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Catshill & North Marlbrook

Parish Council

Newsletter Spring 2015

Parish Council Elections

LOCAL council elections are held every four years and here in Catshill and North Marlbrook the parish council is no different.

Does that sentence bother you? Are you thinking – “Wait a minute, I’ve never voted for that lot, what are they talking about?”

The reason you will not have actually gone into a voting booth to elect a parish councillor is because for the last eight years at least the number of vacancies on the parish council has been the same as, or more than, the number of people who put their names forward. Those people who became parish councillors were elected unopposed. You could say they were elected by default.

The only way you will have the opportunity to put your cross on a ballot paper and actively vote for a parish councillor is if more people are nominated for the role than there are spaces on the council. We think there may have been one or two ballots in the past but we definitely know that the last two elections have been uncontested!

Anyone who is qualified to stand for election can seek nomination to become a parish councillor. To find out more we have information guides about the forthcoming elections available in paper format direct from the parish council office and online at www.catshillandnorthmarlbrook-pc.gov.uk

This year will be the first year for elections to the new parish wards here in Catshill and North Marlbrook. The reason for this is because the parish council boundaries mirror those of the district council which, following the Bromsgrove District Boundary Review, has seen the division of the district’s Catshill ward into Catshill North and Catshill South. The new parish wards are now called **Woodrow** which covers the same area as Catshill North, and **Barley Meadow** which covers the same area as Catshill South.

The parish council’s Marlbrook ward will stay the same size and shape but will now be known as **Lower Marlbrook** and is part of the district’s Marlbrook ward.

The total number of parish councillors that represents the whole parish council stays the same at thirteen and they have been allocated to represent each ward so that there are 3 members for the Woodrow ward, 8 members for the Barley Meadow ward and 2 members for the Lower Marlbrook ward. *Turn to page 2.*

www.catshillandnorthmarlbrook-pc.gov.uk

Continued from page 1.

Nomination papers will be available from the parish council office and from Bromsgrove District Council and on completion they must be returned to the District Council's Electoral Services officers by hand; postal applications will not be accepted.

If you are interested in standing for election to represent local people at our local council grass roots level, and would like to get involved in supporting your local community on all sorts of matters such as planning the built environment, footpaths, highways, public transport, community events, lobbying for improvements to council services and so on, then make sure you submit your nomination form by 4pm on Thursday 9th April.

Who knows, if enough people put their names forward we might even have a ballot!

Dog Fouling

APOLOGIES for lowering the tone, but how do we put it politely without causing offence? If you keep a dog and feed it, then at some point in the day it will produce dog-poo which owners are expected to dispose of responsibly. Dog mess is an eyesore and a health hazard and dog owners have a legal duty to clean up every time their dog messes in a public place.

At the February meeting of the parish council we heard that the District Council's Mucky Pup campaign will be concentrating its efforts in Catshill, so we can expect to



see an increase in poo patrols and notices on the pavement urging us to 'pick up'.

The best advice is to train your dog to go in your garden. The waste can then be disposed of by a number of different methods such as scooped into a plastic bag and placed into your grey waste bin, or into a dog-waste composter dug into your garden, or direct into the sewer system.

This website may be useful:- <http://turning2green.co.uk/blog/?p=627>

If you are out walking with your dog without a poop-scoop the parish council has provided two dog waste bag dispensers; one is at Catshill Meadow and the other is at the Braces Lane recreation ground. Please then either dispose of the poo at home or place in any council waste bin – no need to search for a special dog-waste bin, any bin will do.

Street Theatre to Return

AFTER the success of last years Street Theatre on the Meadow, we are pleased to report that Bromsgrove District Council are arranging with the Catshill Meadow committee to come back on Monday 3rd August.

Watch out for details of this free fun event in the near future.

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Bonfire on the Meadow

MANY Hundreds of people turned up for the annual parish council firework display on Saturday 1st November, and they were all treated to a spectacular display of fireworks, a large bonfire and the choice of wonderful food. Many thanks must go to everyone involved with the organising especially the 6th Bromsgrove Scouts.



