



2009  
2014

## CATSFIELD LOCAL ACTION PLAN

[www.catsfieldpc.co.uk](http://www.catsfieldpc.co.uk)





This photograph was taken of Catsfield just after the Second World War

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## What is the Catsfield Local Action Plan?

A brief explanation...



Local Action Plans pull together community priorities through consultation and detail the actions (e.g. who, when, how) required to address community needs and deliver improvements in the quality of life of localities. The three Towns and the majority of Parishes in the Rother District are working towards such Action Plans, the results of which will be communicated to statutory agencies such as Rother District Council, East Sussex County Council, The NHS Hastings and Rother and the Safer Rother Partnership. These agencies will be asked to respond to key messages emerging from Local Action Plans.

The development of our local action plan gives you, the Parishioner, the opportunity to gauge how successful your Parish Council are at delivering the actions on issues that are important to you.

We held an open event on the 30 April 2008 in which members of the community attended and fed back their comments on key areas such as housing, community safety, the environment and transport. From this event a questionnaire was put together and sent to every household in the parish.

The responses to this questionnaire have been analysed and the key actions requested form the basis of our Local Action Plan for Catsfield over the next 5 years.

## A brief history of Catsfield

by the History Group



The first known mention of (Cedesfille) Catsfield “there is a little church serving the Hall” is to be found in the 1086 record, which was commissioned by Duke William of Normandy and known as the Domesday Book. Fields to the North and East of the Church contain many man made ramparts, similar to those found around the iron age or early Saxon villages. The 11th Century Church of St Laurence has been one of the main influences in the Parish and currently continues that theme.

The village school, was first known to be on the present site as early as 1817 when the Reverend William Delves and James Eversfield commissioned the building of a new Church of England School. Replaced in 1845 and extended in 1912, and after the Second World War and most recently in 2004 where over £500,000 was invested in new buildings, with very significant contributions from the local community .

The “White Hart” public house was originally constructed as a private dwelling in 1675. The Tithe map of 1840 shows that it was known then as “The White Hart Inn”, with its function room it was one of the centres for entertainment in the village. The centre of the village known as “The Green” was open common land until the eighteenth century. Towards the end of the 19th and early 20th Century the green became the focal point of the village as it is today.

In 1805 the village consisted of a handful of houses. During the period 1800 to 1900 a great many of the current buildings were erected. Since then, very little has been added, except for the Council housing estate (1948) in Skinners lane.



## Why Catsfield is a great place to live and work

It's a great place to live and we don't want it to change very much! This was the overwhelming view of the vast majority of Parishioners who completed our questionnaire. Catsfield today is a vibrant parish of 824 people and 340 households (ESIF 2008 estimate). We are members of a community who are generally satisfied with the environment we live in.

## What you told us about living and working in Catsfield

A survey was undertaken during the Annual Parish Assembly in April 2008 in order to provide data to produce a questionnaire. This questionnaire was then delivered to all 340 households in Catsfield Village. A return ratio for the questionnaire of just over 27% was achieved, with 93 households responding representing the views of 223 residents. The research data was analysed and interpreted by members of the Local Action Plan team. It was presented to Catsfield Parish Council for approval and was adopted by them at the Annual Parish Assembly, held on 15th May 2009.

We are luckier than many other villages in East Sussex as we do have a village store, a sausage shop, a pub, a village hall, a community pavilion, a reasonable bus service and lots of public spirited individuals who want see our village flourish now and in the future. We have an excellent Church of England Primary School and an active Under 5's Playgroup. Over the next few pages you will see that we also have a diverse range of clubs and societies that give Catsfield its "life and soul"

68% of Parishioners said the Village is sufficiently tidy

## Catsfield Sports Clubs

What clubs are available today...

### Catsfield Football Team



Although we do not know when football was first played in the village, we do know that there is reference in the Bexhill Directory of 1907 to say that the Club was formed on 13 February 1906. The Club disbanded after the 1996/97 season and reformed at the start of the 2001/02 season and has enjoyed league and cup successes over the past eight seasons.

