

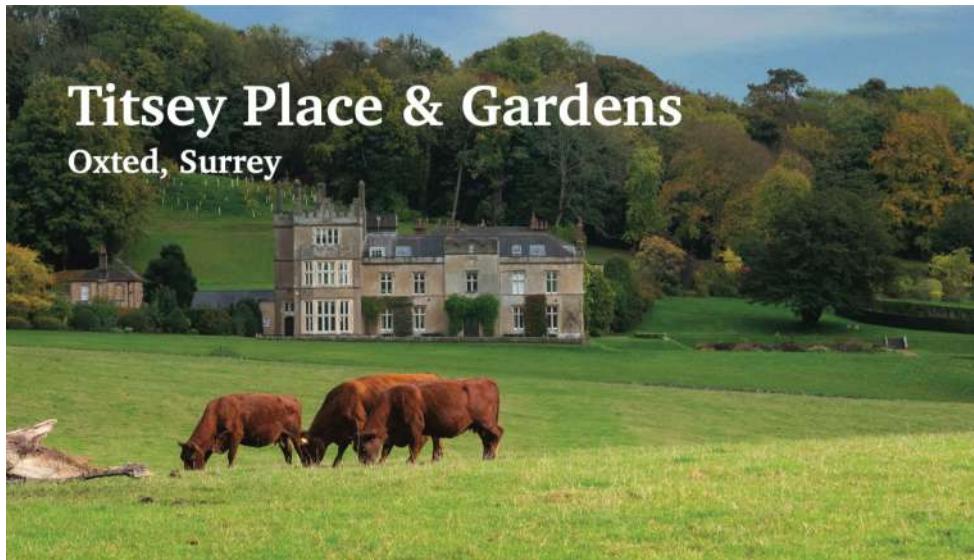


JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2026

Tatsfield Parish Magazine

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CHURCH CONTACTS

St Mary's Church Office (Thurs 9.30-13.30)

Admin: Steve Tatler, The Parish Office, High Street, Limpsfield RH8 0DG.

Phone 01883 712512 / email stmoffice.lttm@btinternet.com.

Team Rector: Revd Helen Cook email: hjwcook@yahoo.co.uk

Curate: Debra Elsdon email: curate.lttm@gmail.com

Wardens: Marjory Broughton (01959 541059) / Chris Hancock (01959 577622)

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COUNCIL CONTACTS

Parish Council: Clerk • Aileen McHugo Building, Westmore Green, Tatsfield TN16 2AG
clerk@tatsfieldpdc.org.uk (07483 337461)

Chair • Kim Jennings email: kimjennings@tatsfieldpdc.org.uk (577328)

Website • www.tatsfieldpdc.org.uk

Tandridge District Councillor • Martin Allen, 38 Paynesfield Rd, Tatsfield TN16 2BG (577201)

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OTHER CONTACTS

Village Hall Bookings Secretary • Helena Garcia-Mcleod (bookings@tatsfieldvillagehall.org.uk)
W.I. Hall Bookings • Pat Walsh (01959577684)

Parish Room Bookings • (07483 337461) **email** clerk@tatsfieldparishcouncil.org.uk

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MAGAZINE CONTRIBUTIONS

We welcome contributions from village organisations and individual residents but reserve all editorial rights. We welcome letters commenting on items in previous issues or on anything else. Anonymous submissions will not be accepted. Organisations must include contact details in their submission, which will be published. Copy date for the Magazine is normally 16th of the preceding month, except for July/Aug and Jan/Feb double issues. Ideally contributions should be sent as a Word attachment by MIDDAY on the copy date in an email to: tatsfieldpdm@gmail.com. Alternatively post to: Tatsfield Parish Magazine, 20 Shipfield Close, Tatsfield TN16 2AU.

Enquiries concerning advertising or loose inserts should be made to Sarah Tait (tatsfieldmag@gmail.com). All loose inserts need to be booked an approved at least ONE MONTH in advance of insertion.

Small Ads These are accepted only from Tatsfield or Titsey residents (No Trade) and are free of charge (Max 10 words plus phone number.) We will include them in the next issue space permitting.

Calendar Dates Our calendar usually covers six weeks or more from publication so please give us your dates in good time. If you don't want your event to clash with others why not check with us early?

Advertisements We take no responsibility for the goods and services advertised in the magazine.

Cover image: Snowdrops, by Tracey Syrett

“It was with heavy hearts that we said goodbye to our dear friend, Mary Smith on Christmas Eve. After a short illness she died peacefully in the Hospice in the Weald.

She was a beautiful soul, full of mischief and spirit - a skilled artist and gardener; an avid reader - and a faithful friend to so many.
We will all miss her very much.”

EDITORIAL

Happy New Year to friends and neighbours in our village of Tatsfield!



At our Carol Service at the beginning of the month we were full to bursting with folk ready to sing their way into the Advent season.

For the Tots on Top Group there were songs and stories delivered by ‘The Angel Gabriel’

Carols and Gatherings at Midnight and on Christmas Morning completed our services and we were blessed to see so many.

But now the tinsel is down, the weather has turned icy and some of us are facing the first year without someone we love. There will be all sorts of challenges – some anticipated, but some unexpected. And soon that time of fairy lights and mulled spices and good cheer may feel like a distant memory.

It was on the radio; Christmas of 1939, that George VI gave his first – and most famous – wartime address. He closed with these words by the poet Millie Haskins: ‘I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year. “Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown.”

And he replied. “Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way.”

Struggles with health, a change in circumstances of whatever kind, are common to us all – even the most privileged can be stopped in their tracks by a scary diagnosis, disappointment and despair. But we are not alone; in our families; in our church and village communities we can reach out and find a hand to hold.

Every blessing to you in 2026,

Reverend Debra



Pictures from two young members of the congregation at our Christingle services who took a “Make Your Own Christingle” pack.



TATSFIELD PARISH MAGAZINE

REQUEST FOR DONATIONS FROM INDIVIDUALS

As you know, the magazine is delivered free each month to all households in Tatsfield and to some in Titsey. We are only able to do this because of the income we receive from advertisers and donations from village organisations and individuals, not to mention the voluntary efforts of nearly 100 villagers who help to write, produce and distribute the magazine each month.

If you would like to contribute to the magazine funds, we would be very grateful as we then have the chance to keep improving the magazine and balancing the books. There is no obligation to donate but we are very grateful for anything received.

The easiest way to make a donation is by a direct bank transfer, and our bank details are as follows: Tatsfield Parish Magazine; Account 84841084; Sort Code 09-01-54.

Alternatively, you can make a cheque out to: Tatsfield Parish Magazine and send it to The Treasurer, Mrs M Langford, 20 Shipfield Close, Tatsfield, Westerham TN16 2AU.

Thank you for your continued support.

Madie Langford



LETTERS

Dear Editor,

The sound of fireworks going off can cause distress in people with post-traumatic stress disorder such as veterans, as well as people with acute sound sensitivity like people with autism. Fireworks can also cause hearing damage.



Fireworks not only affect pets and wild animals, they also affect birds, especially larger ones. According to studies by the Max Planck Institute and the Netherlands Institute of Ecology, many birds abruptly leave their sleeping sites on New Year's Eve, and some fly up to 500 km non-stop to get away from human settlements. Apparently, on average, about one thousand times more birds are in flight on New Year's Eve than on other nights. Frightened birds may also abandon nests and not return to complete rearing their young.



Corvids flying over Berlin during fireworks at New Years Eve. Photograph by Westley Hennigh-Palermo.

Researchers from Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) had observed mixed-species flocks of corvids during New Year's Eve celebrations.

If you really want a private fireworks display, please buy low-noise fireworks only.

Doris Mitchell

Dear Editor,

We all know that the magazine team doesn't make mistakes, so I was somewhat surprised to see that an obvious omission had somehow escaped the accuracy of your eagle-eyes. In the December issue, where were the diary entries for the weekly Cub Scout meetings? My surprise rapidly turned to sadness and disbelief when I was informed that there were no entries due to the simple fact that there is no longer a Cub pack in our village. What follows is a personal plea (with a sprinkling of reminiscence).

