

NEWS MAGAZINE



SUMMER 2021

# CATSHILL & NORTH MARLBROOK

*Parish Council*

[www.catshillandnorthmarlbroom-pc.gov.uk](http://www.catshillandnorthmarlbroom-pc.gov.uk)

## MEET PEANUT



SEE PAGE 9

**HELLO** everybody this month's contribution concerns speeding motorists in the Catshill District and how we are hopefully going to tackle the problems and try to reduce speeding within our area and make people aware that speeding is not acceptable and that the District and Parish Council's take these issues very seriously.

1. A new initiative undertaken by the Parish Council and working closely with the Community Policing Team is to create a **Community Speed Watch Group** which has now been initially set up and is called Catshill SWG. This can be found at the following website. <https://www.communityspeedwatch.org>.

2. As with all new initiatives we want you to volunteer to become a Speedwatch Member and this is imperative for the group to be successful.

3. There will be both online training to undertake and once this has been completed further training will be provided by the local police before you can become a full member of the team.

4. All speeding motorists will receive a letter from the police and repeat offenders will be visited by the police.

5. Some of our speed signs within Catshill are currently faulty and they will be replaced with newer up to date signs in due course. I am currently undertaking research on both the cost and durability of their replacements.

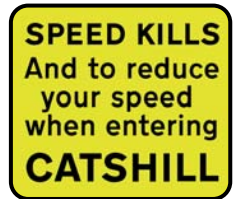
6. Other speed reduction options, such as traffic calming measures, will require evidence-based facts before we can proceed. We are also looking at a range of other potential options such as repeater speed signs etc at identified speed hotspots.

7. I am currently undertaking a speeding sign survey to identify where further speed signs could be positioned, to raise awareness with motorists that they are driving in a reduced speed area.

*Councillor Ian Hooper*



**PLEASE  
REMEMBER**



## Neighbourhood Plan Update

**FOLLOWING** on from the update given in our Spring 2021 parish news magazine, the statutory Regulation 16, six-week representation period, which ran from the 25th February 2021 to 8th April 2021, has now been concluded by Bromsgrove District Council.

An examiner was subsequently appointed to carry out an independent examination of the Neighbourhood Plan and his final report has now been received.

The examiner has recommended the Neighbourhood Plan, with some modifications, goes to referendum. Therefore the local referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan will be held later this year, subject to the approval of Bromsgrove District Council.

*Councillor Bernard McEldowney*



**AS** I write this article at the beginning of June, it appears that we have finally seen the end of Winter and now Summer has arrived. Spring seems to have given us a miss this year. We have also gone from experiencing the driest April on record, to probably one of the wettest May's on record. I suppose this is most likely linked to the impact of Global Warming. Let's hope we have some decent summer weather, as many of us will be considering staycations this year, rather than risk travelling abroad, as we slowly navigate our lives out of this horrid Covid-19 nightmare.

In April we were sad to hear of the death of Prince Philip. We posted a tribute message marking his death, on the Parish Council website and we arranged for the Union Flag to be flown at half-mast on Catshill Village Hall. In non-Covid times we would hopefully have been able to do more, to allow local people to pay their own respects to the late prince.

Some of you will have noticed that work was recently undertaken to completely redesign our Remembrance Garden, which is located at The Dock, adjacent to Catshill Baptist Church. The garden had become a bit of an eyesore in recent times. Thanks to the leadership of Councillor Ian Hooper, chair of the Parish Council Environment & Highways Committee, a few local councillors undertook work to completely revamp the garden, which has included removing the wooden surrounding fence, and creating a pathway through the middle of the garden and erecting a memorial stone. We will be planting additional shrubs at the garden in due course.

Unfortunately, one of our other parish gardens, the Ivy Cottage Garden, situated on Golden Cross lane, near to the junction with Green lane, has recently been targeted by vandals. They removed some flowers and scattered them onto the nearby ground. The local police have been notified. We have arranged for the summer plantation to be done very soon. Hopefully these new flowers will not be targeted by vandals.

One of our councillors Jill Bate, has recently decided to resign from the Parish Council, mainly for health reasons. I would like to thank Jill for her public service and wish Jill and her husband Andrew, a happy retirement.

We now have a few vacancies for Parish Councillors, and it would be great if some local residents would consider volunteering to fill these vacancies.

The main role of a Parish Councillor is to represent the views of all residents within the Parish and to listen to, and understand, the views and needs of different groups in the community. If any of you are interested in becoming a parish councillor, please contact our Parish Clerk for further details.

*Councillor Bernard McEldowney*



**THERE** are many public rights of way in and around our parish which can be used by the public at all times. These rights of way can be on privately owned land and it is an offence to block them without “*lawful authority or excuse*”. You can take a pushchair or wheelchair if the path is suitable but you will need to take into account that the surface may be uneven, waterlogged or muddy and there may be stiles and gates. You can take photographs or have a small picnic but remember to take your litter home. You can also take your dog but they must be kept under control particularly if near livestock. Be careful not to stray off the footpath as you may be committing trespass and that includes your dog!



