



CATSFIELD PARISH NEWS

MAY 2026

Welcome to our May 2026 newsletter!

Want to stay in the loop? Just let the Clerk know and we'll add you to our mailing list. Got ideas or topics you'd love to see next time? We're all ears—please tell us what matters to you.



TO ALL RESIDENTS OF

CATSFIELD PARISH

ANNUAL PARISH ASSEMBLY

ALL WELCOME!

 **THURSDAY 14TH MAY**

 **19:00**

 **AT CATSFIELD VILLAGE HALL**

 Come along to hear what the Parish has been doing, **share your views** and help **shape the future** of our parish.

Your Parish, Your Say!

 For more information contact: **clerk@catsfield-pc.gov.uk**

🌟 CATSFIELD PARISH ASSEMBLY – WHY YOU SHOULD COME ALONG! 🌟

📍 Catsfield Village Hall

📅 Thursday 14th May

🕒 7:00pm

If you live in Catsfield Parish, this is *your* chance to hear what's happening locally, ask questions, and help shape the future of our community.

? What's a Parish Assembly?

It's a meeting open to *all residents* — not just councillors.

- ✓ Hear updates on local projects
- ✓ Share ideas and concerns
- ✓ Ask questions directly to your Parish Councillors
- ✓ Play an active role in local decisions

📌 This Year's Key Topic: Protecting Our Dark Skies

Light pollution affects wildlife, sleep, and the rural character of our parish.

Find out:

- Why becoming a Dark Sky community matters
 - What the Parish Council is doing
- How small changes at home can make a big difference
 - An update on speed reduction measures

🌱 Greener Spaces for Catsfield

Updates on:

- Making the Sports Pavilion more sustainable
- Enhancing open spaces for nature and community use

🤝 Your Voice Matters

Whether you care about the environment, local facilities, or simply want to stay informed — this meeting is for you.

Come along. Have your say.
Be part of shaping Catsfield's future.

All residents welcome.

**** CATSFIELD CLUBS ****



Catsfield Social Club

If you are free on a Wednesday evening between 7pm and 10pm why not come and join a bunch of friendly people in the village hall for a variety of games. They include Wii, table tennis and board games - or just come and chat, with tea and biscuits thrown in and wine once a month, all for just £2.

The Wombles

The Wombles headed out a few weeks ago and concentrated on the main road up to and including Horns Corner, the block around The Green and the Recreation Ground. We made a good dent in the litter thrown from passing cars. We are trying a mixture of weekend and mid week litter picks to see if we can attract some more members.

It would be great to have some new volunteers to assist us in keeping the village litter free. Please give your contact details to the Parish Clerk if you are interested in joining us. We would warmly welcome you. It's a great way to make new friends and exercise whilst achieving something positive as well. You can do as little or as much as you like and all equipment is provided. All you need is sturdy footwear and some gloves.

We prioritise safety and are insured. Any children do need to have a responsible adult with them. Please join us if you want to give something to your community.

Victoria Robertson

CADS

We hope there will be Panto this year. Vanessa is also hoping to be back on stage which will be marvelous. It takes people to put on a show. CADS needs more actors and support crew to make this happen. We know the village loves the Christmas Panto so please join in on or off stage to get out Panto show up and running again. If you can help backstage or have that little twinkle of an idea of being on stage please contact vanessafrancis@btinternet.com

We are a friendly bunch join in the fun!

A Murder Mystery on 20th June at the Village Hall is penciled in. More to follow from CADS soon.