I was a Wolf Cub with the Tatsfield Scout Group way back in the 1960s. When my family arrived in the village there was no place for me at the Inn – (whoops, sorry, wrong story!) – no place for me at the local school so I had to be transported daily to Hamsey Green, firstly in Dad's Ford Consul and later, on the 403 double-decker bus. Cubs was a lifeline for me. It was the only way I was able to meet other local boys and become integrated within the local community. Unfortunately, Scouts was never feasible. By that age I was again being shipped off to school, this time to Wallington. By the time I returned home

and ploughed my way through homework there was no time for socialising. But, a few years later, having left school at the earliest opportunity and having found a place of joy and relaxation (art college), I returned to the world of Scouting. My intention was to become a Cub Leader, but I was too young and had to enrol in Venture Scouts to become a uniformed Cub Pack 'helper'. Strange, since Tatsfield, at that time, had no Venture Unit for me to attend! As soon as I was 18, I became an Assistant Cub Scout Leader, swapping my brown tie for a green one. A couple of years later, upon the resignation of Mick Gray, I became the pack leader and had many happy years with the boys (no girls in those days), their parents and my fellow leaders, until teaching and higher study made my position untenable.

My point, dear editor (for fear of it becoming lost), is that Cub scouting is more than a form of mere entertainment for children; much more than an extension to the school day. It is a fun activity for both children and adults. It is a means of socialising with others; an arena within which individuals come together to promote a common set of values. It offers activities that many may not otherwise experience. It offers unexpected friendships and for some, like myself, a connection to village life and its people, and perhaps most importantly it creates opportunities to enrich children's lives. And let's not forget, by volunteering as a leader you not only give benefit to the community, but you also benefit yourself. What other form of voluntary work offers the incentive to go off 'camping' in a log cabin, cook sausages on an open fire, play 'wide' games in a forest, follow a trail of chalked signs, get covered in mud, learn how to tie a variety of useful knots, plant and climb trees, play riotous indoor games and, at the end of the day, feel a warm glow, knowing that the children in your care have had a wonderful time?

Unfortunately, I am now an old man. Too old to be of much or any use within the Scouting community. But those of you who still have the energy, I implore you to consider supporting our local Scout Group by volunteering to re-establish the Cub Scout Pack. Believe me, it's a decision you won't regret. You will become a village hero!

Nigel Shaw

Dear Tatsfield Residents,

I have taken the difficult decision to resign as your elected representative on Surrey County Council. As a busy mum of teenagers, with a full-time job as a Finance Director, I no longer have the time to dedicate to the role that I believe being a County Councillor, and representing residents, both needs and deserves.

I have been the County Councillor for the Warlingham division for seven years, having been first elected in January 2019 in a by-election, and then re-elected in the 2021 Council elections. Once on the Council I was quickly recognised by my group as an action orientated, straight talking Councillor and asked to join the Cabinet in 2020 as the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, responsible for the £1bn (balanced!) budget at the Council, and then in 2021, elected by my group to become Deputy Leader of the

Council, working alongside Tim Oliver, notably as the first female Deputy Leader in the history of the Council. I returned to the back benches in 2023 to take up a Finance Director role in Education, about which I am passionate.

Closer to home I have achieved a great deal for Tatsfield over the years. Successes include a significant number of roads resurfaced in and around the village including sections of Approach Road, Rag Hill Road, Clarks Lane, Clackets Lane and Pilgrims Way, I secured a Vehicle Activated Sign for the village to tackle speeding, improved signage around Furze Corner. I gave c.£20k of funding for the new shredder for the Compost Group plus an annual grant of £1-3k for their operations, c. £15k for picnic benches and the seating area by the Pond, £16k for the refurbishment of the MUGA and annual funding for our local citizens advice bureau. Due to my constant campaigning on the cabinet Warlingham CRC remains open and accepting black bin bags despite being under constant threat of closure, supported the village on Biggin Hill matters and I have regularly supported the Parish Council on matters regarding highways, parking and planning where I can. Across the wider division I have supported Your Fund Surrey Projects securing nearly £500k investment for the area, overseen £230k community spend including the refurbishment of Warlingham library, and allocated >£500k of my own Councillor highways allowance. I have challenged myself at every decision to ensure fairness and equity across the division.

I have achieved all this by working closely with your District Councillor, Martin Allen, over the years and the Parish Council. Fabulous, hardworking volunteers with whom I have enjoyed working alongside sharing in successes and supporting in more gritty times. I've been so lucky to have been so positively supported by these and many other people and organisations across the village, and to have relationships which have evolved into friendships over the years. I must say you have, from the start, been the most welcoming of communities to me, and although I don't live in Tatsfield I have always been made to feel at home and involved in all that goes on – thank you, it has made my job very pleasant and easier.

I have thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity and experience of being an elected representative, 'politics' not being something I ever had in my sights (or barely any interest in) and am honoured to have been elected twice by the residents of Tatsfield to represent them. I am leaving at a time of significant flux in Local Government. I am in favour of the two unitary model, with my financial hat on, I know that savings and economies of scale need to be relentlessly driven through in order to maintain services for an ever increasing population of vulnerable residents be that the elderly, children in social care or children who need to access Special Education support, and the less top-heavy two unitary model provides the best opportunity for realising this. It is going to be a challenging time and a significant commitment and workload for volunteers in positions like mine; at the elections in May 2026 residents need to choose wisely – person not politics. Someone who listens, who is fair, who is a strong advocate for the area and village community you live in. This is a great chance for new blood to step forward and help shape the future of the new East Surrey unitary council - I am proof that no prior knowledge is necessary! I wish whoever follows in my footsteps the best of

luck with the role, and that they are also able to put their political flavour aside and pursue decisions driven by fairness, common sense and purpose.

With many friends across Tatsfield I feel certain I will see you around at a quiz or in the pub!

Many thanks for your support over the years.

Becky Rush



A MESSAGE FROM SARAH COOP – TATSFIELD RESIDENT

I have decided to take on the challenge of running the LONDON MARATHON this April to raise money for BRAIN RESEARCH UK.

I chose this charity not only because a close friend of mine is living with terminal brain cancer, but also because Brain Research UK funds vital research into a range of neurological conditions such as motor neurone disease, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, and dementia.

I will be honest — I am not a natural runner, and I do not particularly enjoy running. Therefore, the training and the marathon itself will be a real challenge for me. However, knowing that every step will help support life-changing research makes it worthwhile.

If you can support me by sponsoring my run, I would be truly grateful. Every donation, no matter the size, will make a difference.

My fundraising link is:

https://www.justgiving.com/page/sarah-coop-1753777697890?utm_medium=FR&utm_source=CL

TATSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Happy New Year to you all. It has certainly been a cold and windy start to 2026.

I would like to first thank everyone for the help and support we received from many of you for making our village look special this Christmas. Special thanks must go to Dan Burr of Acacia Tree Surgeons for helping with our new tree lights at very short notice. Dan has also raised funds for new additional lights for 2026 via a Go Fund Me Page. For this we are very grateful, and we look forward to working together. (Collection pots are available in The Ship, Sheree's Store and the Village Club if you would like to donate.)



Our beautiful Christmas Tree was sponsored this year by James Howard of Yes Glazing Solutions and decorated with red bows and baubles (thank you James it was amazing). Ian Hayman of Tatsfield Aquatics kindly transported and erected tree in Village centre.

The Ship also had a wonderful display of Santa and his Sleigh with The Grinch watching over us all. Thanks to all at the Ship. Then of course you will have all spotted the white gazebo housing the amazing wooden model of St Mary's Church. This had been made and donated from Acacia Trees and is now on display at the Church.

Of course this year we were pleased to receive an early visit from Santa and his elves. What a great sight he was on his Sleigh, arriving at his Grotto on Westmore Green to give the children a gift. Well done to all the fabulous children who waited in line for their turn with Santa. The visit was organised by The Roseheath Foundation with support from the Parish Council.

Thanks also to Tatsfield Church and The Tatsfield Singers that both held Carol concerts bringing us all Christmas cheer.