The Club, which now has two teams, plays their home games at Catsfield Playing Field and fixtures, results and league tables can be found in the local Observer newspapers or on the East Sussex Football League website:

[www.esfl.org.uk](http://www.esfl.org.uk).

### Catsfield Cricket Team



[www.catsfieldpc.co.uk](http://www.catsfieldpc.co.uk)

Very little information about Catsfield Cricket Club is available, in the form of records and other documents but most members of the Club know that it was founded on 22nd September 1799, when Edward Quaife of Catsfield played a Mr. Martin of Battle, at Hooe Common, for ten guineas a side, Wickets were pitched at 1pm.

In the Twentieth century, cricket has been played regularly at Catsfield and in the finest sporting spirit (to quote Arthur Gilligan) as it currently is today.

## Catsfield Stoolball Team



The game of stoolball, more than 500 years old, is the forerunner of the modern game of cricket. The modern rules of stoolball were consolidated at a meeting at Glynde in East Sussex in 1881. Until the introduction of secondary schools, Catsfield C of E Primary School taught children until the age of 14 so stoolball was one of the sports played. Nowadays we have one ladies team and one mixed team in the village, both of which play friendly games and tournaments against other village teams between May and August.

## Catsfield Village Hall

A brief history...



Lord Brassey who lived at Normanhurst provided our Village Hall in 1903 and it has served villagers well ever since. At the beginning of the 1990's the Parish Council who were running the Hall at the time, realised that grants for many needed improvements could be obtained if the Hall was run by a charity. Such a charity was formed and after much hard work and fund raising the improvements, which can be seen today, came into being. This included incorporating the former caretaker's house, Hermon Cottage into the main structure of the Hall.

Later works have included a new and more flexible heating system, a new floor in the main hall (the old one was causing too many splinters for the playgroup and keep fit classes to cope with) and a refurbished kitchen. A programme of regular maintenance and renovation is planned for the future. This is assuming that the high level of bookings continues. At present it is difficult to find a daytime slot and there are not many evenings free either.

## Catsfield Amateur Dramatic Society (CADS)



Records seem strangely silent as to the origins of this society but the best suggestion is that it stemmed from The Boys' Club Pantomime in 1944 organised by Bertha Broadley wife of the owner of the garage, which used to be where Broadley Cottages now stand. The Society then developed through the Tennis Club Concert Party to CADS, which by the mid fifties was presenting full-length plays, which it then continued to do until the mid eighties when falling audiences prompted a change to pantomimes. This was a recipe for great success and 2009 is a special year as CADS will present its 25th pantomime. Apart from these annual offerings CADS will often perform fund raising murder mysteries and one-act play evenings. CADS attract people in their teens to those in their eighties, mostly from the village but it is always willing to import talent from further afield.

## The Catsfield Book Group

We meet on the third Tuesday of the month in Hermon Cottage at 4 pm to discuss our book of the month. These are provided by Battle Library, which is most convenient, as they allow members who would like to keep their book longer, to return it to any ESCC library. To cover the cost of the hire of the Cottage we pay £1 per meeting. Discussion is always lively and adds to the interest and enjoyment of reading: we all say that the Reading Group makes us read books we might never else have tackled. The more difficult the book, often the more interesting the discussion. We have members from Catsfield, Battle, Bexhill and Ashburnham and are always pleased to welcome new readers.

## Catsfield Horticultural Society

The Horticultural Society goes back many years in the history of Catsfield. Its prime role seems to have always been the annual flower show and fete held at various venues over the years including Twisly and Parkgate before finishing up on The Playing Fields. However it has in the recent past also provided for its members evening talks, outings and even a horticultural shop.

In the middle of the last century the flower show and fete started to show a profit and initially the committee used to give donations to various local charities as they saw fit. Then with dwindling helpers village groups were offered a stall in exchange for a share of the surplus funds. Latterly this has changed to funds being given to a particular project. In recent years some younger people have stepped forward to take up the running of the fete side of things which is slowly spreading into the flower show aspect, giving raised hope for a continuing future for the Society.

