was suggested as a good spot to establish a book exchange.

We're starting it off with a lidded box to contain the books donated so far, so please have a look and add/take whatever you like.

If it grows beyond the box, we may find some shelves to use as well!

Please email combsparrishcouncil@gmail.com with any comments or questions

Battisford Parish Council

I am very pleased to report that, since our last Newsletter, Battisford has appointed a new Parish Clerk and co-opted a new Councillor.



We were pleased to receive several applications for the Clerk role. Following a selection process, Julia Stephens-Row was offered the position of Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer and took up her duties just before Christmas. Many of you will know Julia and will appreciate what an asset she will be to our Council.

At our November meeting, we were delighted to receive interest in our Councillor vacancy and were pleased to welcome Lucy Durrant to the Parish Council. We appreciate the benefits that will be brought through her professional skills and personal experience as a long-time resident of Battisford, which she and her family have supported in many ways over the years. Sadly, Erika Kerry has stepped down to better meet her family and career responsibilities, and many thanks are extended to Erika for sharing her expertise, knowledge, and enthusiasm over the past few years. This does mean that we have a further Councillor vacancy and it would be great to hear from you if you are interested in joining us.

Though Spring weather may still seem a little way off, we are again coordinating our early-year litter pick with our neighbours 'across the border'. Battisford's litter pick is scheduled for Saturday 22 March, commencing at 09:30 - start location is the Village Green car park- all volunteers very welcome. Combs' litter pick is Sunday 23 - so if you can't make ours, please support our neighbours.

Other recent activity included our annual Health and Safety/General Check of Battisford Cemetery. In addition to managing and providing administration functions for the Cemetery, the Parish Council is legally responsible for ensuring site health and safety, and that the Cemetery Regulations are followed. The inspection includes a functional check called the 'topple test', where headstones are assessed for security; unfortunately, a small number of memorials failed this test and were made safe. Whilst we understand the potential for upset to be caused, it is a recognised and necessary action. The Parish Clerk will be contacting relatives to advise of this outcome and ask for appropriate remedial action to be taken. During the check, a significant amount of rubbish was collected and removed. Our cemetery is rightly a place for remembrance, peace and quiet reflection and the Council endeavours to ensure that it maintains the Cemetery for that purpose. Natural flowers are preferred as tributes and memorials, and all wreaths and flowers, when past their best, should please be removed.

At our January meeting, Councillors debated the Parish Council precept and, whilst very conscious of continuing financial pressures on us all, agreed an increase in line with the annual inflation rate of 2.53%. This equates to an additional £1.37 for a Band D Council Tax bill.

Devolution is again on the political agenda and you will have doubtless seen and heard articles in the press and media. We can currently provide little information other than directing you to <https://consult.communities.gov.uk/lggc/norfolk-and-suffolk-devolution-consultation/>, but will continue dialogue with our County and District Councillors and pass on information as we receive it.

Lastly, representation was made at our January meeting regarding the possibility of implementing 20mph limits within certain areas of Battisford and Battisford Tye. The Parish Council agreed to investigate further with Suffolk County Highways; at this stage our investigations are simply exploratory and we have no firm idea of the scope or feasibility of the scheme. We would very much like to understand residents' views on potential 20mph zones; please contact the Parish Clerk, or any Councillor to let us know what you think.

Jon Cook - Chairman, Battisford Parish Council

joncook@battisford-pc.gov.uk

www.battisford-pc.gov.uk

clerk@battisford-pc.gov.uk



Oaks Meadow Update

This is the moment the meadow starts to awaken with the soft stirring whisper, 'Spring is here'. Dawn stretches its blissful golden rays earlier each day with the bird song melodies finding new heights of happiness to mark each day. The ground is thawing, although perhaps a little mulchy here and there still. The leaves begin to thicken within the hedgerow, blades of grass push through the soil. The bugs stretch their sleepy wings as flowers delicately unfold. The air is filled with the scent of renewal, as nature awakens from its long slumber, embracing the promise of the season ahead.