As you have all witnessed the weather has been a bit on the cold and windy side. Tandridge District Council provides gritting services to our main roads and bus routes, but this finishes in the village centre where the Parish Council have once again arranged private gritting for Crossways (made up part), Westmore Road, the full length of Paynesfield Road, and Lusted Hall Lane to the dip. We have requested, if grit supplies permit, the school car park. We hope this helps to keep us all on the move on these bad weather days.

Our January meeting is after magazine deadline, so we will provide a double report covering the January and February meetings in the next issue of the magazine. (February meeting, 9th February 8pm in the Parish Rooms.)

I look forward to seeing you all out and about in 2026.

Kim Jennings, Chairman Tatsfield Parish Council

Email: kimjennings@tatsfieldpc.org.uk

TANDRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

I trust you all had a really good Christmas and New Year, and I hope everyone remained safe through the ice and snow we recently experienced and let's hope that normal weather returns to us soon and then the slow improvement in to Spring and Summer. I wish you all what you hope for 2026. Let's hope that our village centre can get back to being a bustling hive of activity very soon. As I write this the daylight hours are already growing longer, so although some distance away, summer is coming.

At last year's end/this year's beginning we must all appreciate that the emphasis is slowly turning to the new **Draft Unitary** and its elections in 2026. Both Neighbourhood Area committees and the first voluntary joint committee meeting on 15th January will begin to shape the way forward. Surrey County Council is the lead Council taking us forward; but all roles have been shared between all twelve district Councils allocated as close as possible to the expertise available from each council. Stay in touch through the council website where you can also sign up for future newsletters and information.

<https://www.tandridge.gov.uk/Your-council/Local-government-reorganisation-LGR>

Financial matters As 2026 arrives I am even less confident about the financial limitations that may yet beset Tandridge District Council as well as the normal problems on inflation and wage rises and additional costs - it is estimated £1.5m may be needed to finance the transition whilst continuing business as usual. Government assumes all councils will increase Council Tax by 2.99% which TDC has already calculated within the budget for 2026/2027.

On 29th January, the council's Strategy & Resources Committee (S&R) will discuss the **Council's budget for 2026-2027**. This will be based on the draft budget presented to S&R Committee on 27th November 2025. Despite several financial challenges, we have set a balanced budget without relying on general reserves. If you would like to comment on the budget, please email customerservices@tandridge.gov.uk, or write to Budget Feedback, Tandridge District Council, Council Offices, 8 Station Road East, Oxted RH8 0BT by Wednesday 28th January 2026.

Down to more normal matters The review of the allocation of seats **for 2025/26** was taken to committee at the full council on 18th December. By this time, I with the backing on the Group had offered Cllr Lewis Sharp of Chaldon, the new Reform candidate, an opportunity to join the independent group, as I felt the decision not to allow him a committee seat was totally wrong if not undemocratic. Remembering back when I was a sole Independent Councillor, I was offered a seat and, in my opinion, quite rightly so. The fact that Cllr Sharp would not be able to represent his residents through committees he was offered the opportunity to join the independent group until the end of the time of this council so he could do just that. I am pleased to say that he accepted that offer on behalf of his residents and we will work with him on that basis. So, the Independent group now numbers 6 which gave us 2 additional seats and the Conservatives 5. RA are still the main party with 20 and the Liberal Democrats 12 in a no overall majority council.

Have your say on the Local Plan We are working on a new Local Plan for the Tandridge district. This plan will help shape how the district grows and changes in the future. If you'd like to stay updated, you can sign up at tandridge.gov.uk for the Local Plan newsletter.

My role as your District Councillor will continue much as last year, and at least we will not have to endure another District Councillor election. Our Surrey County Councillor as Cllr Rush has tendered her resignation. I am waiting clarification on this as to who will replace our Ward Councillor on the Neighbourhood area committees. I will try and keep you informed.

During the next four weeks, I will be attending Planning, Community Services, Planning Policy, Housing, Strategy & Resources and Investment Subcommittee meetings where apart from the Local Plan being at the forefront of the Planning Policy meeting, the Budget will be the major point of interest. I will continue to attend meetings at Biggin Hill Airport regarding the over fly complaints and the ongoing efforts of having the Noise Safety Area moved further south.

Remember to help Tatsfield Good causes by buying your Tandridge Together lottery tickets. Also please volunteer to assist the clubs and societies that need committee members to help run them.

My best wishes for 2026. If there is anything you think I can help you with, please contact me accordingly.

Cllr Martin Allen Tel: 01959 577201

Email: cllr.martin.allen@tandridge.gov.uk or martin_allen@talk21.com

CLAIRE COUTINHO MP

I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and a joyful celebration to see in the New Year with your family and loved ones. Many of you will have read from my previous articles that 2025 had been a remarkable year for me and my family – so I was grateful to welcome in 2026 with my son and husband by my side. I have been blown away with the level of support and warm wishes I have received since sharing my story, so thank you all for bearing with me as I returned from maternity leave.

In the south of the constituency, we have seen several reoccurring noxious fires – yet another part of the growing number of local incidents that feel like an all-out assault on our countryside. Locals are sick of no action being taken despite reporting the fires several times, so after writing to the Environmental Agency I brought their officers to the epicentre, Smallfield, for a public meeting. The Highways Agency also responded positively to a request I put in for gantry data warning drivers on the M23 of poor visibility. I'm glad we are finally starting to get some movement on this, and I will continue to work with residents to get this sorted.

One of the great privileges of my job is visiting our local schools and colleges. Before the Christmas break, I was thrilled to visit not just one, nor two, but three beacons of educational excellence here in East Surrey: Hillcroft Primary School in Caterham to see their impressive brand new facility for their ever-cute two-year-old intake; East Surrey College to talk to the principal about all things apprenticeships and how tremendously well the students are performing ahead of their exams in the summer; and to officially open East Surrey's newest specialist school – Auroa Chaldon School, between Chaldon and Merstham. Education is the closest thing we have to a silver bullet that can improve the life chances of every young person. To see how brilliantly our local teachers and support staff work to give our youngsters the best possible start is an opportunity I never say no to.

After hundreds of festive Christmas card designs flooded my inbox for my annual competition, I'm delighted to share that Willow from Furzefield Primary School in Merstham won with her fantastic drawing. Thank you to everyone who sent in a design and I look forward to welcoming Willow and her family to Westminster to receive her prize.

If you would like to share your thoughts or if there is an issue you would like my help with, please contact me at: claire.coutinho.mp@parliament.uk

BUSINESS SUPPORT GRANT (APPLY BY 31ST JANUARY 2026)

We Are offering local businesses the chance to apply for a Business Support Grant of up to **£1,000**. You can use the grant to: buy new equipment; upgrade your shopfront; train your team; add energy saving features.

Whether you're a new or established business, you can apply for a one-off grant.

Applications close on Saturday 31st January 2026 (or sooner if funds run out) and projects must be completed by 31st March 2026.

Grants are limited and will be given on a first come, first served basis.

Apply on Tandridge.gov.uk

HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND – EVERYDAY ESSENTIALS E-VOUCHER

This is open to eligible Surrey residents who may be struggling with the financial costs of everyday essentials. Eligible residents can receive up to £300 in the form of an e-voucher which can be redeemed at a supermarket of the applicant's choice.

Applications opened on 1st October and can be made until March 2026 or the funding runs out. The application portal opens each month and will close once that month's funding has been fully allocated and reopen again the following month.

For more details visit: www.surreycc.gov.uk/everydayvoucher

LITTLE ACORNS PRESCHOOL

Little Acorns warmly welcomes our new starters as we begin the Spring term, and we would like to wish all our families a happy, healthy 2026!



We continue our weekly clubs and a different theme each week, ensuring activities and learning through play is fun, exciting and always engaging.



We have more school trips planned for 2026; our wildlife garden will be open for more explorative play and outdoor learning activities; and we also have new and exciting toys and equipment ready for the new year.



We will be continuing to reward the children with Friendship and Kindness awards, embedding the importance to be kind to others and good friends to all here at Little Acorns. The children were proud to be recognised for their kindness to others.