## Catsfield 55 Lunch Club

We meet in the Village Hall every Friday at 12.30 pm, for a home cooked meal costing £2.50 per person. Currently we have 26 members, including 8 visitors from Parkgate Manor. All our members come from Catsfield. Successive teams of three volunteers help to serve lunch and wash up, with everyone lending a hand when necessary. Once a month we hold a raffle which is always fun and at Christmas we hold a very good Christmas lunch for our members and helpers. The 55 Lunch Club is a good forum for older people in the village to get advice from central organisations and to care about each other. The Village Hall makes an excellent venue and we are fortunate to have a dedicated cook. Currently we have a grant from Action in Rural Sussex to run an Extend course of exercise classes before the meal.

## The W.I.

There has been a W.I. in Catsfield since 1918 it was among the first groups to be formed in England. We meet on the first Thursday afternoon of the month in Catsfield village hall. Our varied programme aims to educate and entertain, there are also Scrabble and rambling groups who meet monthly. We hold various fund raising events during the year to support local projects, from the playground, the new school hall, the Church organ and now the newly awaited allotments for the village.

In the W.I. women find friendship and support, a chance to learn new skills and to use their talents. Nationally we work with the government for the good of our society. At home our aim is to improve life for all who live in our community, and to keep Catsfield the happy and caring village it is. Together we can make a difference.



## Catsfield Under 5's

Catsfield Village Hall and Hermon Cottage has been home to the Catsfield Under Fives Pre-School as a charitable organisation since April 1994. It is run by extremely enthusiastic and qualified staff who are friendly and welcoming work hard to provide a safe and happy environment for the children in their care. Originally opening for 2 sessions a week we are now able to offer 8 sessions a week during term-time. At our liveliest we have 24 children ranging from 2 to 5 years. The Pre-school is managed by a group of parent volunteers who form the Pre-school Committee.

Along side the Pre-School runs our Toddlers Group – Catsfield Kittens. The Kittens get together every Monday morning in Hermon Cottage from 9.00 to 11.30 during term-time to provide activities for children under the age of 5. The group is completely run by volunteers for parents, grandparents and carers to attend together with their children for a small charge, which helps pay for the toys, a craft activity, refreshments and insurance.

We have a good relationship with Catsfield Church of England and Primary School frequently visit their Reception class to help prepare the children for their transition into the school environment.

Our mission statement says it all....

*'It is our aim to provide the best care for all children in a safe happy environment. We have a simple routine with daily activities. Each term there is a new theme to promote and stimulate the children's creative and educational needs. We aim create an atmosphere where children feel relaxed and secure. We provide a variety of activities and a range of equipment to support the children's learning.'*

## Other Clubs, Societies, Organisations and Institutions

- St Laurence Church PCC
- Fete Committee
- Luncheon Club
- Cycling Proficiency
- East Sussex Bridge Club
- Hand-Bell Ringers
- Whist Drive
- Catsfield CE Primary School