Larger crowds than ever attended, so many in fact that the start had to be delayed by a few minutes to allow the people queuing on the pavements to get in. However everyone agrees that this was once again a fantastic community event, and the good news is that this year's display is already being planned. So why not join us for the fun this year, and remember there is free parking at the school opposite, and you might get to set the fireworks off!

From Our Past



THIS edition's photograph from our past has a current resonance. It dates from the late 70s and shows the effects of flooding in Green Lane which just goes to show that flooding in this area is nothing new.

However we all hope that the flood alleviation measures mentioned on page 12 will mean that photographs like this remain a thing of the past.

VE-DAY

70th ANNIVERSARY EVENT

**You are invited to celebrate
The 70th Anniversary of V.E. Day,
on Friday 8th May 2015
at 7:30pm in the Catshill Club.**

**This 1940's themed
event is being organised by
the Catshill Village Hall
Trustees and will feature
1940's Big Band music
to dance to, along with
1940's refreshments!**

**Tickets are just £7.50
and are available from:**

**A B & J Bate 01527 833342
Ian Hooper 01527 574316 or
Owen Sweeting 01527 870895**

IN the summer 2014 edition of this newsletter we carried a feature on the improved access to the footpaths that go through the fields off the A38 south of North Bromsgrove Cemetery, which is located in Barley Mow Lane. These improvements were done to help walkers who could no longer access the field via the commonly used “unofficial entrance” that has been blocked off whilst ground-work is done to extend the cemetery.

Last summer’s improvements were generally welcomed by walkers, but since then members of the public have contacted the parish council, alerting us to the fact that the steps down to the field at the new entrance were rather steep and lacked sufficient hand rails.

We are now pleased to announce that during February Bromsgrove District Council added a new hand rail which we are sure will benefit all who use the steps.



Walking for Weightloss

All classes start week beginning 16th February 2015



To lose weight and to keep it off you need to get moving. Join our FREE sessions now at a location near you.

Walking at a moderate pace for 30-60 minutes burns stored fat, but it will also increase strength which helps to speed up your metabolism. Walking is also associated with cutting your risk of heart disease, breast cancer, colon cancer, diabetes and stroke. Isn't it time to fit a 1 hour walk into your busy lifestyle?

Mondays 9.30am - The Meadows, Alvechurch

Tuesdays 9.30am - Sanders Park, Bromsgrove

Wednesdays 9.30am - Millenium Park, Barn't Green

Thursdays 9.30am - St Chads Park, Rubery

Fridays 9.30am - Lickey End recreation Ground

Saturdays 11am - Charford Recreation ground, Bromsgrove

Sundays 10am - Lingfield Walk, Catshill



For further information on this group, or other similar activities please contact Hayley Gwilliam on 01527 881404
email: hayley.gwilliam@bromsgrovedistrictcouncil.gov.uk



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New Beaver Scout Colony Opens in Catshill

6th Bromsgrove Scout Group celebrated by opening its doors to its latest edition to the group. Their new Beaver Scout Colony started with 8 new members, 2 leaders and 2 sectional assistants in January. The colony is already growing with an additional 4 members who have recently joined. As with all scouting sections we are open to both boys and girls and the young people will take part in an active balanced programme in order gain awards and badges, learning new skills as they progress through the section.

Next Month, the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts will all be visiting the RAF Museum at Cosford as part of their Air Researchers badge. During the summer two camps are planned – the first is within ear shot of West Midlands Safari Park - at night you can listen to the nearby animals! The



left to right: Tanya (Sectional Assistant), Jayne (Sectional Assistant), Claire (Beaver Scout Leader), Emma (Assistant Beaver Scout Leader), Martin (Group Scout Leader).

second is a adventurous activities camp in the Lake District including water sports and mountaineering. The new Beaver Scouts have all this to look forward to!