Winter often feels like the longest season for us, but it allowed us a moment to put down tools and put our energy into the plans for the new year... it also gave us the opportunity to lay a sparkly new car park with cycle stands now fit for use. With a big shout, cheer and thanks to Greenoak Contracts for their hard work and efficiency! Also, whilst on shout outs, we are incredibly grateful for the MSDC for funding 75% of the project from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Combs Parish Council for 25% of the cost from their CIL money. Thank you also to John Matthissen our District Councillor who funded the cycle stands from his locality budget.

Our orchard is growing beautifully. We have just been donated an additional Catherine apple tree from Richard Frost of the Suffolk Tree Network (we have 3 now). The Catherine apple tree was first discovered at the back of the Live and Let Pub in Park Road, Combs and is, therefore, native to the village.

Upcoming Event

Easter Event @ the Meadow

Sunday April 13th 2-4pm

Activities for the event will be: Easter egg hunt. Easter bonnet/top hat parade. Tombola. Cake stall. Face painting. Maypole dancing.

Please do join us, bring friends & family, open to all ages.

Finally, we have some very exciting news to share with Channel 5 filming and featuring Oaks Meadow project on their show 'Springtime on the Farm.' We are absolutely delighted to be a part of it and share the amazing work that everyone is putting into the project.

And on that note, we would like to thank you all for your ongoing support to Oaks Meadow. We are so proud of the growing community working on the project, for the time and effort so many of you have put in to create a place of solidarity to share within the village.

If you would like to be further involved in the Oaks Meadow project, please don't hesitate to get in touch. See you soon.

Website: www.oaksmeadow.org.uk

Email: oaksmeadow@gmail.com

The Oaks Meadow Project is a registered charity no. 192200



Battisford & District Cricket Club

As I am writing this we are looking forward to the first day of Spring- maybe this will be accompanied by warm and dry weather - fingers crossed- both of which is much needed for the preparation of the cricket ground before our first home game of the season on Saturday 26th April.

We have been busy at the club installing some solar panels- technically called photovoltaic panels and two electric charging points.

Thanks to Combs Parish Council, Suffolk Climate Change Partnership and the ECB for their funding which has made the project possible. Even with all the grey skies we are starting to see a return on this investment in relation to generating our own energy.

We are holding a Community Event on Saturday 12th April 10-11.30 to provide more information about this which is open to all to come along (see opposite page for more details)

We have a bottle bank which is available to the community to use from which we generate income so please do drop your bottles off anytime as you can access it even when the club is closed.

Over the winter we have held our traditional New Years Eve event - sadly without fireworks because of the weather. In February our curry and quiz night was very popular and we have a Paddy's pie and pint on 15th March with a full day of rugby. We are also holding a Burnt Mill Beer tasting and Fish and Chips on Friday 11th April 7-9pm. So if you are not a social member already do join us. It also means you can come along on match days as the bar is always open for alcoholic and non alcoholic beverages. Please check on the website when there are junior or senior games at home.

This is the ideal time of year to get involved in playing or starting to learn about cricket, we are always looking for new players for our men's, ladies and junior teams. Our senior training is on Wednesdays and our family friendly coaching is on a Friday 5.30pm - 6.30pm.

We had an amazing season last year with both our senior men's teams achieving promotion so we are looking to build on this.

Please use any of the following medium to contact the club and we look forward to a very successful season.

Website

<https://battisforddistrict.play-cricket.com/>

X @BattisforDCC

Facebook @BattisfordAndDistrictCricketClub

Or contact Julia Stephens-Row Administrator for BDCC on 07449310295



**Green Energy
Solutions information
event - Solar Panels
and EV Chargers**

**12th April 2025
10am - 11.30am**

**Battisford & District
Cricket Club**

The cricket club has been successful in receiving funding from the ECB, Combs Parish Council and Suffolk Climate Change Partnership towards the installation of Photovoltaic panels and 2 Electric Vehicle Chargers. We will be holding an information event for residents and businesses to find out about the benefits and to dispel some of the myths associated with these products. Come along and see different types of panels and hear from a resident about their experience of green energy.

