

NEWS MAGAZINE



SPRING 2021

CATSHILL & NORTH MARLBROOK

Parish Council

www.catshillandnorthmarlbrook-pc.gov.uk

NEW DEVELOPMENTS That Will Affect the Parish



IN February, outline planning permission was granted by a Government inspector for a new housing development on Whitford Road. Assuming full permission is granted, 490 new houses will be built.

Although this development is some distance away, a lot of the traffic generated from this site will come through the Parish of Catshill & North Marlbrook for access to the M5 north and to Birmingham and The Black Country.

The Parish Council objected to this development as did 100s of other people that the roads in the area cannot take any more traffic and that a relief road is needed around the west of Bromsgrove and Catshill.

We have now been made aware that the application for a much bigger development along Perryfields Road is now proceeding. That will comprise a further 1,500 dwellings along with office space and industrial units.

The Parish Council will be objecting to this development unless a Western Relief Road is built first.

We are asking residents of the Parish to also to make objections. They should be emailed to simon.jones@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk quoting the application number, **21/00096/OUT**. The deadline for submissions is 19th March 2021. Anybody who has previously commented on the Perryfields development should do so again repeating in full what has been said previously as this is a separate application and previous comments will not be copied.

The plan documents can be viewed via Bromsgrove Council's portal at:

<http://publicaccess.bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk/online-applications/>

The Parish Council has previously made numerous objections to this development because as with Whitford Road a lot of the extra traffic generated will come through the Parish. There will be significant increases along Meadow Road, Gibb Lane and Golden Cross Lane. Residents living on Stourbridge Road, Wildmoor Lane and Woodrow Lane will also be affected.



I would like to introduce myself to you all, my name is Ian Hooper and I am one of your Parish Councillors. I am a former member of the armed forces in which I served 23 years and I have now been living in Catshill since 2002. I have keen interests in the countryside and the environment so being asked to undertake the Chairman's position for the Environmental and Highways Committee is an honour and I will do my best to maintain and improve local needs.

The Environmental and Highways Committee look at the needs of the Community and look at any proposals that may come up for attention this is then brought in front of the Full Parish Council members to which agreements are made and either rejected or carried out.

This year's proposals may prove difficult under the circumstances until lockdown measures are lifted, however, it is intended to try and improve the following:

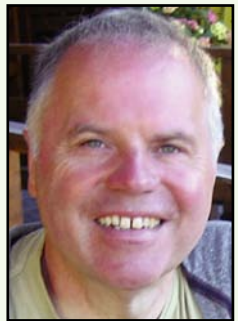
1. *The 4 bus stops in the Parish are in need of renovation and I will be seeking quotes for the job once restrictions are lifted*
2. *We are looking at costings to install solar lighting in alleyways and on public footpaths where no or limited lighting is available*
3. *A new rail for the war memorial was approved and funding was found from various sources and also donations were received. This work will be carried out in the near future.*
4. *Bins for dog waste are also being looked into to improve the health and safety in certain areas and this is also on-going.*

I look forward to the year ahead with the work that is planned so far

Regards

(Cllr) Ian Hooper

MY name is Brett Laniosh and I have recently been co-opted onto the Parish Council. I was born in Bromsgrove and have lived in Catshill since 1991. I am a former science and computing teacher (with a special interest in staying safe when online) and since 2011, the managing partner at Catshill Consultancy LLP. I joined the parish council to help make our village a better place to live. I am keen to engage with all members of our community and encourage participation especially with the council.



In response to the pandemic, I created a community support website and a Facebook page. I have an interest in online safety, educational technology and computing, astronomy, electronics and inland waterways. I am also a former director of the Campaign for Real Ale, so naturally I am interested in community pubs and good quality beer.

I hope to help make our area a better and safer place to live.

Brett Laniosh (Cllr)



WELCOME to the latest edition of our parish magazine.