Martin Wood who oversees Catshill Scout Group said “I am really pleased that we’ve decided to open up a Beaver Scout Colony. I’m hoping that opening up our colony will benefit the local community by giving 6 – 8 year olds an opportunity to experience and develop skills for life and to give them opportunities to outdoor adventure in a safe and secure way. I’ve been involved in Scouting since the age of 6 (now 31) and have recently taken on the role of Group Scout Leader. I’m proud to be given the opportunity to undertake this role as I gained so much out of Scouts in my younger years I’ve always felt I need to give something back. I’m proud to be volunteering and working with a fantastic team of adults and working with a fantastic set of youngsters. I hope that we can continue to provide the local youngsters Scouting opportunities into the future”.



6th Bromsgrove Scout Group

JOIN THE ADVENTURE.

We Need You!!

We are looking to recruit adult volunteers for a range of different roles within the Scout Group to join our enthusiastic team.

We are looking for people interested in helping the Beaver, Cub and Scout sections. We are also looking for occasional parental help at events and around the Scout HQ.

We're also looking for a few people to help with fundraising and social activities and possibly to join our executive committee which plays an important role in supporting the activities of the Group.

If you have a particular skill or talent we would love to hear about it. You could be just the person we need to help our Group's success.

We're a very friendly group who put fun at the heart of our activities, both for the youngsters and for us!

If you are interested in finding out more about volunteering call or text Martin on
07746 138706

or email gsl.6thbromsgrove@gmail.com
 6th Bromsgrove Scout HQ, Lingfield Walk,
 Catshill, Bromsgrove
 B61 0UJ
www.6thbromsgrovescouts.org.uk



EARLY last year it was proposed to move Catshill Post Office from its site in Meadow Road opposite the Middle School, to the One Stop Store in Woodrow Lane. However, after much consultation a different location was selected – The Spar supermarket in Golden Cross Lane.

By late 2014, the move was successfully completed, and so now Catshill Post Office can be found within the Spar supermarket, bringing it to a more central location within the village, close to other shops and facilities where there is also safe car parking available.

Change is often hard to accept, but in this case perhaps we should be thankful that the Parish has retained the services of a Post Office, at a time when many other communities across the country are losing theirs.



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MARCH 2015

Dear All,

Spring is just beginning. On a trip to Wales recently there were some lambs in the fields, snowdrops are blooming and daffodils are just beginning to begin to turn yellow. It is a lovely time of the year. A time of new life and hope. For the Christian church we are travelling through Lent towards Easter.

Since at least AD330 the Church has prepared for Easter with a season of 40 days of fasting. The season of Lent is understood as a way of remembering and sharing in Jesus' 40 days in the wilderness. We often 'give -up' something. I remember my cousin telling his Mum that he was giving up cabbage for Lent – "But you don't like cabbage" was his Mum's reply. I don't think he had quite got the idea!

Lent is about drawing nearer to God and yes, some do that by

giving up something they enjoy while others take on a new discipline. But all is done so that we are ready to celebrate the Resurrection on Easter Sunday. This year Easter coincides with the Jewish festival of Passover which begins on Saturday 4th April with the Seder meal when Jews remember how God saved them from slavery in Egypt.

There is another special day in March – Red Nose Day. It began as Comic Relief some years ago and has been blessed with many millions of pounds in donations raised by people "Doing something funny for money". This year it seems to be about making your face look funny. The grants from the money raised combat things that are far from funny. In the UK and abroad a grant making strategy is followed. It is based on 5 themes, Better Lives, Healthier Future, Safer Lives, Stronger Communities and Fairer Society. All things worth supporting as we look with hope to New Life at Easter

May God bless you always,

Anne Smith

Minister of Catshill Methodist Church

*Remembrance Sunday*

ONCE again thank you to everyone who attended the Remembrance Sunday inter-denominational service held at Catshill Club and the act of remembrance at the War Memorial across the road on Sunday 9th November 2014. The attendance at this event continues to grow and much thanks goes to all who help with this important commemoration each year.



The crowd in the club after the event



FOR the second year running your parish council supplied an illuminated Christmas tree that was positioned in front of the Village Hall over the festive period.

This year we increased the size of the tree, and added extra lights to maximise it's impact, which we hope helped brighten up the shopping and restaurant area of the village.

You may be interested to

note that just as in previous years; the War Memorial was also illuminated over the Christmas period.

If you did not get a chance to witness the tree, then don't miss it this Christmas!