If you are looking for a preschool for your child, we would love to welcome you and your family for a visit. Please call or email us:

Tel: 01959 540775. Email: office@littleacornstatsfield.co.uk

Tatsfield Village Hall, Westmore Green, Tatsfield, Surrey TN16 2AG

The Little Acorns Team

MONKEY PUZZLE DAY NURSERY



HAPPY NEW YEAR ... We are glad to be back and getting back into routines again. The children have been loving the snow play!



FOREST SCHOOL HOLIDAY CLUB We have spaces available for 5–8-year-olds to join our Forest School holiday club on Monday 16th February and Wednesday 18th February. For more information, please feel free to contact us.

Are you looking for childcare?

We offer a high standard of care to children aged 3 months to 5 years old. Providing a range of fun and exciting activities, both indoors and outdoors all year around, exploring our local environment and all it offers on local trips, celebrating all traditions and cultures.

We have spaces available here at Monkey Puzzle Tatsfield, if you are interested and want to book a tour of the nursery, please contact us

Phone – 01959 928427

Email – manager@monkeypuzzletatsfield.co.uk

TATSFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Assemblies are an important part of school life at Tatsfield. Last week, during our first assembly of 2026 we spoke about the new year and new beginnings. The children discussed that the new year doesn't mean that everything has to be 'new', and shared ideas and thoughts about things that they would be carrying forward into the new year. Children shared fantastic thoughts:

"I am going to carry on developing my resilience."

"I am going to continue eating healthily."

"I am continuing to develop my horse-riding skills."

"I am going to carry on looking out for my friends."

"I am going to carry on bringing kindness to my school community."

"I am going to carry on smiling and being kind."

"I am going to carry on having fun in maths!"

What will you be carrying forward into the new year?



MILLENNIUM ART GROUP – SPRING TERM 2026

Our Spring Term started on 14th January, and our last meeting of the term will be on 1st April.



Sadly, however, we will be without the presence of the person who started the group and named it. Mary Smith passed away on the morning of 24th December and her funeral is being held on 28th January. Our group was formed from a number of people who, after attending classes held by Adie Parker, decided that they so enjoyed painting together on Wednesday afternoons that we should continue meeting as a group in the Millennium Hall, Tatsfield. Mary drove this and for several years managed both the administration and finances of the group. A few years ago, she asked to step down as head of the group and Ash Thakar took over managing the finances of the group and I took over the administration. She would often remind us, with a cheeky smile, that it took two men to do the work previously done by one woman! Her positive presence will be sorely missed by the whole group. However, in her memory, we have decided that not only will the group continue but that we should make efforts to grow the group, as she would have wanted. Mary established the very friendly and relaxed atmosphere which exists in our meetings, and Ash and I will strive to ensure that this continues.

Another major event during our Autumn term was when the most senior member of our group, Alan Hall, reached his 100th birthday. His family held an event in the hall to celebrate his birthday and to which the group was invited. Alan was one of the founding members of our group and continues to paint with great skill.

If you are interested in joining our group why not come along to one of our sessions to get a taste of what we do? We are a friendly bunch, and we have room for a couple of more members. We have three terms in a year, Spring, Summer and Autumn and the cost per member last term was £50. This includes access to equipment such as easels, the cost of refreshments, and the cost of demonstrations. If you want to visit us to see us in action we can offer you tea, biscuits and sometimes cake, served at about 3pm. To take up this invitation please contact me using the details below.

Douglas Dawes, Email: millartg@icloud.com



A HOLLY JOLLY CHRISTMAS

Thank you to The Tatsfield Singers for their fun-filled Christmas Concert on 13th December. It was a wonderful evening encouraging audience participation and sending everyone home smiling and singing!

Looking forward to the summer concert.

NOT SO YOUNG CLUB

Happy New Year!

We celebrated our Christmas meeting at The Crown in Leaves Green and of course Christmas/sparkly jumpers were compulsory! We all had a lovely afternoon eating drinking and being merry. Gifts were shared and of course the traditional NSY raffle.

In November we visited Haskins Garden Centre and saw all the beautiful Christmas decorations and goodies. Some members also enjoyed lunch.

In January we will try our first race afternoon, not sure what could possibly go wrong but all our members will look beautiful in their race hats.

Our meetings are always the second Tuesday of the month please contact me if you would like to join us.

Finally, we would like to wish everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Keep safe.

Sue Dowse, notsoyoung100@gmail.com, 07816110929

TATSFIELD WI

WI meets on the first Tuesday of each month.



In December our members enjoyed a celebration lunch in the Old Ship. All the traditional trimmings, exchange of seasonal gifts, good food, excellent company; what more could we have asked for?

Our New Year festivities also included food: delicious homemade soup and crusty bread, fruit pies and cream. We then debated the merits of five resolutions for action in the community that had been submitted by members across the country. Our preferences will be added to the votes submitted by almost a quarter of a million members from across the UK to decide which will be the National Campaign for 2026.

As the weather starts to change you may be looking for somewhere warm and cosy for a midweek cuppa. Don't forget, everyone is invited to come along for a cup of coffee or tea and a friendly chat every Wednesday morning between **10.30 and 12** in the WI Hall in Paynesfield Road. A great way to meet and catch up with other village residents – anyone of any age is welcome. So, if you are passing, please do just "Pop In".

I would also like to remind you that our WI Hall is a conveniently local, warm (new radiators just installed) and bright venue available to hire at very reasonable rates for a meeting, family party or celebration, please just give us a call on 01959 577684 to find out more.

Susan Smale 01959 577660

NORTH DOWNS SINFONIA AUTUMN CONCERT, 15TH NOVEMBER 2025

I had been looking forward to attending this concert for some time and arrived at Tatsfield Village Hall with a feeling of excited anticipation. Before the music began, I had time to peruse the programme with its excellent notes about the pieces of music, the composers and the performers. Gill Paterson should be congratulated for creating a great start to my evening.

We were warmly welcomed by Jon Maynard, the NDS Chairman and conductor for the evening. The concert would have a British flavour as two of the items were by English composers and the other was about the British aristocracy, albeit written by an Italian! Jon gave a very amusing introduction to Donizetti's Roberto Devereux Overture and then it was time for the music to begin.

The members of the NDS, led by Sylvia Seaton, played confidently with good balance between the instruments. They achieved lovely dynamic contrasts in this piece, and the music sparkled all the way through to its stirring climax.

Next it was Elgar's well-loved Cello Concerto. There was a real buzz in the audience as Jon introduced the soloist, sixteen-year-old Mariatu Kanneh-Mason. To hear this piece in such an intimate setting was a real treat. Mariatu drew the audience in as she played so that they felt part of the music. She played confidently and sensitively, giving each of the movements a different colour and really making her cello sing. This was not just about an extremely talented teenager but about the music itself and it was as if I had heard this old favourite through new ears. It was an assured performance by Mariatu, the NDS and Jon and it was a real privilege to have been there. As the music finished, there was rapturous applause and then Mariatu treated us to an encore, playing a Bach unaccompanied Bourée with great aplomb.



After the interval, the NDS played Alice Mary Smith's Symphony No 1 in C minor. Until today, this female Victorian composer was not known to me, and I was not aware that I had heard any of her music. It seems that in her relatively short life she was quite a prolific composer, and I shall now be looking out for more of her work.

I really enjoyed listening to the NDS playing this symphony. They produced beautiful legato sections in the first movement and glorious melodies with gentle accompaniments in the second. They created dance-like qualities in the third movement, and the finale was a majestic triumph. The thing I liked best about this work is that the composer gives all the instruments their time in the spotlight and the NDS players rose to the occasion, playing expertly when their moment of glory arrived.

This was a thoroughly enjoyable concert and Jon Maynard and the NDS should be congratulated for all they do. **Lesley Clare**

ST MARY'S MATTERS

Welcome 2026! Our Team Rector Revd Helen Cook, Curate Revd Debra Elsdon and Churchwardens Chris Hancock and Marjory Broughton offer you all every best wish and blessing for the year ahead. We look forward to delivering a range of services and events in the months and seasons to come.

Some news from the wider Limpsfield and Tatsfield Team Ministry. On 13th January Revd Tim Brunton, the new Incumbent at St Andrew's Limpsfield Chart, was licensed as Team Vicar in a service led by Rt Revd Dr Rosemarie Mallett, Bishop of Croydon. We look forward to getting to know Tim and his wife Alison.