Catsfield Community Gardeners

Catsfield Horticultural Society has recently been rebranded as Catsfield Community Gardeners. Whilst at present still affiliated to the Royal Horticultural Society our aim is to become more rooted in the village community and to gain enthusiasm for all things associated with plants and gardening. Following our successful and well attended village Spring Show there were a lot of things we shall continue with but we are also thinking of coffee mornings for seed, book and bulb swaps, strategically placed planters, growing competitions for children and adults - well, to be honest we are seeking suggestions for events or activities that would inspire people to become involved in joining Catford Community Gardeners and help us to further in enthuse villages in their contributions to village life. Any suggestions or offers of help please message janetwoolf55@aol.com

UPDATE FROM CATSFIELD CRICKET CLUB

PRE SEASON ACTIVITIES

The season start looms large on the horizon with the first match being away at Ashburnham on Sunday 3 May and the first home match being at The Field versus Mountfield on Sunday 17 May – the first anniversary of the author's wrist being broken by the Mountfield 'quickie'! Ouch!

The first pre-season activity has been the installation of posters at various locations around the village, namely the Village Hall notice board, the notice board near the shop, the shop window itself, in the White Hart (thanks Charlie!), The Field entrance gate and the Pavilion. There are two posters, both of which have been put up on the village social media page. The first is a list of home fixtures and dates. The second is a recruitment poster giving a name and means of contact for people interested in playing.

The second pre-season activity has been the installation of the club banner to the west of The Field entrance gate. The plan was to install this at the beginning of the 2025 season, but I was severely incapacitated by the broken wrist so the work was postponed until spring 2026. Thanks must go to club members and supporters Jules Buss, Rob Vint and Mitch Mattocks for doing all the work – I just plan and supervise as the wrist still isn't 'match fit' for such tasks.

The third and most onerous pre-season task that has started has been preparation of the square, which has really suffered from being exposed to the elements over such a wet winter. The ground is extremely bumpy and it's going to take some intense rotary cutting, verti-cutting and rolling over the next three weeks to bring it up to a condition where it can be finally prepared using the Masport cylinder mower. The process has already started along with spreading of grass seed and 'weed and feed', all of which will have to be watered believe it or not as what was a 'bog' up until a few weeks ago has suddenly turned into a rock-hard surface. Fortunately the evenings have been drawing out so this and the other tasks can now be tackled over a longer period each week and with more people. Thanks so far must go to Junior Grounds People Mitch Mattocks and Barbara Cook for their invaluable assistance.

The aforementioned recruitment posters and banner prompt me to remind readers to remember a continuing series of pieces throughout 2025 to date about the Club and that only a couple of people from the village played in any match during the 2025 season.

It still begs the obvious question, if no one from the village plays for the village cricket club, then why have a village cricket club at all?

It would be wonderful to welcome people from the village to play and enjoy a game of 'social' cricket on a Sunday afternoon. People of any ability, age and experience would be most welcome. Rest assured that you would not be expected to play week-in, week-out, but on a 'when available' basis. Very few people do play every week and the club can usually cope with that, but it would be nice to have a bit of 'headroom' in that respect.

Match fees are modest, ten pounds for adults and five for juniors covers playing expenses, in play and tea-time refreshments. There is no annual subscription.

Disappointingly, since these pieces have been appearing in the PN over the past few years or so, no one has expressed an interest in playing via this outlet. But it's never too late, so if you are interested, then please contact club vice chair, Keith Cook, via mobile 07916 717870 or email keith.cook@btinternet.com.

The Club looks forward to hearing from you in time for the first home match of the 2026 season, on Sunday 17 May versus Ashburnham CC, with a two o'clock start. A full fixture list of home fixtures is available on request to Keith Cook (details above) and has been posted on the Parish Notice Board and at strategic places around the village in advance of the season.

Keith Cook
April 2026



CATSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL FINANCES

The 2025/26 financial year has now concluded, and the internal audit by Mulberry & Co is scheduled for the 1st May 2026. The audited documents will be reviewed and formally approved by Councillors at the Parish Council meeting on the 21st May 2026.

The Parish Council remained broadly within its approved budget. While there was some overspending due to unforeseen projects, this was covered by existing reserves. Government guidance recommends that Parish Councils maintain general reserves equivalent to approximately 50% of annual expenditure. The Council will therefore review and gradually increase its reserves over the coming years to align with this guidance.