Information on the Suffolk Solar Together initiative and the Cosy Homes scheme which is available to residents in Mid Suffolk will also be available. The savings made to the cricket club will also be shared.

Refreshments will be provided.

**For more information please contact
secretary@battisfordcricket.co.uk or 07449 310295**

The Punch Bowl Community Inn - Spring Update



Spring is in the air and there's plenty to look forward to at The Punch Bowl Inn, Battisford! From our upcoming May Bank Holiday Beer Festival to exciting new additions behind the bar, here's what's happening at your local....



May Bank Holiday Beer Festival – Friday 23rd to Monday 26th May 2025

Mark your calendars! Our much-loved Beer Festival is back this May Bank Holiday weekend! Running from Friday 23rd to Monday 26th May, we'll be showcasing an incredible selection of local ales and unique ciders, celebrating the best brews from our region and beyond. Whether you're a fan of hoppy pale ales, smooth bitters, or fruity ciders, there'll be something to tickle your taste buds!

And what's a beer festival without live music? We're thrilled to announce that Adam Thomas will beerperforming on Friday night, with more fantastic acts to be confirmed soon! Keep an eye on our socials for updates.



A big THANK YOU to the local shoots

January can be a tough month in the pub trade, but thanks to the continued support of our local shooting community, we had a fantastic start to the year! Your loyalty to The Punch Bowl means the world to us, and we truly appreciate your efforts in supporting your local pub.



Helles lager & exciting new bar snacks

We're always looking to bring you the best and our latest addition - the Burnt Mill Brewery Helles Lager has been a huge hit! Crisp, refreshing, and brewed with love, it's quickly become a customer favourite. If you haven't tried it yet, now's the time!

And that's not all! Our bar snack selection has also had an upgrade! Alongside our classic offerings, you can now enjoy:

- Bombay Mix
- Japanese Rice Cracker Mix
- 'Real' Pork Scratchings

All available at just £2.50 per serving – the perfect pairing for a pint.

PLUS starting from 17th March we are proud to host Dolly's Wood Fired Pizza Truck every third Monday of the month from 4.30 - 7.30pm. So don't worry about dinner for the family – come to the Bowl for delicious pizza at an affordable price



Congratulations to Zoe – our new Bar Supervisor!

We're incredibly proud to announce that Zoe has been promoted to Bar Supervisor! Her dedication, hard work, and commitment to The Punch Bowl have made a real impact, and we couldn't be happier to see her progress in her role. Thank you, Zoe, for everything you do! With so much happening at The Punch Bowl Inn, there's never been a better time to pop in for a pint, a chat, and some great community spirit. See you at the bar!

Follow us on:

Facebook: Punch Bowl Battisford Community Inn

Instagram: @the_punchbowlinn

St. Mary's Battisford

We were delighted to welcome over one hundred people to our Carols by Candlelight service at 5 p.m. on Christmas Eve, a really happy and joyful start to the Christmas celebrations! We were also fortunate to host the Christmas Morning service which is shared around the eight parishes on a rota basis. As it happens, on the day of the Census of Religious Worship of the year 1851, a similar congregation of 70 adults and 30 scholars was recorded at the Sunday Morning Service at St. Mary's Battisford. No indication if this was the usual number of the congregation, but we guiltily look on this record with un-Christian envy at a time when 10 is a good attendance for us. We may have to share Dan, but in that Census year of 1851 the Vicar of Battisford was Revd. Edward Paske, who lived in, and took services at Creting St. Peter and never set foot here at all ! He paid (very poorly) one John Sammons as curate to look after Battisford, Gipping (10 miles away) and Needham Market Grammar School..... so we count our blessings in 2025!