Sunday services We continue our **main Sunday service with hymns at 10am** followed by refreshments in the Millennium Hall. All are welcome. Our website is at www.lttm.org.uk/stmarys which gives more information and has a link to our weekly Notice Sheet.



Personal Prayer Requests We would love to support you in prayer. Please add your request to the Prayer Request Book near the Baptism Font, or email stmoffice.lttm@btinternet.com

Christmas 2025 at St Mary's A big 'Thank You' to all who helped deliver the programme of Advent and Christmas services, in particular Bishop Chris Goldsmith, our Curate Revd Debra Elsdon, the Tatsfield Singers, our pianist Sarah Coop and Organist Mike Lambert. Not forgetting our Flower Team leaders and members for decorating the church, Titsey Estate for the greenery, our Churchwardens, volunteers and

all who provided refreshments in the Millennium Hall following services. And of course, Sauro Gabelli who once again built a magnificent Christmas Tableau in the Narthex.



An attentive full house enjoying the annual 'Carols by Candlelight' service



A section of Sauro Gabelli's magnificent Christmas Tableau in the Narthex

Westerham Foodbank We aim to deliver Thursdays 22nd Jan and 19th Feb. Non-perishable food can be left in the Narthex at St Mary's when open (times below). To see what items are urgently needed or to make a monetary donation please contact the Foodbank at: <https://www.visitwesterham.org.uk/westerhams-foodbank>. Thank you for continued support. **Hilary Vale 01959 577864**

Lent Lunches Dates for our popular Lent Lunches will be published on the Village Website and Facebook pages very soon!

St Mary's Tatsfield 100 Club Results for December 2025

54 M Smith £25 D Vale £15 48 M Langford £10 St Mary's £46

Churchyard Team Our volunteers led by David Gulley plan to commence their maintenance programme for 2026 on Saturday 7th March.

Dates for your diaries Ash Wednesday falls on 18th February this year and Palm Sunday on 29th March. Please also see our website and weekly Notice Sheet for more information on services.

Hire of the Millennium Hall If you are looking for a well-equipped venue for your event



function, or activity our Millennium Hall is open for bookings. Enquiries from individuals and groups are very welcome.

Sheila Cook (01959 577443)

ST MARY'S CONTACTS Our contacts are detailed near the front of this magazine and on our website www.lttm.org.uk/stmarys.



Photos from Carol Priestley during a Christmas visit to St Mary's with her daughter.

*They enjoyed some quiet contemplation and Carol described
St Mary's as 'a very special and spiritual place'.*

*Our church is open for viewing, prayer and reflection
9am to 3.30pm Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays.*

REGULAR TATSFIELD EVENTS AND INFORMATION

| | | |
|------------|--------------|--|
| Sun | 9.30 am | Yoga with Lexy, VH |
| | 10.00 am | Church service – StM |
| Mon | 9.30 am | Tots on Top – CH |
| | 9.30 am | Shape and Tone with Gary - WIH |
| | 1.30 pm | Bridge Club – WIH |
| | 7.00 pm | Art Group – VH [Term time] |
| | 8.15 pm | Bingo – TVC |
| Tue | 1.00 pm | Not So Young Club (2 nd Tuesday of the month) WIH |
| | 2.30 pm | WI Meeting (1 st Tuesday of the month) WIH |
| | 4.00pm | Paracise VH |
| | 7.00 pm | Scouts and Explorers – SH |
| | 6.15 pm | Barré with Fi - VH |
| Wed | 10.30 am | WI Pop In – WIH |
| | 2-4 pm | Composting Site CLOSED UNTIL APRIL |
| | 6.00 pm | Shape and Tone with Gary – WIH |
| | 6.00pm | Over 8s Jujitsu, SH |
| | 6.30pm | Latin Fusion Dance Fitness for Adults, TPS |
| | 7.30pm | Adults Jujitsu, SH |
| | 7.30 pm | Yoga – VH |
| Thu | 9.30 am | Yoga with Lexy, StM |
| | 9.30 am | Shape and Tone with Gary, WIH |
| | 2.00 pm | Scrabble at AMB (2 nd Thursday of the month) |
| | 1.30 pm | Hear Here Sessions – AMB (1 st Thursday of the month) |
| | 6.00 pm | Over 8s Judo – SH |
| | 5.30pm | Barré with Fi, VH |
| | 7.30 pm | Adults (14+) Judo - SH |
| | 7.30 pm | Tatsfield Singers - TPS |
| | 8.00 pm | Table Tennis – VH |
| Fri | 9.30 am | Combat Fitness - SH |
| | 1.30 pm | Short Mat Bowls –VH |
| | 4.15pm | Boom Arts Academy Tots Street Dance – VH |
| | 4.45pm | Boom Arts Academy Lower Junior Street Dance – VH |
| | 5.30pm | Boom Arts Academy Theatre and Singing – VH |
| | 6.15pm | Boom Arts Academy Junior Street Dance – VH |
| | 8.00 pm | Badminton Club – VH |
| Sat | 9.00 am | Under 8s Judo – SH |
| | 10.00am-12pm | Composting Site CLOSED UNTIL APRIL |
| | 10.15 am | Over 8s Judo - SH |

Venues: AMB - Aileen McHugo Building • CGA - Community Games Area • MH - Millennium Hall • SH - Scout Hut • StM - St. Mary's Church • TACG – Tatsfield Allotments and Community Garden • TVC - Tatsfield Village Club • TPS - Tatsfield Primary School • VH - Village Hall • WIH - Women's Institute

UPCOMING EVENTS – VILLAGE AND BEYOND

JANUARY

28th Wed 2.15pm Visual Magic in the Musicals, Limpsfield Church Hall

FEBRUARY

| | | |
|---|---------|--|
| 7 th Sat | 12.00pm | The Ultimate Bubble Show, Barn Theatre, Oxted |
| 7 th Sat | 3.30pm | The Ultimate Bubble Show, Barn Theatre, Oxted |
| 8 th Sun | 3.00pm | The Evening Shadows (legendary hits of Cliff Richard and the Shadows), Barn Theatre, Oxted |
| 9 th Mon | 8.00pm | Tatsfield Parish Council Meeting, Parish Rooms |
| 13 th Fri | 7.45pm | Moonage, David Bowie Tribute, Barn Theatre, Oxted |
| 23 rd Mon – 28 th Sat | | Southern Counties Drama Festival, Barn Theatre, Oxted |
| 25 th Wed | 2.15pm | Tamara de Lempicka: Art Deco Diva, Limpsfield Church Hall |

MARCH

| | | |
|----------------------|--------|--|
| 7 th Sat | tbc | Churchyard Tidy Up, StM |
| 7 th Sat | 7.45pm | An Evening with the Dreamers, Barn Theatre, Oxted |
| 14 th Sat | 7.45pm | Looking For Me Friend (Victoria Wood's best songs), Barn Theatre, Oxted |
| 25 th Wed | 2.15pm | How Russia Sold Off Much Of Its Cultural Heritage Following The Revolution, Limpsfield Church Hall |
| 25 th Wed | 7.30pm | How Russia Sold Off Much Of Its Cultural Heritage Following The Revolution, Limpsfield Church Hall |

TATSFIELD ONLINE

Village website:www.tatsfield.org.uk

Village facebook page: search for 'Tatsfield Village' on facebook

Tatsfield Talk facebook group: search for 'Tatsfield Talk' on facebook, and ask to join to be able to view and post. **Twitter:** @tatsfieldtweet

PARISH MAGAZINE EVENTS LISTINGS

If you would like your event included in this diary in future, please send details to tatsfieldpm@gmail.com. Please also let us know if any information has changed.

THE ARTS SOCIETY LIMPSFIELD

Visual Magic in the Musicals by Christopher Budd. **Wednesday 28 January 2026.** **Afternoon lecture only starts at 2.15pm.** Guests: £10. The true pioneers of visual effects in the movies were the musicals. In the glory days of the studio system Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly were involved in an artistic arms race to put the most ingenious dance routines on screen. Join writer, teacher, and composer Christopher Budd for an appreciation of blue screens, rotating stages, and two extraordinarily talented men.