## Catsfield Walks

Where the walks are around Catsfield



St. Laurence's Church



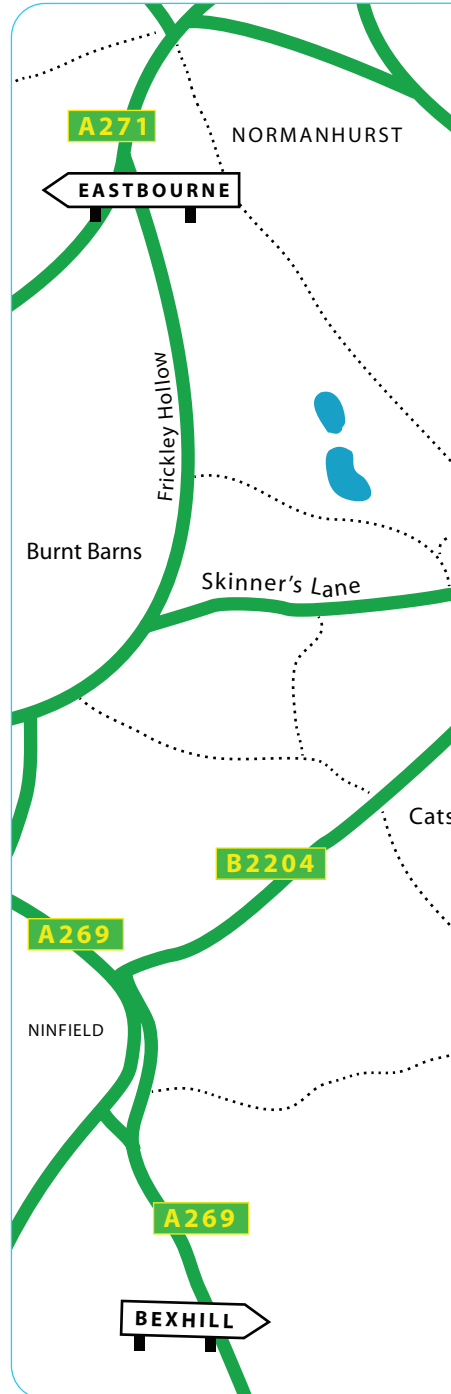
Catsfield Pavilion

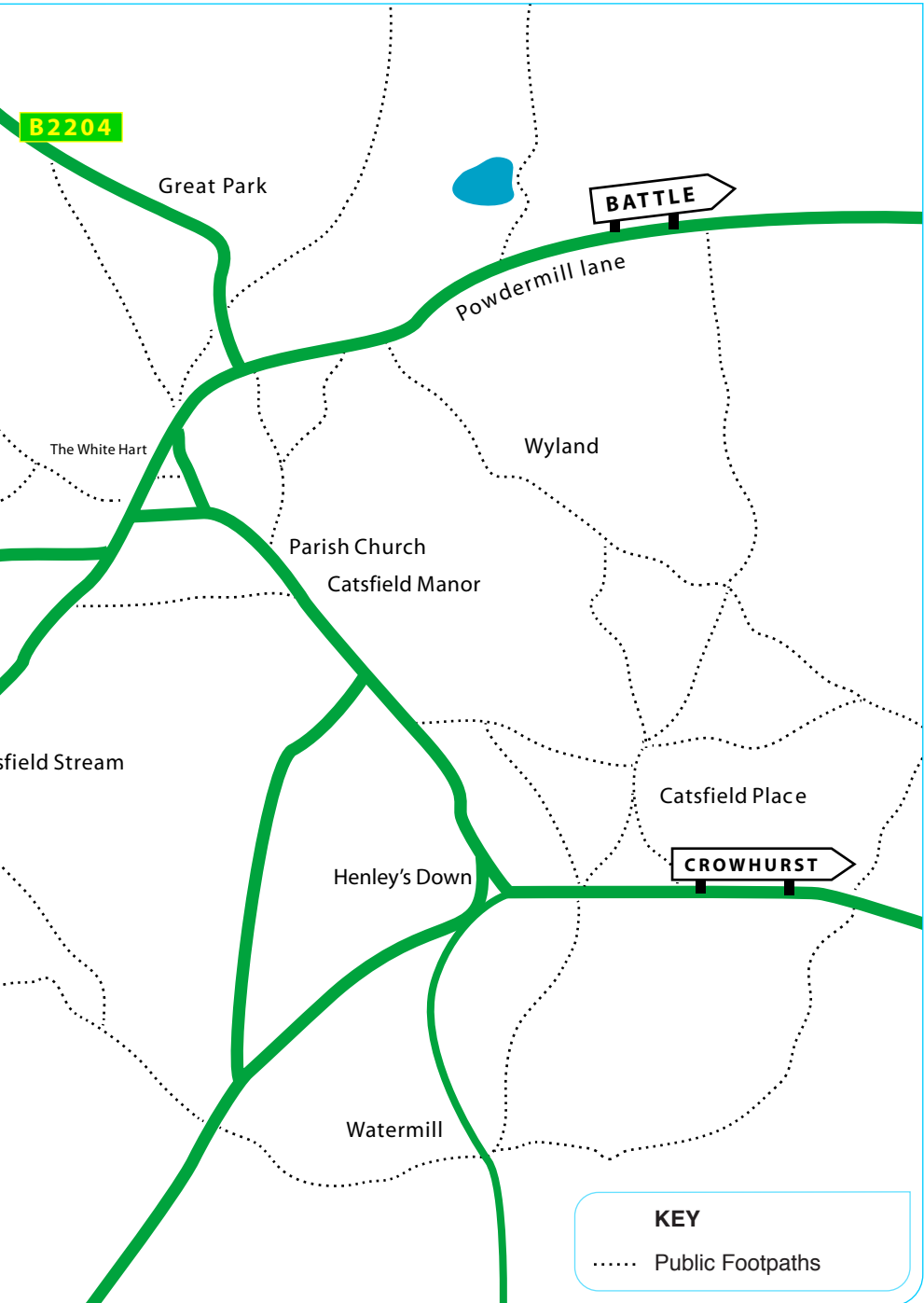


Catsfield Village Hall



The White Hart Public House





22% of Parishioners regularly use public transport

## Our Playing Field and Pavilion



Everyone is very proud of our new Pavilion which was only completed recently after several years of fund raising and applying for grants. It is a magnificent building that we hope to further develop over the coming years into a well resourced Community Facility. It is available for hire by any groups or societies by contacting the Parish Clerk. With any new building it takes time to “bed in” and it has been established that we shall need to take some further action on the drainage and the expanded car parking area.

### ACTION ONE

Provide proper drainage and resurface the car park by end 2010

### Communication

Better communication with YOU the Parishioners...

Communication flows through the village in the form of :

- 1 The monthly Parish Magazine
- 2 The Notice boards located at Catsfield Stream, White Hart Pub on The Green, inside and outside the Village Hall and also outside Catsfield Primary School
- 3 The weekly Local Newspapers
- 4 Good old fashioned talking to one another.

Overall local response showed a level of satisfaction and an interest for further information to be made available. The emphasis is on the Village Hall activities and events, Social events, Sporting facilities and events, Agendas and Minutes of the Parish Council Meetings.

The majority of respondents agreed that a specific Parish Newsletter should be circulated to every Household on a regular basis. This will publish details of forthcoming Sports and Social events in and around the Village, news items, planning decisions, topics of local interest and any items that might impact on the way of life in Catsfield!