It doesn't help our numbers, as noted by Simon Knott when writing about St. Mary's, that "much of Battisford is closer to the parish churches of Little Finborough and Ringshall than it is to its own parish church." It IS still the village church, however, available to all for weddings, baptisms and funerals, always open for a quiet few minutes in the bustle of life, or a quick prayer for someone in need. We work hard to keep it that way, although maintenance of such an old building, insurance and heating costs, rise for us as for everyone else.

You may not wish to attend services (though you'd be so very welcome if you did!) but you could still support us by becoming a "Friend of St Mary's". An annual donation, however small, would be very gratefully received.....just contact me for a form. (Caroline : 07547943160).

Our services for March may already have happened when you receive this newsletter but here are some dates in case:

2nd March 1st Sunday Morning Prayer 11.00 a.m.

5th March Ash Wednesday, Holy Communion 7.00 p.m. at Great Bricett

9th March 2nd Sunday Holy Communion 11.15 a.m. National Day of Reflection after Covid 19. Minutes silence at 12 noon.

23rd March 4th Sunday Holy Communion 9.00 a.m. join with Ringshall.

30th March 5th Sunday 8 Parishes Holy Communion 10 a.m. at Ringshall.

April

6th April 1st Sunday Morning Prayer 11.00 a.m.

13th April 2nd Sunday (Palm Sunday) Holy Communion 11.15a.m.

8 PARISHES EASTER SERVICES:

17th April Maundy Thursday Holy Communion Offton 7.00 p.m.

18th April Good Friday An Hour Before the Cross Great Bricett 2.00p.m.

20th April Easter Day Holy Communion - Flowton 8.00 a.m. / Barking 11.00 a.m.

May

4th May 1st Sunday Morning Prayer 11.00 a.m.

11th May 2nd Sunday Holy Communion 11.15 a.m.

25th May 4th Sunday Holy Communion 9.00 a.m. join with Ringshall.

June

1st June 1st Sunday Morning Prayer 11.00 a.m.

8th June 2nd Sunday Holy Communion 11.15 a.m.

22nd June 4th Sunday Holy Communion 9.00 a.m. join with Ringshall.

Easter is late this year, Easter Day being 20th. April. This is because the date is determined by noting the first full moon on or after 21st March and celebrating Easter on the next available Sunday following it. (21st March is the Spring Equinox as fixed by the Church.) The Roman Catholic church has expressed interest in a fixed date each year....how agreement could be reached by all the bodies involved in such a decision has not been suggested!!

Regional Devolution

Dear Residents

You may have read that both Suffolk and Norfolk County Councils have elected to be fast tracked into the government's proposal to abolish county, borough and district councils. These will be replaced new multiple Unitary Council arrangements all under the umbrella of a directly elected mayor who will oversee a strategic Combined County Authority. The geographic boundaries of the unitary authorities have not yet been identified.

These changes will not directly impact Parish or Twin councils but there will likely be some knock-on effects at some point.

You can find out more at:

<https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/devolution>

Importantly, this page contains a link to a consultation process whereby all residents have until 11:50pm on 13th April to have their say.

Jon Cook and Tony Kitson

Chairmen, Battisford and Combs Parish Councils



PURE

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Come and visit us at our new show room in
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to book an appointment

We have Carpets, Vinyls, Wood and Laminate flooring as well as the impressive Luxury vinyl tiles.

We also have Beds – Divans, Ottomans, Wooden & metal frames, Novelty & Bunk beds as well as a range of mattresses, toppers and protectors to suit all budgets!



Pure Flooring, Combs Tannery, Tannery Road, Combs, Stowmarket, IP14 2EN

Battisford Village Hall

**BATTISFORD VILLAGE HALL IS AVAILABLE FOR HIRE
DAYTIMES AND EVENINGS
7 DAYS A WEEK**

Join Us in Supporting Our Village Hall

Our village hall stands as a vital hub for local residents, providing a space for events, meetings, and activities that bring us together. To ensure this resource continues to thrive, we hold monthly meetings to discuss essential topics such as hall hire, finances, maintenance, and organizing events that benefit everyone in the area.