Tamara de Lempicka: Art Deco Diva by Alexandra Epps. **Date: Wednesday 25 February 2026. Afternoon lecture only starts at 2.15pm.** Guests: £10. Tamara de Lempicka's story is one of self-invention. From her early beginnings as an aristocratic fugitive from the Russian Revolution, to later taking Paris by storm as a successful artist living on her own terms, she has become an icon of the Roaring Twenties. Few artists sum up an epoch quite so completely - a true art deco diva.

TATSFIELD COMMUNITY COMPOSTING

SPECIAL OPENING FOR RECYCLING NATURAL CHRISTMAS TREES ON SATURDAY 10TH JANUARY 2026

It was a cold and windy Saturday morning when our fourteen strong team of composters assembled at the allotment site in Approach Road. We had decided to try out an idea - to offer Tatsfielders the opportunity to bring their natural Christmas trees to the site for processing and composting to produce our award-winning Black Gold compost. We had no idea if this would prove to be a popular idea so we decided that just one of our processing machines would be sufficient, but we were wrong!



As soon as the gates opened at 10.00am the trees started arriving in wheelbarrows, carried by hand and in cars! Parents, grandparents and children came and stayed to watch and learn how we turned Tatsfield trees into lovely dark compost. There were so many trees arriving that we quickly got our second machine into action and barely kept up as the trees piled up! Some folk brought trees collected from their neighbours as well, and then the village volunteers arrived with the village Christmas tree all trimmed into branches ready for processing. By closing time at 12.00 we had processed around forty trees, thank you Tatsfield, it looks like this will be an annual event!

What could be more sustainable than a tree that is locally grown for five to seven years in a relatively undisturbed wildlife habitat, to fill you home with that unmistakable smell of pine and then taken a short distance to be turned into compost that can be used as a soil improver, a mulch, or coarsely sieved and added to a potting compost? The growing field is then cultivated and planted with the next crop.

If you would like to join our team of community composting volunteers, please contact **Jon Allbutt at jon@jonallbutt.co.uk or call on 07712 196406**

TATSFIELD IN BLOOM

As I'm writing this, the displays are all covered with snow and ice but underneath we hope that the Violas and Bellis daisies we planted in October will still be thriving and will flower beautifully in the Spring. Lots of different bulbs, including Narcissus, Crocus, Alliums, Tulips, Aconites and Muscari, were also planted.



Bulbs have also been planted in the semi-circular bed at the front of the Village Hall, and we have purchased Lavender plants to go around the edge to preserve this and to show that this is a flower bed! These are in our polytunnel at the Allotments now and will be planted out once the weather is more suitable and the plants have had a chance to establish.

Our thoughts have also turned to next Summer and we have placed orders for plug plants to bring on in the polytunnel. These will be delivered during April/May.

We have ordered orange Begonia Starshine and Nemesia Aroma Banana Split for the mangers, together with Verbena Showboat mango orange, Sanvitalia Golden Aztec and Calibrachoa outrageous orange for the containers, tubs and cascade planters. So, look out for an extravaganza of orange come the summer!

Volunteers took a break over Christmas and New Year but are back out on Saturdays at 10.00am, weather permitting. There is only maintenance to carry out during January and February, but we will always welcome new helpers for a little work and a cup of coffee!

Thank you to all those who put donations into our yellow pots in Sheree's, The Old Ship and The Village Club. We have reduced our costs by introducing more sustainable plants, and we are very grateful for any contributions in our efforts to keep Tatsfield looking attractive.

Jill Hancock (577622) (jillhancock12@gmail.com)

THE TATSFIELD GARDENER IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY

A very happy new gardening year to all you keen Tatsfield gardeners! I bet you have been looking at your garden wondering what this gardening season has in store for us and what you should be doing right now. As I suspected, our winter flowering plants that started flowering many weeks too soon have been damaged by the recent cold spell and that was without the damaging East/Northeast winds. If you have plants such as Camellias and Rhododendrons in soft bud it is not too late to protect them when the forecast is for winds from that quarter. Plants growing in pots outside can still be wrapped up to protect the root ball from freezing and reduce the risk of the pot splitting as wet soil freezes and expands.

This is the ideal time of the year to review your gardening successes and failures and make plans for the coming growing season. A word of warning! Do not be tempted to bring forward your dates for sowing seed, especially vegetable seeds. Our soil is heavy clay, slow to dry out and slow to warm up. Sowing too early can result in total loss or

poor germination. Of course there are always exceptions! I know of some Tatsfield gardens that have been cultivated by generations of gardeners with soil that falls obediently into a beautiful tilth ready for sowing and planting much earlier than one might consider wise. Be patient, more on this subject in my March notes!

Throughout my life in horticulture there are many subjects that divide us professionals and one of these is Ivy - you either love them or hate them! You love them because they cover fences and walls in a variety of colours and leaf shapes; they are very important for roosting, hibernating and nesting by birds and other small creatures; they flower around October/November, you may not notice the flowers but pollen and nectar lovers depend on them for survival; they grow very well in dark shady places. But Ivy is a fast-growing vigorous plant that will become invasive if not kept within bounds every year. If allowed to make a big plant on fences and in trees, it increases the weight of a branch



making it vulnerable to collapse; it acts as a sail and its host becomes more vulnerable to high winds; on fences, it increases in bulk and weight that can result in the collapse of fence panels; on the walls of buildings it must be kept clear of windows and gutters; it will find any weaknesses in bricks and rendered surfaces, it has even been known to work its way into buildings and emerge through interior plaster and wallpaper! So, buy and plant Ivy in the garden but make sure your fences are strong, especially the fence posts – concrete rather than wooden posts. Routinely prune away all branches growing outside the designated growth area, this is best done now to reduce disturbance to wildlife.

I see and read that our younger generation of media gardeners are recommending that Roses, Buddleia and other shrubs that will flower on the new season's shoots can be pruned now. This is a good idea if you are living in towns and cities and other protected situations! In Tatsfield we can still have frost and damaging cold Easterly winds in March and April that will damage early growth, despite climate change!

Jon Allbutt

WILDLIFE GARDENING TIPS FOR JANUARY AND FEBRUARY

Hi Folks. It's that time of year for the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch, which is the world's largest garden wildlife survey. Every year, hundreds of thousands of nature lovers take part, helping to build a picture of how our wonderful but struggling garden birds are faring. Everyone can help just by taking an hour out of their day, and this is how it works:

- Choose an hour between 23rd and 25th January.
- Only record the birds that land in your patch.
- Record the highest number of each bird species you see at any one time.
- Tell the RSPB so they can feed it into the national picture.

Last year more than 590,000 people took part in Big Garden Birdwatch, counting a whopping 9.1 million birds, so please do pitch in – it is important because we have our own unique micro-climate up here in Tatsfield and it has a big influence on how our wildlife thrives and survives. You can find out more including some useful downloads at: <https://www.rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/big-garden-birdwatch>

The other big event for this time of year is that all around our little village, badger mums



are giving birth to litters of tiny cubs. Most cubs are born between mid-January and through February. They will be just 5 - 6 inches long (around 15cm) and totally dependent on Mum for several months, and we will start to see them above ground in April or May.

So, badger mums need all the help they can get to be fit and healthy for the birth and for nursery care, so please do give some thought to feeding

these neighbours of ours at this critical time. They eat most things, but a good staple is cat biscuits mixed 50/50 with peanuts. One benefit of this is that cats are put off by the peanuts and are unlikely to bother with the biscuits. Having said that, badgers seem to eat most things, and one of our garden visitors gets very excited by a half-banana. Eggs always seem to go down well too and are high in protein and calories, which seems especially important at this time. As a note of caution, it is important to say that these are wild animals, not pets, so my personal recommendation is to only put out a small amount of food so that they don't become solely dependent on us. Having said that, we do build our homes over their feeding grounds, so it seems a fair trade to make a contribution to their welfare!