As a part of our plan to improve communication we have already set up the Parish web site which you can find at [www.catsfieldpc.co.uk](http://www.catsfieldpc.co.uk) This already lists all the current Parish Councillors and how to contact them as well as Minutes from Council meetings. We hope to include a comprehensive History of Catsfield provided by the History Group (who meet regularly in the Village Hall). The web site also allows YOU to report, anonymously if necessary, anything that you observe within the village that may be inappropriate – for example vandalism, petty crime, fly tipping, and anything else that you might want reported to the Police Community Support Officers.

The Parish Council will also produce a 'Welcome Pack' for newcomers to Catsfield. This will emphasise that as we are a small 'Village' community we rely on local people to get involved with the activities in the parish, consideration for our neighbours is important in our village, support local business and services if you can and also to take note that our lanes are narrow and used by pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders, so keep your speed down!

**A welcome pack will be devised and will include:**

- 1 A copy of the Local Action Plan
- 2 The most recently published Parish Newsletter and Parish Magazine
- 3 A list of telephone numbers for all local activities and services
- 4 An information leaflet from the Womens Institute
- 5 Bus Timetable
- 6 Household Emergency Plan
- 7 Mobile Library Schedule

## ACTION TWO

### Improve Village Communication

#### HOW:

✓ **Create a regular Newsletter**  
The Parish Newsletter will be circulated with the Parish magazine and also to all residents on the electoral roll.

✓ **Create a Village 'Welcome Pack'**

✓ **Establish a Village Website**

#### WHEN:

All these objectives should be completed by June 2010 and continuously developed and improved over the course of this plan



## Community Safety and Fear of Crime

Where we are now...



Catsfield is fortunate not to be a high crime area and responses confirmed that fear of crime or anti-social behaviour is not considered a problem. The Local Rural Officer based at Battle, assisted by a Community Support Officer have made a good presence in the Village, though few knew how to make contact with them.