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THE outcome of the project that started with an idea last year to commemorate Catshill Middle School's 75th anniversary was celebrated at the school's assembly on Monday 9th February. The parish council's Chairman, unveiled a plaque alongside the commemorative quilt which he declared a 'spectacular work of art'.



The quilt took eight months to complete and consists of 352 individual squares sewn together under the guidance of Mrs Pask and Miss Marshall from the Design Technology department.

The quilt, which measures approximately 3m x 2.5m, includes the names of everyone present in Catshill Middle School during the 2014 summer term. Pupils, teachers, teaching assistants, administration and cleaning staff are each

represented by way of a 10cm x 10cm square of fabric on which their name is machine embroidered and embellished in some way. Several different techniques for colouring and embellishing were used and when they were ready all the fabric blocks were sewn together in the colour blocks – red, yellow, blue and green - of the four school houses. Whilst the names of the houses have changed over time, the central school logo continues into its 75th year.

Paul Essenhigh, the Executive Headteacher (Catshill Middle, Catshill First School & Nursery), welcomed special guests to the assembly including Charles Bateman, a pupil in the 1940's and Mr and Mrs Partridge who were head-boy and head-girl in the 1960's. Today's pupils took the opportunity of asking the guests searching questions about their school 'in the old days' and Charles provided his original school report and a copy of the school newsletter to which he had contributed a couple of riddles.

The Parish Council is very pleased to have contributed to this worthwhile design and textile project which will be on loan during the summer term for the Worcestershire Voices and Visions exhibition at Worcester Cathedral.

Catshill Women's Institute – New Members Welcome!

CATSHILL Women's Institute meet every 2nd Monday evening of the month in the Village Hall, starting at 7:30pm.

New Members are always most welcome, so if you would like to join, then just turn up at the next meeting or if you wish, contact Lorna Nicklin on 01527 871835 for more information.

The WI will celebrate its centenary in 2015 and currently has 212,000 members in around 6,600 WIs. You can find out more at: www.thewi.org.uk

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Catshill Library welcomes you to try its “click and collect” service.

For busy people on the go, simply reserve books, CD’s and DVD’s online and we will email you when your item has arrived. You can then call in to collect at any time, including our late night Tuesday, to pop in and collect them.

Got a children’s History project that needs to be done? Looking for that latest best seller? They are all just a click away!. Children’s reservations are free, and adults are only 75p per item.

Our knowledgeable staff can also help you on site with a number of online applications.

Including, Road tax, Blue Badges, School admission and using online government services such as Universal Job Match.

It’s easy to find us. We are at the bottom of the car park of Catshill Middle school

Look forward to seeing you soon.



For more information and opening times please visit:

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/catshilllibrary

Useful Numbers

Bromsgrove District Council: **01527 881288**

Out of hours emergency: **01527 871565**

Catshill and Marlbrook Local Policing Team

01527 583733 / 0300 333 3000

Crimestoppers: **0800 555 111**

Contact Us

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Flood Alleviation Scheme

THE work being done to reduce flooding in Green Lane should be finished or nearly done by the end of March. In a joint scheme between North Worcestershire Water Management and Bromsgrove District Housing Trust part of the open space between the A38 and Lingfield Walk play area will be dug out to create a pond. At times of heavy rainfall this pond will fill up with excess water thereby reducing the amount of water that would normally flow along the Marl brook through Catshill.

Completion of this flood storage area is the last in a series of measures being taken to reduce the fearful impact of heavy rainfall,



Marl Brook trash screen



The brook's new route at the back of Ash Drive

which although not frequent can be devastating. One such event occurred on 28th June 2012 when a number of Green Lane houses were flooded. Other remedial actions have included the installation of two trash-screens at Green Lane, the diversion of a small stretch of the brook away from Ash Drive and into the open space, and shrub clearance. Additionally the 'official' footpath (the one that is shown on the Definitive Map), has been diverted so that it now follows the edge of the new pond.

The site is likely to remain quite muddy until the area is re-seeded which may take some time to establish. Eventually in the next planting season trees and shrubs will be planted around the site.



The site of the balancing pool at Sedgfield Walk