Just a thought, if you have children or grandchildren, maybe put out a trail camera to see who is coming for tea. Our camera always snaps a badger and a fox, with either one being first to supper, with the second one looking a bit grumpy at missing out.

Interesting fact of the month.... While on the subject of badgers giving birth, lady badgers have a little-known superpower. They can mate at any time of the year but still give birth in the New Year when the cubs have the optimum chance of survival. In other words, they don't have a fixed-term pregnancy. Huh!? They do this by getting pregnant in the spring or summer and then pausing the pregnancy (yep, they pause their pregnancy) until December when they're tucked up indoors away from the cold. It brings a whole new meaning to the term 'birth control' and it's an incredibly beneficial phenomenon known as embryonic diapause.

Jim Kenney

THE NIGHT SKY IN TATSFIELD – JANUARY & FEBRUARY 2026

The beginning of a new year is a good time for people to look ahead and see what goodies it promises and, in that respect, astronomers are no different. Of course, many of the things we look at require a degree of optical assistance but that's of little use to the public. What they are interested in, and want to know about, are the sort of events where the naked eye is all that's needed.

Have you ever seen Mercury? Not many people have. There is a reasonable chance to see it in the evenings in mid-February and again in the middle of June when the brilliant "Evening Star", Venus, is also visible.

Jupiter rules the evening skies for those of us in the northern hemisphere, and that will be the case from January until early June whilst the other "gas giant" Saturn, puts on a good show from late September.

What will most likely grab the attention of the public though is an eclipse of the Sun on 12th August when 91% of the Sun will be obscured. Then on 28th August it's the turn of the Moon to be eclipsed when 93% of it will move into the earth's shadow. It isn't all good news because that event doesn't begin until 3:30am and ends when the Moon sets at 6:10am with the eclipse still in progress. If you enjoy meteor watching, then the Perseid meteor shower in August reaches its peak on the night of 12th/13th that rather conveniently coincides with a new Moon which will be a big improvement on the 85% Moon which rather spoiled the 2025 display.

The other high activity shower is the Geminids which peaks on the night of 13th/14th December. In fact, recent data suggests that activity is increasing year by year so the fact that in 2026 the slim waxing crescent Moon will have set by 8pm should encourage even casual watchers to take a look.

That's all about the future but what about the here and now? Of course, in January and February, we see the brilliant winter constellations that are generally clustered around Orion, "The Hunter" which lies in the southeast at 8pm in the middle of January. The three stars which make up Orion's belt make him easily identifiable. If you draw a line through the stars of the belt and down towards the horizon, you'll reach Sirius, the brightest star in the night sky. A line through the belt and upwards will pass close to another bright star, Aldebaran, in Taurus the bull. Continuing that line north will bring you near to the Pleiades cluster otherwise known as the Seven Sisters. The brilliant object that sits some twenty-five to thirty degrees to the east (left) of Orion is the planet Jupiter, which is currently found among the stars of Gemini, the twins.

If you want to see Orion and his retinue at their best then if you look at 10pm in mid-January, he will be due south and at his greatest elevation. Alternatively, if you wait until the middle of February, the hunter will be in the same position at 8pm.

During January, Jupiter is at its closest to Earth, something that astronomers refer to as "opposition" because the planet lies opposite the Sun in the sky. Being at its closest means it appears at its brightest and largest. Have a look for the four Galilean moons even if you only have binoculars.

To see Mercury, look low down slightly southwest of west from 18th-24th February around 6pm. You will need a low horizon but should see the brilliant Venus very close to the horizon with the fainter Mercury almost directly above it with an altitude of 10°. **Don't use binoculars to search for it until the Sun has set!**

Brian Mills FRAS

TATSFIELD ART GROUP

2026 will be an exciting and busy year for Tatsfield Art Group. Over the winter months our members have been working hard creating new paintings, you will be able to see their finished work at our May Exhibition.



Below are the details of our Monday evening sessions, leading up to the annual exhibition which this year is being held over the first May Bank Holiday weekend.

| | |
|---|---|
| 23 rd February | Time to be creative/own work |
| 2 nd March | Simon Cook workshop – BLACK AND WHITE |
| 9 th March | Adie Parker workshop TBA |
| 16 th March | Jane Okeefe workshop – 3D HEADS-SCULPTURE |
| 23 rd March | Time to be creative/own work |
| 30 th March – 10 th April | Closed for the Easter holidays |
| 13 th April | Paolo Francis workshop TBA |
| 20 th April | Time to be creative/own work |
| 27 th April | Time to be creative/own work |
| 2 nd – 4 th May | 3 DAY EXHIBITION. |



Sandra Shury

If you would like more information, please contact Sandra Shury 07867 502235 or Carol Gaskell 07815 775859. Our door is always open Mondays from 7pm - 9.30pm at Tatsfield Village Hall, if you fancy trying something new, just pop in and have a chat. The first two sessions are free. If you don't fancy becoming a member you can always join us at any of our workshops, only £15, we would love to see you.

You can find us on Facebook **Tatsfield Art Group** and Instagram **tag_tatsfield_art**

TATSFIELD FAIRTRADE GROUP

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The link between Valentine's Day chocolate and flowers stems from the Ancient Romans and Greeks: Aphrodite was the goddess of love; chocolate was considered an aphrodisiac; and flowers symbolised romance.



In the 3rd Century St Valentine embodied selflessness and compassion and gave flowers to lovers to encourage their union into marriage. In the 1868 Richard Cadbury is credited with creating the first heart-shaped box of chocolates, making chocolate an iconic Valentine's gift for expressing love.

The Victorian era also saw a surge in the popularity of "floriography," the language of flowers, where bouquets were used to convey secret or unspoken feelings. Different flowers and colours held specific meanings. Red roses are the most popular Valentine's Day flower because they represent love, passion, and romance. Other flowers also carry Valentine's Day messages of love: pink - admiration and gratitude; yellow - friendship and joy; white - purity and new beginnings; tulips - symbolize a perfect love; carnations: - have various meanings, including love and fascination.



Show you care this Valentines Day and share your love with your nearest and dearest and the planet. Do look out for Fairtrade flowers and chocolates.

Tatsfield Fairtrade Group

tatsfieldfairtradegroup@gmail.com tatsfieldfairtradevillage.weebly.com

TATSFIELD 100 CLUB

Congratulations to the winners of the Tatsfield PFA 100 Club for **November 2025**:

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|--------|-----------------------|------------|--------|
| 1 st Prize | Craig Seamons | £42.00 | 2 nd Prize | Ken Budgen | £28.00 |
| 3 rd Prize | Michael Evans | £14.00 | | | |

Congratulations to the winners of the Tatsfield PFA 100 Club for **December 2025**:

| | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|--------|-----------------------|--------------|--------|
| 1 st Prize | Margaret Burton | £42.00 | 2 nd Prize | Nigel Gracie | £28.00 |
| 3 rd Prize | Mary Wiggins | £14.00 | | | |

Thank you for supporting sport in Tatsfield. If you know of anyone who wishes to join the 100 Club (for a modest £6 per month), or if you would like additional numbers, then please contact me at leames200@gmail.com. Les Eames

It's not only in our own archives that material about Tatsfield's past is to be found. The huge British Library newspaper collection is constantly being added to, and so it was that I came across further evidence of political activity in Tatsfield a hundred years ago. Once again it happened at Tangland Castle in Goatsfield Road.



the longest-running West End opera, who had lived at Tanglands in earlier years.

The local papers at the beginning of the year give an account of a busy Tatsfield, with much of the news centring on Westmore Green.

Last month I recounted plans for the Southern Heights Light Railway, with a station near the Village Hall. In January 1926 the Surrey Mirror was suggesting that the railway would run on an embankment or even a viaduct across Westmore Green! And by February the Westerham Herald was talking about a station near the White House.

Another issue was a track across Westmore Green connecting Lusted Hall Lane with Redhouse Road. Eight residents had protested against plans to stop vehicles being driven on the track, saying it had been open from time immemorial. Nevertheless it was decided to stop vehicular traffic using the track – hence the concrete posts at the end of Redhouse Road that exist to this day.