### Know your Neighbourhood Police Team

PCSO

0 7 9 2 0 7 1 0 5 4 4

Battle Police Station

0 8 4 5 6 0 7 0 9 9 9

Extension

6 5 2 0 3

Remember that you can report anything to the PCSO. This includes on kerb car parking, vandalism, antisocial behaviour, speeding traffic, littering, to name just a few!

## Employment and Services

Where we are now...

There are a number of businesses operating in Catsfield and the majority of respondents would like to see a directory of the local businesses, services and skills produced. In today's modern society with broadband and Skype it is amazing what a diversity of business operations actually take place on a daily basis in our Village! Everything from sausage making, poultry keeping, and traditional farming to the marketing of published partworks, natural antibiotics and satellite dishes – it all goes on in Catsfield!

### ACTION THREE

Produce a local business directory

Our survey has however indicated that the scope for new business or industrial premises was considered not necessary in Catsfield. We do intend however to produce a directory of local businesses and services available to everyone.



74% of Parishioners would use a directory of local business, services and skills

## The Environment

Where we are now...



The overwhelming majority of Parishioners responding to our questionnaire were firmly in favour of keeping the Village tidy and reducing litter that accumulates around the Village. To this end the Parish Council have set up a regular STOP THE DROP campaign to keep Catsfield as litter free as possible. Volunteers, teachers and pupils from Catsfield Primary School and Claverham Community College, many of whom actually live in Catsfield, started the STOP THE DROP Campaign in 2009. This was the first litter day in Catsfield and we intend to do this on a regular basis - perhaps 2-3 times per year but we do need more adult volunteers to come along and help us keep the Village clean and tidy.



80% of Parishioners felt there was too much packaging waste in the environment

Sadly, litter is never always of the paper kind. Inevitably most Villages have problems with Dog Fouling and Catsfield is no different. So part of our anti-litter campaign will include the provision of more dog bins in the Village.

It is also our aim to start a series of Community Planting to both enhance and protect our Village landscape. We will engage the expert assistance of the Catsfield Horticultural Society to identify suitable areas and recommend the types and varieties of plants that will best enhance the existing landscape and habitat.

## ACTION FOUR

Improve our local environment



### HOW:



**We will provide much more community planting in consultation with the Catsfield Horticultural Society.**



**Provide more dog bins**

With regard to placing more dog bins in the Village we propose to place one outside the School and another along the Green

### WHEN:

This will be ongoing throughout this planning period

## Roads and Transport

Where we are now...



Traffic is a problem all over Catsfield. Not just the volume or the speed of the traffic but the often poor parking in the village and the increasing number of large lorries that seem to travel between Catsfield and Crowhurst and onto Hastings.

As this plan went to print we were informed that the speed limit at Catsfield Stream is going to be reduced to 40mph. This is a significant reduction as certain traffic calming measures are also planned to slow down the traffic in this dangerous area of the Village.

The Parish Council is also committed to slowing the traffic down. To this end we are going to invest in some training to enable us to operate a SID (Speed Identification Device). We will then either hire or purchase a share in a SID and operate it at various places in Catsfield. It is possible to keep a record of those vehicles that speed and persistent offenders can be reported to the Police and fines are issued.

## ACTION FIVE

### Campaign for speed reductions across the Parish

**Campaign for speed reductions across the Parish and hire or purchase a SID to measure traffic speeds around the Village.**

We are also looking at several ways of preventing cars from parking on verges and in awkward positions around the village. We should not forget that we have an excellent and under-used car park at the Village Hall. A number of options are under consideration and this may result in the adoption of double yellow lines where appropriate, and further traffic calming measures with increased signage. All this is designed to slow traffic speeds around the village and make Catsfield a safer place for you and your children.



## Homes and Housing

Where we are now...

Catsfield has a mixture of dwellings including some Social Housing which was meant for local residents as well as some Rother District Council properties and the usual mixture of large and small privately owned houses! It has become very popular to extend homes and generally speaking the Parish Council is in favour of these small scale developments providing the character of the property is maintained.