Hopefully by the time this magazine lands on your doorstep, we will have put the harsh Winter weather behind us and be looking forward to a much nicer Spring.

Not only have we had to endure a harsh winter of many days of snow, ice and possibly too much rain, but we now also approach the first anniversary of the global Covid-19 pandemic. Every local household will have been affected by the pandemic, some more than others. Many lives have been lost locally, many local people will have been infected with Covid, and sadly some of you may be experiencing the detrimental impact of long Covid. Our thoughts are with all of you at this difficult time.

Thankfully there is a potential end in sight, due to the wonderful work of scientists, who have invented these amazing vaccines and the many hard working NHS staff and volunteers who are rolling out the vaccines at a very impressive rate.

However, there is a likelihood that some form of restrictions will be in place for the remainder of the year. There is a possibility that new variants of Covid could develop which are resistant to the current vaccinations. Indeed, there is a strong likelihood that we will all be invited to have a third booster vaccination later on this year to tackle these new Covid variants.

Due to this uncertainty Parish Council meetings will continue to be conducted virtually via Zoom and the Parish Office will remain closed to the public for the foreseeable future. Although the Parish Council has not taken any formal decisions at this stage, it is difficult to envisage any of our normal public events, such as the Bonfire & Fireworks event, taking place this year. Having said that, the Parish Council will continue to monitor the national picture and if it is possible later in the year to hold some events, we will certainly give consideration to doing so.

Although we were unable to hold the usual Christmas meal for our guests, we personally delivered Hampers funded by the parish council, to remind them that they would not be forgotten by us at Christmas. I would like to thank Catshill Baptist Foodbank who put the hampers together for us.

Speaking of Christmas, I think it is only right that I thank the Willowbrook Garden Centre for kindly donating two very impressive Christmas trees to the parish. These were displayed outside the village hall and in our parish garden, adjacent to the Baptist Church.

I would like to welcome our new parish councillor Brett Laniosh, who was recently co-opted onto the council. We look forward to working with Brett.

Our Assistant Clerk Jim Quinn, recently resigned from the Parish Council, as he will be moving out of the area with his family. We thank Jim for his 4 years loyal service to the council and wish him and his family best wishes for the next chapter in their life.

Councillor Bernard McEldowney (Chair) - 24th February 2021

Goodbye and Thank You

THE Parish Council's Assistant Clerk, Jim Quinn, has resigned after four years of excellent service to the Council.

Jim and his family are moving out of the area to be near their children and their grandchildren, two of which are due to be born in March so we are sure he will have his hands full. We offer him all the best of health for the future and hope he enjoys his retirement and his new additions to his family.



Barley Mow Gardens

IN recent editions of this newsmagazine we have made reference to the continuing improvement work being done to the A38 through our parish.

Whilst some of the improvements are now complete, such as the lane widening at the Lydiate Ash roundabout, other work is still ongoing, such as that at the Lickey End roundabout.

As many of you will have noticed, the contractors have used the grassy area by the parish council maintained "*Barley Mow Gardens*" as a base for their site office, heavy plant, and construction material storage etc.

Although this has been, and continues to be a bit of an eyesore, we are advised that the contractors will make good the damage caused to this green spot once all their work is completed.



For your information, the parish council maintains several gardens within the parish including; the "*Ivy Cottage Garden*" by the Co-Op, the "*Jubilee Garden*" on the Braces Lane/A38 junction, the "*Barley Mow Garden*" at the top of Barley Mow Lane, and the "*WWI Commemoration Garden*" next to the Baptist Church.

OUR Autumn 2020 *News Magazine* invited parishioners to complete the ‘*Green Infrastructure Survey*’ and to provide comments on the enclosed ‘*Neighbourhood Plan leaflet*’. We received a good response and also a decent attendance at the public consultations about the draft Neighbourhood Plan (NP), which were held on three Saturday mornings in October 2020 at Catshill Village Hall. Thanks to all of you who responded to the survey and leaflet and who attended the public consultations.