The Parish Council continues to actively review Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds and is looking forward to progressing a number of projects during the 2026/27 financial year.

All financial information is available online, and the Clerk remains available to respond to any queries.

WAYS TO REDUCE OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT AND HELP THE ENVIRONMENT



You are likely to already be doing the following but you might identify another to consider from this checklist:

- Remember to take bags to the supermarket
- Carry water in a re-usable container
- Wait until the dishwasher is full before operating
- Swap food wrapping for re-usable tubs
- Mow the lawn less frequently and provide wildflower areas
- Swap books and seeds with friends
- Car share
- Use the microwave for cooking – low energy use

How we can give nature a helping hand

Providing water habitats

Providing water in gardens is one of the most effective, simple, and high-impact actions for increasing biodiversity, offering critical resources for birds, insects, and mammals.

A water source, such as a pond, birdbath, or container, turns a garden into a functioning, connected ecosystem that supports wildlife throughout the year.

A report commissioned by the Water Friendly Farming project has demonstrated that ponds are a critical part of our freshwater system. Changes in pond biodiversity had a key impact on the total freshwater biodiversity in the catchment. Surprisingly ponds support a wider variety of species than rivers or lakes.



The link to the journal is here:

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0006320719310626>.

Water for biodiversity has many benefits by providing:

- Hydration, particularly for birds, mammals, and beneficial insects like bees, moths and butterflies
- Breeding grounds for amphibians including frogs, toads and newts and aquatic insects such as dragonflies and damselflies. These are crucial to a balanced ecosystem.
- Nature's own pest control, as creatures like frogs, toads, and dragonflies feed on garden pests such as aphids and slugs, reducing the need for chemicals.
- Habitats that support a high diversity of species, including birds that use them to bathe and remove parasites.
- Stepping stones that allow wildlife, particularly amphibians and mobile insects, to move between larger, isolated habitats.
- A wonderful way of observing and capturing the beauty of our natural environment.



Helping our Garden Birds

The latest Big Garden Birdwatch reveals that the humble House Sparrow has retained top spot this year. Whilst it is good news for our cheeky and much-loved little bird, in terms of numbers, it is 64% down since the first Birdwatch in 1979.



I know I am not alone in enjoying feeding the birds and watching the different species that visit our gardens. However, the latest advice from the RSPB is to refrain from feeding our garden birds between May and the end of October.

Recent research weighed up the pros and cons of feeding during the summer months, and concluded that during summer and autumn, there's a higher risk of a disease called trichomonosis spreading. This is a highly contagious disease and can spread where birds gather in large numbers such as at bird feeders. It's also at a time when there are more natural foods available to birds, such as seeds and insects.

Some species, including Greenfinches, are particularly affected and in serious decline because of disease. When the Big Garden Birdwatch started in 1979 Greenfinches were at number seven in the top ten birds seen. Now they are 18th.



The RSPB is asking us to make two simple changes to the way we feed our birds.

- Between 1 May to 31 October avoid feeding seeds or peanuts. Restrict feeding to mealworms, fatballs or suet.
- Between 1 November to 30 April feed a full range of bird foods, including seeds and peanuts.

We all want to help birds and make our gardens or outdoor spaces a place where all wildlife can thrive.

Cllr Diane Wilson
April 2026

CAN YOU HELP SUPPORT CATSFIELD VILLAGE HALL?

Our Village Hall is at the heart of the community - but we need your help to keep it running.

We're currently looking for volunteers to join the Hall Committee, including key roles:

- Chairman
- Treasurer
- Buildings Officer
- General committee members

You don't need prior experience - just a willingness to help and be part of keeping this important community space going.

 To find out more, come along to our **Open Meeting:**

 Saturday 9th May

 11:30am

 At the Village Hall

This is a relaxed, informal chance to meet the current team and see how you could get involved.

Even a small contribution of your time can make a big difference.

Please come along or get in touch if you'd like to help support the future of our Village Hall!