The majority of residents in Catsfield did not want to see any major housing developments and overall it was felt that there was no real need for more property to be developed. Some residents were happy to see some “affordable housing” developed but in this respect the schemes available are not foolproof in offering housing only to Catsfield residents or their relatives and so we propose to try and limit future large scale development as much as possible.

Catsfield has already been earmarked to provide a further 40 dwellings by 2026 according to the Rother Local Development plans and to this end we have already seen a significant number of “in fill” properties and the Parish Council will make sure that these “count” towards our final total.

## Our Emergency Action Plan

The Emergency Plan is designed as an initial response to a variety of situations which may affect the parish of Catsfield and our neighbours. This response may be as simple as providing local knowledge, or as complex as providing support to a major incident.

Emergencies can occur at any time, and often strike without warning. Whilst immediate response is carried out by the Emergency and Health Services there is a major support role that is undertaken by Local Authorities, especially when it comes to supporting the community and helping to restore normality.

Catsfield Parish Council will cooperate and coordinate with East Sussex County Council and Rother District Council's Emergency Plans. Liaison with the Emergency planner, and other agencies may be direct with individuals or with the Parish Council via the Clerk. Lead responsibility of the chain of command often lies with the Police and we will add our assistance where appropriate.

There are a great number of details in the Emergency Plan but in simple terms it allows the Parish Council to provide an initial point of contact and a framework of contacts and activities which will support the community, people in distress or at risk, and responding agencies in the event of an emergency.

### Emergency contact number:

Parish Clerk

0 1 4 2 4 8 9 3 5 2 6

## A set of further priorities

Apart from the actions highlighted in this Local Action Plan the Parish Council would also like to make progress on a number of other projects over the course of this Plan. Most of these projects will require significant investment and therefore may not be completed or even started by 2014. However the Parish Council will keep looking for Grants and Awards and assistance wherever possible to at least make a start on the following priorities:

- Refurbishment and improvement of the Playground
- Replacement of the existing toilet block and storage facilities at the playing fields
- Set up of a Junior Council specifically to look after the priorities of young people living in Catsfield

## Useful Phone Numbers

Village Hall Booking Secretary	0 1 4 2 4	2 1 1 5 1 3
Snooker Room	0 1 4 2 4	8 9 2 0 3 9
Under 5's Playgroup	0 7 5 3 2	1 8 8 6 1 0
Catsfield Stores / Post Office	0 1 4 2 4	8 9 3 4 9 8
Parish Clerk	0 1 4 2 4	8 9 3 5 2 6
St Laurence's Church Rector	0 1 4 2 4	8 9 2 9 8 8
PCSO	0 7 9 2 0	7 1 0 5 4 4
Battle Police Station	0 8 4 5	6 0 7 0 9 9 9
Extension	6 5 2 0 3	

## Acknowledgements

<b>Scott Lavocah</b>	Member of the Local Action Plan Team
<b>Carol Hodgson</b>	Parish Clerk and member of the Local Action Plan Team
<b>Peter Josling</b>	Parish Councillor and member of the Local Action Plan Team
<b>Ian Coleman</b>	Rother Local Action Plans Support Programme Development Worker, RVA.

All the Clubs and Societies that contributed to this Local Action Plan.

With thanks to the support and guidance offered by Rother Voluntary Action's Community Development Worker, Action in Rural Sussex and funding from the Rother Local Strategic Partnership.

mr

Designed by Matt Roberts  
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**RVA**  
Rother Voluntary Action



## **ACTION ONE**

Provide proper drainage and resurface the car park by end 2010

## **ACTION TWO**

Improve Village Communication

## **ACTION THREE**

Produce a local business directory

## **ACTION FOUR**

Improve our local environment with community planting

## **ACTION FIVE**

Campaign for speed reductions across the Parish and improved road safety

For details concerning anything to do with village life, please contact the Parish Clerk:

Telephone:

**01424 893526**

E-mail:

**[clerk@catsfieldpc.co.uk](mailto:clerk@catsfieldpc.co.uk)**