The responses to the survey and leaflet have now been analysed and incorporated into the final draft of the NP. The NP Steering Group held a meeting in December and approved the contents of the final draft of the NP and related appendices. An Extraordinary meeting of the full Parish Council was subsequently held in January 2021 and they formally approved and signed off the contents of the final draft of the NP and related appendices.

The next stage of the formal process required us to submit our NP to Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) Planning Department. They reviewed the NP and associated documents and confirmed that they were satisfied that the NP was able to proceed to the Regulation 16 phase of the process.

The NP was then formally submitted to BDC Cabinet for approval of the following, at their meeting in February 2021:

- 1) *Cabinet approval sought, for the District Council to publish the NP for a statutory six-week representation period, in line with Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. BDC is required to publicise the submission of the NP for a minimum six-week period and invite representations, which will then be forwarded on to an independent examiner for their consideration*
- 2) *Delegated authority to be granted to the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services, to appoint an independent examiner to undertake an examination of the NP following the statutory representation period. The requirement that the NP is subject to an independent examination is to ensure and verify that the neighbourhood plan meets the ‘basic conditions’, as defined in the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act, before it can proceed to a referendum.*
- 3) *Delegated authority to be granted to the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services to arrange a referendum on the NP, subject to the recommendations set out in the examiner’s report.*

BDC Cabinet subsequently approved the above-mentioned recommendations. The statutory six-week representation period will run from the 25th February to 8th April 2021.

Later this year, we hope to be in a position to hold the referendum in which local parishioners will be given the opportunity to formally ratify their NP. Once ratified, BDC Planning Department and Planning Committee, will be legally required to take into account the contents of the NP when making future determinations on any planning applications for this parish area.

Councillor Bernard McEldowney - Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group

CATSHILL and North Marlbrook Parish Council welcome contact from Parishioners, whether this be with good news or information about areas that need our attention. There are various methods that can be used to contact the Parish Council. The Clerk is available via email, telephone or voicemail. There are times when the Parish Council do not have the power to assist with certain requests and would need to pass on other contact details to help with the issue, so please could I request that you leave some form of contact detail to allow me to respond to your request and keep you updated.

At the moment due to the COVID restrictions the Parish Office remains closed for the foreseeable future.

Thank you - Carol Blake, Parish Clerk.

News From the Village Hall



THE Village Hall has been kept in good repair and cleaned regularly during this lockdown. We have followed all the regulations including testing for Legionnaires Disease. We have also made improvements including roof insulation to ensure improved and more efficient heating. We would like to thank Bromsgrove District Council for a grant towards the cost.

The manager has kept in touch with many Hirers who are looking forward to using the Hall once again. She is also pleased to report that she has some new enquiries for future use once we are safely and legally allowed to open. We have made some changes to our terms and conditions to ensure increased Health and Safety issues are met. We are updating the Website and as soon as we are officially allowed we will publish our intentions and procedures in line with Government Regulations - our Roadmap to recovery!

Looking forward to seeing the Village Hall in full use again with old friends and new - hoping to provide a continuing service to the community.

(Cllr) Jill Bate Trustee

www.catshillvillagehall.co.uk

HAVING lived in Catshill and North Marlbrook all my life, I remember the Poets Estate off Barley Mow Lane being built.

As a youngster in the late 1960s, before all of the buildings had been completed, I remember riding my bicycle round what at the time seemed to be a huge complex maze of roads and alley ways, with my cousin David Keight.

Eventually, as the road names went up; Milton Road, Byron way, Blake Road, Shelley Close, and Spencer Walk, it became obvious that all were named after famous poets, and thus “*The Poets Estate*” was born.

Move forward 50 plus years to 2021, and a strange but true error in the naming has been discovered.

Spencer Walk is named after Edmund Spenser (1552 – 1599), who is deemed by many to be one of the greatest poets in the English language. But did you notice, as you read this paragraph that I have spelt Edmund’s surname two ways?