Catsfield Village Hall Committee



Catsfield Barn Dance

With the amazing Catsfield Steamers

**Saturday 1 August from 7pm
Great Park Farm, Horns Corner,
Catsfield, TN33 9DT**

**Licensed bar & pizza van serving wood
fired pizza, cooked fresh to order and
available to purchase on the night.**



**Tickets
in advance:
£10 adult £5 child
family (2 adults 2
children) £25
On the night
£15 adult £10 child
family £35
Under 6 FREE**

**Ticket info please call 07421 456568
or email scottlavocah@gmail.com**

Catsfield Village

Fete

Saturday 1 August

12.30 - 3.00pm

Catsfield Playing Field

Entry: Adults £1 Children 50p



- Live music
- Bottle tombola
- Tea & cakes
- BBQ & Licensed bar
- Children's activities
- Grand prize draw
- On site parking
- And much more

Headline sponsor

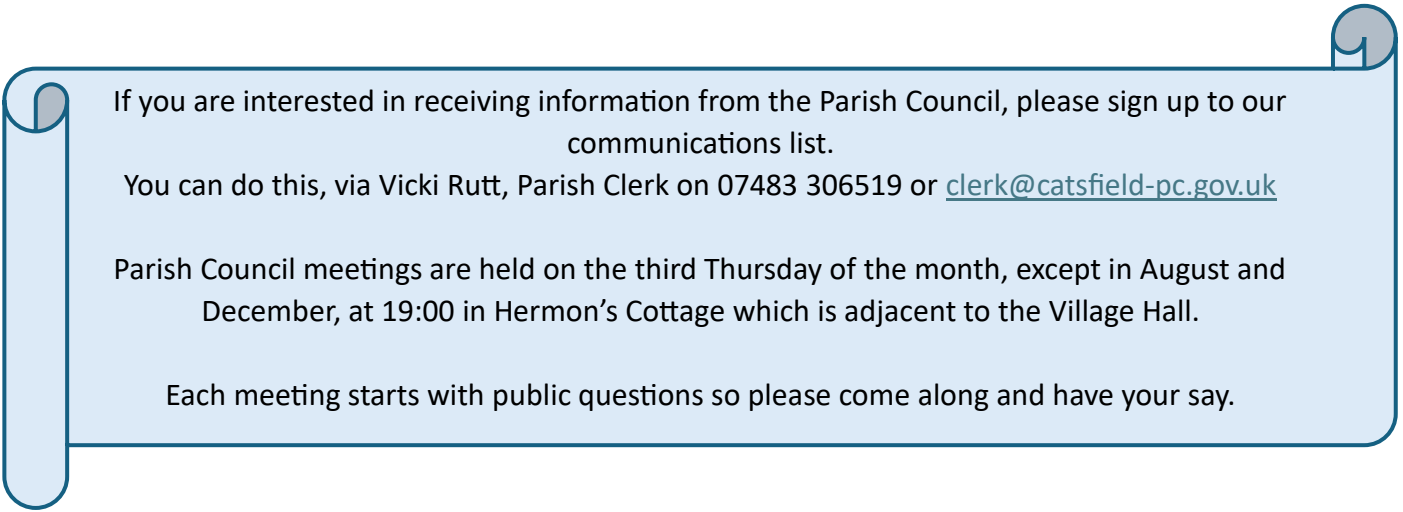


BUILDING THE FUTURE - RESTORING THE PAST





**We have a new Parish Council website,
this can be found at
<http://www.catsfield-pc.gov.uk>
Please go and take a look.**



If you are interested in receiving information from the Parish Council, please sign up to our communications list.

You can do this, via Vicki Rutt, Parish Clerk on 07483 306519 or clerk@catsfield-pc.gov.uk

Parish Council meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month, except in August and December, at 19:00 in Hermon's Cottage which is adjacent to the Village Hall.

Each meeting starts with public questions so please come along and have your say.