Our Mission

Our mission is to keep the hall running smoothly and make sure it remains a relevant and valuable asset for all residents. We believe that a strong community is built on the contributions of its members, and we are dedicated to fostering a welcoming environment where everyone feels included and valued.

Call for Volunteers

To achieve our goals, we are eagerly seeking new volunteers from the local community. Your involvement can make a significant difference, no matter your age or experience. Whether you have been a resident for a lifetime or have just moved to the area, your unique perspective and skills are exactly what we need.

Why Volunteer?

- **Make a Difference:** Your efforts will help maintain and enhance a space that serves as the heart of our community.
- **Connect with Neighbours:** Volunteering is a great way to meet new people and strengthen ties within the community.
- **Learn and Grow:** Gain new skills, share your knowledge, and take on roles that match your interests and abilities.
- **Have Fun:** Participate in and help organize events that bring joy and entertainment to our neighbours.

How to Get Involved

We meet once a month to discuss various aspects of the hall's operation and to plan future events. If you are interested in joining us, please reach out. We would love to hear from you and discuss how you can contribute to the ongoing success of our village hall.

Contact Us:

Feel free to get in touch with us at battisfordvhmc@gmail.com or call 01449 674852 to learn more about how you can get involved. Your participation is not only welcome but greatly appreciated.

Together, let's ensure our village hall remains a vibrant and essential resource for everyone. We look forward to hearing from you!

Clubs

Snooker Club
Yoga
Gardening Club

Facilities

Indoor Bowls
Table Tennis
1 large function room
Kitchen
Outside area
Internet
Projector
Stage, Chairs & Tables
Holds 80 max capacity

Available for hire
Monday - Sunday

Private Parties
Weddings, Christenings &
Funerals
Clubs
Meetings
Training

Contact Us

Battisford Village Hall
Straight Road
Battisford
Suffolk
IP14 2HP

01449 674852

battisfordvhmc@gmail.com

battisfordvillagehall.co.uk



Pride in your Place Grants

Grants between £250-£5,000 are available for capital projects that enable community groups to enhance their local area and environment, explore local identity and heritage, and engage in activities such as community clean ups

Combs Parish Council is supporting the formation of an Action Group in order to make an application for this grant.

Would you like to join the Pride in your Place Action Group?

Do you have some ideas that may be included in the PiyP Application?

If so, don't hesitate and contact: combsparishcouncil@gmail.com

Help make Combs even more beautiful!



MaxwellBrown

Independent Property Agents

T : 01449 673948

E : sales@maxwellbrownea.co.uk



As long term residents of Combs, the owners of Maxwell Brown are well placed to advise buyers and tenants of the benefits of living in our lovely area. We provide a lettings management service for many properties in Combs & Battisford and would be delighted to speak to you if you are considering selling or letting your property, or have any other property requirements.

Your truly local agents for all things property! Call our friendly team for a free, no obligation sales or lettings valuation.

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Battisford and District Gardening Club

The November talk had some good ideas about designing a border and six teams enjoyed the great December Christmas Quiz and social. There is no meeting in January, but a group went to see the beautiful winter garden at Anglesey Abbey, which is stunning in January and February. Jaime Blajke gave an amusing and very informative talk about garden maintenance in February. Who knew that soap deters muntjacs?

If you would like to find out more about the club and become a member, please drop Denis an email to denis@wicking.me. We have a variety of talks and outings to enjoy, all for an annual subscription of just £15.00. All talks in the village hall start at 7.30pm with drinks and biscuits included. You will be made very welcome at this friendly and informal club.

Battisford and District Gardening Club programme March to December 2025

Monday 3rd March: Barbara Seagall. The Secret Gardens of East Anglia.

Monday 7th April: Creating a Pollinator Garden. Tony Brown.

Monday 12th May: My Family and Other Irises. Lucy Skellorn.

Monday 2nd June: Visit to Lillesley Barn and The Old Gardens.

Monday 7th July: Visit to Smallwood Farmhouse Garden.

No meeting in August.

Monday 1st September: Mini Fun Show and AGM.