Also at the beginning of the year, the Working Men's Club called for the filling in of the village pond because of the flooding of its and the other cellars of premises on the Parade. At the next parish council meeting it was recommended that the pond's bank should be raised with a brick edge to prevent water spilling across the road in front of the Parade and that the pond itself should be cleaned out. At the same meeting action was also called to stop horses being grazed on Westmore Green in defiance of the by-laws.

Meanwhile, Godstone Rural District Council had been reviewing the state of some of the narrow roads in its area and decided that Chalkpit Road, Oxted and White Lane, Tatsfield should be closed entirely for vehicular traffic.

Ian Mitchell, Tatsfield History Project - Tatsfield.history@talk21.com Tel: 577376
Website: <https://e-voice.org.uk/tatsfieldhistoryproject/>

NIGEL'S NATURE NOTES

Waxwings, Siskins, Fieldfares, Cutwings, Hawfinches, Bramblings... the reports have been pouring in: into my dreams! The fact is that I've heard nothing, zilch, nichts, rien, hakuna chochote. Fortunately, I have a few observations of my own worth mentioning.

It's surprising how a little sprinkling of snow brings unusual or generally unseen wildlife onto the garden scene. Tracks running up and down the lawn told me that a **Fox** was visiting on its nightly scavenge. Other tracks, nearer to the house, appeared to be those of a **Pheasant** and indeed, a couple of days later, an overweight, cock Pheasant was spotted heading towards the wild area, its colourful plumage standing out against the frozen snow. Around the same time (early January), a small flock of a dozen or so **Fieldfares** flew over, failing to see the potential feast of cotoneaster berries down below. In past years these would have been gobbled up by visiting Song Thrushes, Redwings and Blackbirds but this year they have been left to ornament the garden. Perhaps the birds know there is worse to come and are keeping them in reserve? But best of all, on January



5th, six **Lapwings** appeared, flapping haphazardly across the sparkling, blue, winter sky. This may prove to be my best observation of the year. I recall with great fondness the excitement of walking across the fields towards Beddlestead with numerous dancing, diving Lapwings performing and crying out overhead. If a few choose to return this spring it will indeed be cause for celebration. (See photo.)

The winter migrants may not have arrived as expected but a cheery email has done. Stuart (Payne) sent this New Year message which includes a reminder that the RSPB isn't the only national bird protection organisation worthy of our support:

(30.12.25) 'Just wanted to thank you for your nature notes through 2025. I've enjoyed reading them and it's good that you, along with John Allbutt and Jim Kenney, keep wildlife concerns in people's minds through the Parish mag.

*January is the RSPB's 'birdwatch' time [Birdwatch 2026, 23rd - 25th January] which we do every year, but I've also been doing the British Trust for Ornithology's weekly garden bird survey for the last few years which gathers valuable data on garden birds and mammals, amphibians and some of the insects we see in our gardens. It might be worth publicising this as the number of people taking part nationally has tailed off a bit since a peak during Covid. It's fun to do and easy to upload your results on the BTO's website [BTO.org]. We get a regular magazine and one result of reading this was last month to spot a new (for us) bird in Mum's garden; a **Marsh Tit**. These are very similar to the Coal Tit but have an all-black head without the white mohican stripe. Until reading about them I'd always assumed from the name that they were only found in marshes, but not so!'*

I've just visited their website and yes, Stuart, you are so right; the work of the BTO is impressive, important and most certainly does get overlooked. Let's give it a 'shout out' right now: **Join the BTO – it's worthy of your support!**

We may seem powerless to prevent species decline, but through the collective support of the many concerned and caring individuals throughout the British Isles, organisations such as the BTO and the RSPB are enabled to act on our behalf to safeguard the wildlife that we hold dear. I found the following statement on the BTO website that neatly sums up why these organisations are worthy of our support:

'Our relationship with birds often brings a deep connection that enriches our lives. From heralding the change of the seasons, to sound-tracking key moments that forge lifelong memories, birds become totems that bring joy, meaning and even healing to so many of us. But almost a third of UK bird species are in population free fall, and as a result our lives are diminished. Year after year they become fewer, their dwindling voices drowned out by the white noise of daily life. The scream of the Swift, the raucous chatter of the Starling, the iconic call of the Cuckoo; no longer simply birdsong but desperate cries for help.'

We can all provide practical support by creating garden sanctuaries, through local environmental awareness and wildlife-friendly improvement, and in the form of outreach support for regional and national organisations through financial assistance. Perhaps it's time to break the piggybank? Your few pounds could make a big difference.

Stuart also mentioned his sighting of a new tit in the garden. Most tits can be seen in our village gardens and their identification is fairly straightforward. A problem only arises when attempting to identify the difference between the Marsh and the Willow.

'You're right about the Marsh and Willow. I think the Marsh is slightly more common so assumed it was probably one of those but can't tell for sure. I don't know which has been seen most frequently in the village?'

As you said previously, Stuart, their names aren't particularly helpful. But, instead of worrying, I suggest that we follow Brian Thomas's advice (East Surrey RSPB). Since the Willow Tit hasn't been seen in East Surrey since 2003 and is now considered extinct in this part of the world, the possibility of seeing one in our gardens isn't worth considering. So, if anyone thinks they've seen a Willow Tit in their Willow tree, they're mistaken. It was a Marsh Tit!

Any news or views? Contact: nigelshaw2000@hotmail.com
Alternatively, drop a note in to 'Primrose Ridge', Greenway.



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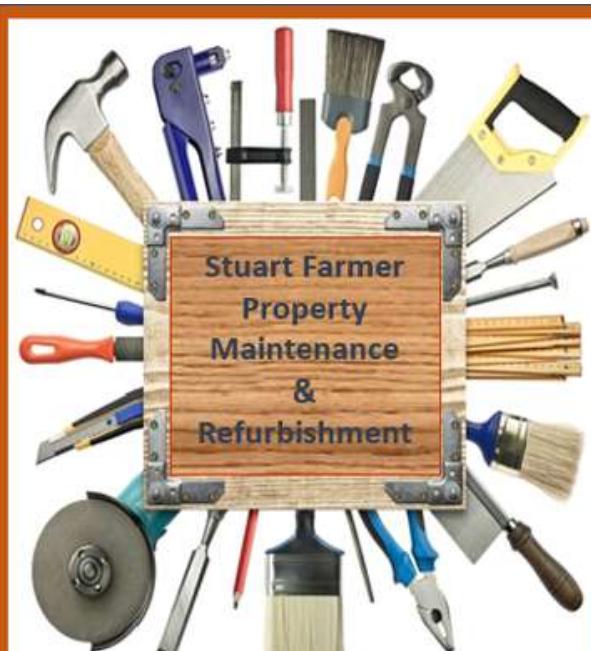
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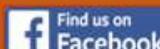
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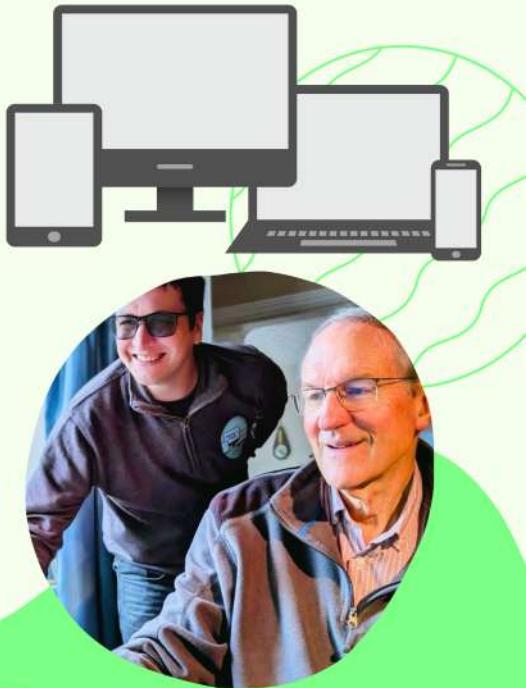
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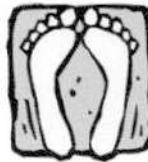
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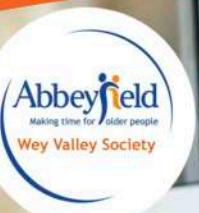
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