It would appear that for over half a century, Spencer Walk has been misspelt. It should have been Spenser Walk!

As the old signs wear out, the District Council is replacing them, and they are correcting the mistake as they do this. However, this means that right now, and until all of the signs have been replaced, you will find both spellings within the estate as these photographs show.



*Edmund Spenser is most famed for his epic poem *The Faerie Queene*, which he published in 1590 in the form of three books, with a further three books published in 1596. It is said that he intended there to be a total of twelve books, so even though *The Faerie Queene* is one of the longest poems in the English language, it is effectively incomplete.*

Cllr. Paul Masters.

Did You Spot Comet Neowise?

HUMANS have observed comets for thousands of years, but it's only in the last few centuries that they've been studied as astronomical phenomena. Before this, comets caused worldwide fear, as they were thought to be bad omens; signs of impending disaster and terrible turmoil.



In my life I have been lucky enough to witness three comets in the night skies of the parish. Back in the early 70s my brother Timothy had a telescope, and was keen to observe the night sky, often calling me to look into the eyepiece to witness astronomical phenomenon; the colourful rings of Saturn being my favorite. Then one night in the early 70s he woke me in the small hours to observe a comet. It was probably either Comet Bennet or Comet Kohoutek - I really can't be sure, but I do remember that it was an amazing site, but very short lived.

Next, in 1986, we all awaited Halley's Comet, but from memory, I don't think we got to see much of it from our area; it was not as bright as expected, and by this time, light pollution was a major problem, causing our previously dark night skies to have a constant orange glow.

However, 1997 brought us the glorious Comet Hale-Bopp, which put on an amazing show. It was bright, clear, and we were able to watch its long tail grow, before finally fading away after several weeks.

But did any readers witness Comet Neowise in July last year?

Sadly, although searching, I did not see it, but here is a wonderful photograph taken by Mr. Dave Webb which clearly shows Neowise viewed over the local countryside.

Thanks Dave for sharing this with us!

Cllr. Paul Masters.

Don't Forget to use our website

www.catshillandnorthmarlbrook-pc.gov.uk

It includes interactive features, up to date information, communication links, a very important link to the current Neighbourhood Plan and what is happening about that, all the information contained within the website is aimed to provide residents with information on what is happening within their Parish.



We are also on Facebook if you would like to check us out there too.

COVID 19 caused mayhem throughout 2020 for all of us and its impact on our lives will be felt for a long time.

The Parish Councillors were disappointed that they had to cancel all the usual events during the year. Decisions to cancel were not taken lightly but it was finally decided that it would not be a good idea to encourage large crowds to come together for Bonfire Night, Remembrance Sunday, the Seniors' Christmas Party and the Christmas Lights.

It was decided your safety was paramount and to protect the residents of Catshill and North Marlbrook from Covid and hopefully that was achieved.

However, the councillors decided that Christmas should be celebrated in some way so the lights and Christmas Trees became the one and only project for 2020.

Willowbrook Nursery donated the Christmas trees and the Parish Council thanks them for their generosity and the support they give to the Parish.

Thanks must also go to the councillors who gave their time to erect the trees and decorate them with the lights also to Catshill Baptist Church for their assistance and our District Councillor Shirley Webb, who organised the Christmas Street Lights in the shopping area. Finally thanks to the Village Hall Committee, who decorated the front of the Village Hall.



The lights in Golden Cross Lane.



Hopefully you agree that they brightened up the village and added to the Christmas spirit.

Hopefully this year 2021 will see the return of at least some of the Annual Events and that Christmas in the village will resemble times past.

The Parish Council ask you to stay safe. The vaccine will be with us all soon.

*Catshill First School c1916*

THIS edition of *From Our Past* shows a building that many of us will know well. It's Catshill First School.