Monday 6th October: Roses. Simon White (Peter Beales)

Monday 3rd November: Companion Planting for a Balanced Garden. Ian Bedford.

Saturday 29th November: Christmas Wreath Making.

Monday 1st December: Christmas Quiz and Social.



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Letter from the Rector at Combs and Little Finborough

At long last there are small signs of spring appearing with snowdrops and daffodils popping up and daytime hours slowly extending, even though at times it can feel that the dark winter days are never-ending. During this time of year it's all too easy to hunker down and miss out on seeing our families and friends but Thankfully, across our benefice we have a number of regular events that can help with loneliness and isolation:

- Meet Up Mondays, held at Combs Church Hall, Poplar Hill, Combs Ford from 10.30am to 12.30pm. An opportunity to come together with others for tea and coffee, cake and a chat on the second and fourth Mondays of the month. If you would like further details please ring Revd Alison on 07745 546071 or 01449 541794
- Regular coffee mornings are held at Trinity Hall, Onehouse on a Wednesday morning from 10.30am to 12pm. Prior to these events a short service of Holy Communion takes place and after that the tables come out, together with the tea, coffee and cake and the chance to catch up with friends and neighbours
- The Rural Coffee Caravan exists to help rurally isolated people in Suffolk access services and information to improve their lives, health and wellbeing, and to bring people together, empowering and strengthening rural communities. They set up in 2003 to tackle rural isolation and promote community spirit. The project was the brainchild of the Revd Canon Sally Fogden who felt very strongly that there was a need to do something to combat the stress of rural isolation. The service is free and accessible to everyone and the good news is that they visit one of our parishes every month. On Thursday 13th March, Thursday 10th April, Thursday 8th May, and Thursday 12th June, between 10am and 12pm, you'll find the Rural Coffee Caravan at Combs Green, Combs and this is what to expect from their visit:
 - We will park up, set out tables and chairs and get the kettle on!
 - We provide free refreshments and always a warm and friendly welcome!
 - Our team and our volunteers love a good chat, so don't worry about coming on your own, there's always someone to talk to
 - We have access to a raft of information on local and national agencies, organisations, activities and support services. If there's something on your mind then chat with us. If you've questions about what's available locally for you, we'll help you find the answers

So I hope that over the next few months you'll be able to appreciate those early signs of spring, the warmer weather and enjoy meeting family, friends and neighbours at one of the regular social events that take place across our benefice of 7 parishes.

With blessings and all good wishes
Revd Sarah



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

Next visits are
10th April
8th May
12th June
10th July

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, call the HQ on 01379 855338 or Diana on 07494 572153
or see the website www.ruralcoffeecaravan.org.uk

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Announcing *Skulduggery in Stowmarket*, Saturday April 26th 2025



Stowmarket Library's Skulduggery team is excited to announce this year's fast-approaching literary crime festival.

Join us at Stowmarket Library on Saturday 26th and meet our guest authors: Barbara Nadel, Kate Rhodes, Tom Mead, Sophie Morton-Thomas, Alison Bruce, & Bridget Walsh.

Tickets are £5 per author, or £15 for all-day Saturday. Light refreshments are available throughout the day.

Book your place:

www.suffolklibraries.co.uk/resources/skulduggery-in-stowmarket



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Photo Credit to Beckie Egan Photography

Welcome to Infinite Potential Fitness

We are Beth & Sam, we run a Personal Training Space at the Combs Tannery. We like to call it HQ. We offer Small Group Personal Training, Personal Training, Stowmarket Bootcamp and Hyrox Training. We love to support members on their fitness journey and help people in the local community. Everything we provide is coach lead so you never have to be unsure of a movement.

If you're looking to start or get back into fitness, please contact us as we would love to help. Welcome to all ages and abilities.

HQ, The Glovers Building, Combs Tannery, Tannery Road, Combs Stowmarket, IP14 2EN.
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Easter Celebrations at Little Finborough Church

EASTER EGG HUNT – Saturday 12th April at 10am until noon The hunt will be in the old churchyard at Little Finborough Church. Entry £3.50 per hunter. There will be other activities for children too. Children must be accompanied by responsible adults. Refreshments will be available.

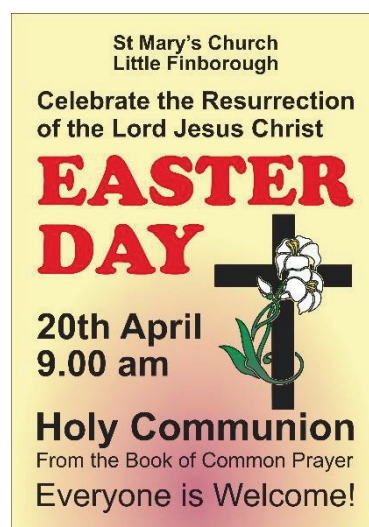
PALM SUNDAY PROCESSION AND SERVICE – Sunday 13th April.

Procession at 2.30pm, Service at 3pm

Meet at the Punch Bowl Inn in Battisford Tye to walk to the church. The short service will start at 3pm, and be followed by light refreshments. All, especially children accompanied by responsible adults, will be most welcome to join us for the procession, the Service or both.

EASTER DAY HOLY COMMUNION – Sunday 20th April at 9am

Start Easter Day with a traditional service of Holy Communion, celebrating Jesus' resurrection and saving grace. The service will be followed by light refreshments. Everyone will be most welcome!



Key Contacts

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 Matthison 01449 258894

County Councillor

Kay Oakes: 07702 339971 or 07724 700695

kay.oakes@suffolk.gov.uk

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

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Orchard Barns News

Our wonderful new Education Building (the reinstated 1580s Longhouse) has been a long-term project for all of us at Orchard Barn. Although not yet complete, we were able to hold our first get together inside it just before Christmas, with the new Masonry Stove providing warmth. Below left shows all that was left standing of the Longhouse in 2010.

It's quite a thought that the 1580s Longhouse was first built using timbers which may have started life locally as acorns in the early 1500s. It feels very satisfying that some of the 500

year old timbers have been repaired on training courses and put back where they used to be in the new building, to continue the job for which they were originally felled!

The craftsmen from the 1500s would certainly recognise the traditional tools and methods we have used in reinstating the Longhouse. Here Brian is repairing one of the original corner posts.



If you would like to try working with

old timbers, we have a Timber Frame Repair Course on offer on 27 June.

Our Volunteer Working Parties continue on Wednesdays and Fridays 9.00 – 1.00. New Volunteers welcome.

To find out more about us and what we do, or to volunteer with us, take a look at our website

<http://www.orchardbarn.org.uk>, call Sarah on 07766 054042 or email her at sarah.orchardbarn@gmail.com.



Orchard Barn, Ringshall, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 2LY
Learning from the past how to build a greener future

A request to all walkers and runners

We have lots of lovely off road walks around our villages which are very popular especially with our furry friends and their humans companions.

It's inevitable that the footpath signs get damaged over time and we would like to encourage everyone to report any damaged or missing footpath signs to Suffolk County Council. A photo and the What3Words location would be very helpful!

It's easy to report online at <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/public-rights-of-way-in-suffolk/report-a-public-right-of-way-issue>



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Monday Teas at the Punchbowl Inn 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.



A donation towards costs is appreciated. Come along and taste the cakes!



Hadleigh Community Transport Group

462 bus to Stowmarket each Tuesday and Friday excluding bank holidays. A minibus service that runs to a time table, so no need to pre-book. Below is an extract of the timetable, more information available on their website <https://bustimes.org/operators/hadleigh-community-transport>

Departs

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------|
| • Battisford Punch Bowl | 1018 |
| • Little Finborough Moat Farm | 1022 |
| • Combs, Queens Close | 1024 |
| • Combs, Bus Shelter | 1025 |