This photograph was probably taken round 1916, and it clearly shows the use of the separate Boy's and Girl's entrances, which was a common feature in most schools at the time. It also shows the schoolmasters wearing boaters, the boys in their smart uniforms and the girls wearing Victorian style smocks.

*Catshill First School 2021.*

This view of the school, showing the dual entrances is not the side of the building that faces Gibb Lane, but the side where the school car park is now. I have included a recent photo to show this, though it's taken from a different angle. However, what is remarkable when comparing the two photographs is how the building has hardly changed since those days; with the same architectural features still proudly on display.

I hope you enjoyed looking at this photograph, and remember; if you have an old photograph that you would like to share, then please let us know.

Cllr. Paul Masters.



GOING back to 2003, the Parish Council embarked on an ambitious project to document as much information as we could find about the men whose names are on Catshill War Memorial.

Most of the work was done by one of our parishioners and his findings were assembled into a couple of large volumes that are stored in a book case at Christ Church and is also available on the parish website.

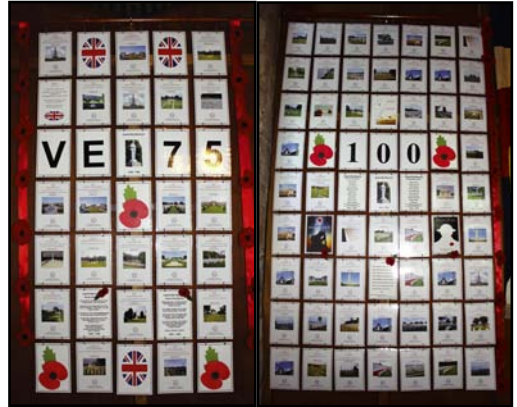
Since that work was done, we now believe that much more information is available particularly for the men who died in the First World War.



We are fortunate that one of our parish councillors and a member of the local Royal British Legion are now prepared to go through our records and update them where new information has come to light.

Though much of the research will be done using web sites, we are also hoping to use paper archives.

This project is quite a large task for two people so if there is anybody else interested in helping then please contact our parish clerk via email at parishclerk@catshillandnorthmarlbrook-pc.gov.uk. We would particularly like to hear from anybody who has links or contacts with any regimental or military sources.



Looking at the names on the Memorial, many are the same as local families so we suspect there are a number of their relatives living in the area. If so we would like to hear from anybody related to the men who are remembered on the Memorial in particular any photos, letters or items that would grace our records.

Finally if anybody is interested in viewing our existing records then this can be done by contacting Christ Church by email at pa.bromsgroveparish@gmail.com who will be happy to arrange a visit at a convenient time or by visiting the parish website.



Your Parish Council NEEDS YOU

Catshill and North Marlbrook Parish Council are seeking
new Parish Councillors for long term relationships...

Mr, Mrs or Ms Right will need the following:

Communication Skills - good listener, responds to e-mails sent by the clerk, open to new ideas, computer literate and willing to work electronically

Personal Qualities - honest, decent, confident, visionary, forward thinking, proactive, strategic, flexible, respectful of professional knowledge and objectivity of officers, leadership, supportive, polite, patient but tenacious and a good sense of humour!

Commitment - prepared for meetings, team player, punctual, available and accessible for scheduled and ad hoc meetings, takes role seriously, willing to participate, interested, enthusiastic and with a positive outlook

Knowledge - understands council's strategy, understands roles and responsibilities of officers and councillors, understands council's powers, willing to learn and develop, undertake training and understands the Code of Conduct

Communitarian - passionate about the community, focused on the whole community and not a single issue

Basics - stays awake in meetings, treats others with dignity, has reasonable and respectful dress standards for council meetings and who gives the meeting their full attention!

COULD THIS BE YOU?

You might not have all the above but training and guidance is always available.

For further information, please contact the Clerk via email
parishclerk@catshillandnorthmarlbrook-pc.gov.uk

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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