Arrives Stowmarket Argos 1033

Departs Stowmarket

Bury Street Card Centre 1240

Arrives

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------|
| • Combs, opp Bus Shelter | 1248 |
| • Combs. opp Queens Close | 1250 |
| • Little Finborough Moat Farm | 1252 |
| • Battisford Punch Bowl | 1254 |

Bus passes accepted. Cash fares paid to the driver on boarding. Call for more info 01473 826242 or see website <https://bustimes.org/operators/hadleigh-community-transport>

Further details can be found inside this newsletter

Date

Every Wednesday
Every Thursday
Every Friday
Wednesdays & Fridays

Event

Snooker Club at Battisford Village Hall
Yoga in Battisford Village Hall 6.30pm – 7.30 pm
Mobile Post Office outside the Punch Bowl
Volunteer Working Parties at Orchard Barns

March

Saturday	15 th	Cricket Club – Paddy's Pie & Pint with Rugby!
Monday	17 th	Dolly's Wood Fired Pizza Truck at The Punch Bowl
Tuesday	18 th	Battisford Parish Council Meeting
Thursday	20 th	Mobile Library outside St Mary's Church Battisford
Saturday	22 nd	Battisford Litter Pick
Sunday	23 rd	Combs Litter Pick
Sunday	30 th	Start of British Summer Time (and Mothering Sunday!)

April

Thursday	10 th	Rural Coffee Caravan, Combs Green
Friday	11 th	Cricket Club – Burnt Mill Beer Tasting & Fish and Chips
Saturday	12 th	Easter Egg Hunt at Little Finborough Church
Saturday	12 th	Green Energy Solutions Information Event
Sunday	13 th	Palm Sunday Procession & Service at Little Finborough Church
Sunday	13 th	Easter Activities at Oaks Meadow
Sunday	13 th	Deadline for Regional Devolution Consultation
Monday	14 th	Afternoon Tea at the Punch Bowl
Monday	14 th	Combs Parish Council Meeting
Thursday	17 th	Mobile Library outside St Mary's Church Battisford
Sunday	20 th	Easter Day Holy Communion at Little Finborough Church
Monday	21 st	Dolly's Wood Fired Pizza Truck at The Punch Bowl
Tuesday	22 nd	Battisford Parish Council Meeting
Saturday	26 th	Skulduggery at Stowmarket Library

May

Thursday	8 th	Rural Coffee Caravan, Combs Green
Monday	12 th	Afternoon Tea at The Punch Bowl
Monday	12 th	Combs Parish Council Meeting & Annual Parish Meeting
Monday	12 th	Gardening Club – My Family and Other Irises
Thursday	15 th	Mobile Library outside St Mary's Church Battisford
Monday	19 th	Dolly's Wood Fired Pizza Truck at The Punch Bowl
Tuesday	20 th	Battisford Parish Council Meeting & Annual Parish Meeting
Friday to Monday	23 rd – 25 th	Bank Holiday Beer Festival at The Punch Bowl

June

Monday	2 nd	Gardening Club – Visit to Lillesley Barn & The Old Gardens
Monday	9 th	Afternoon Tea at The Punch Bowl
Monday	9 th	Combs Parish Council Meeting
Thursday	12 th	Rural Coffee Caravan, Combs Green
Thursday	12 th	Mobile Library outside St Mary's Church Battisford
Monday	16 th	Dolly's Wood Fired Pizza Truck at The Punch Bowl
Tuesday	17 th	Battisford Parish Council Meeting
Friday	27 th	Timber Frame Repair Course at Orchard Barns
Friday	27 th	Deadline for articles for the July newsletter

July

Monday	7 th	Gardening Club – Visit to Smallwood Farmhouse Garden
Thursday	10 th	Rural Coffee Caravan, Combs Green
Thursday	10 th	Mobile Library outside St Mary's Church Battisford
Monday	14 th	Afternoon Tea at The Punch Bowl
Monday	14 th	Combs Parish Council Meeting
Tuesday	15 th	Battisford Parish Council Meeting
Monday	21 st	Dolly's Wood Fired Pizza Truck at The Punch Bowl