Catshill Parish has its own footpath warden, responsible for monitoring our footpath and that includes reporting issues such as flooding or blockages and maintaining “*waymarks*” like the ones below.

Ordnance Survey (OS) maps are the easiest way of finding out rights of way and the Explorer series (1:25,000 scale) is the most useful for walkers. Public rights of way are shown in green and permissive paths are orange. Catshill and North Marlbrook is covered by map 219 (Wolverhampton and Dudley) but you will also need map 220 if you want to cover East of Barnt Green and 204 if you want to cover South of Bromsgrove. You may prefer to buy a custom map that is centred on your house so that Catshill is right in the middle! More details from [www.shop.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/custom-made](http://www.shop.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/custom-made). An alternative is to install the OS app on your mobile device.

You can find more information and view our local footpaths on an interactive map by going to [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20237/public\\_rights\\_of\\_way](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20237/public_rights_of_way). As well as the map there is facility for you to report a footpath issue.

There are four types of public right of way in England and Wales. In addition there are also permissive rights of way which a landowner have given permission for people to walk or ride. The permission may just be for walkers and may be withdrawn by the landowner at any time.

Yellow	Blue	Plum	Red
Footpath for walkers including wheelchairs and pushchairs	Bridleway for walkers, cyclists and ridden or driven horses	Restricted byway for non-motorised vehicles	Byway open to all traffic

There is an informal footpath group made up of Parish Councillors and the footpath warden. We hope you are inspired to make use of and enjoy local footpaths and please report any issues using the link above.

*Cllr Brett Laniosh*

**MANY** of you may be aware, from coverage in the local press and social media, that the Parish Council recently experienced problems with our Precept for the financial period 2021-22. The precept is the Parish Council's share of the council tax. The precept demand goes to the billing authority, Bromsgrove District Council (BDC), who collect the tax for the Parish Council

The Parish Council set an increase of 2.23% for that period, but due to an unfortunate error in the forms submitted to BDC, it was wrongly stated that we were seeking a 37% increase.

We only became aware of this mistake close to the date when BDC send out the Council Tax demands. The chair of the Parish Council Finance and Staffing Committee and myself, held urgent talks with the BDC Financial Support Manager and their Head of Finance and Customer Services, in an effort to get the council tax bills amended, to reflect our actual request for a 2.23% precept increase. We were advised, that as the bills were already printed and ready for posting, it would cost the Parish Council £35,000 to have the bills reprinted. It was simply not feasible for us to sustain that cost, which would have vastly exceeded the extra revenue which the precept error had generated. Reluctantly, we had no choice but to allow the tax bills to be sent out, unamended.

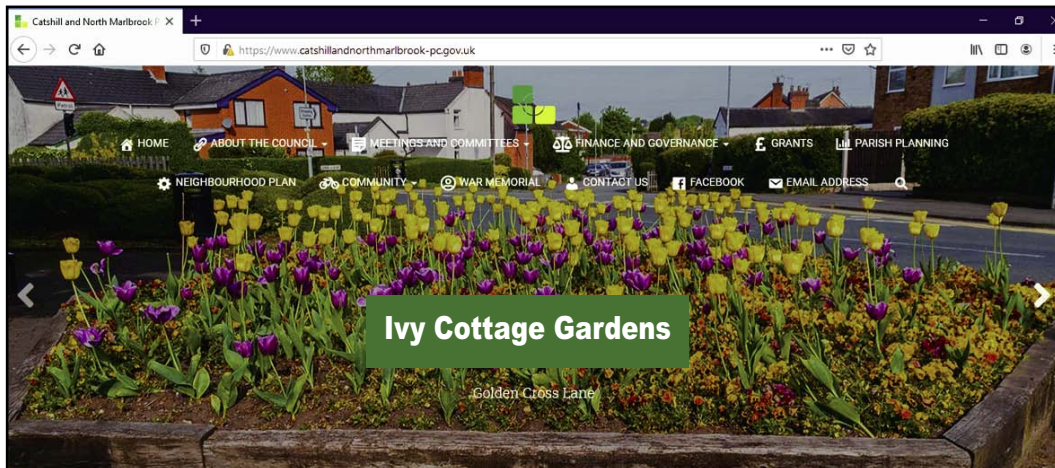
The precept error means that an extra £19,000 will now be collected from local residents, during this financial year. This works out at an average household paying an extra £8 for the whole year. It is our intention that this £19,000 will be spent on behalf of our residents, over the next 12 months.

We invite you to submit suggestions to our parish clerk, telling us what you would like us to consider spending this money on. We have already received some suggestions, as follows:

- 1). Pelican crossing in front of the Methodist church on Golden Cross Lane*
- 2). Business Fair on the meadow.*
- 3). Arts Festival*
- 4). Trees planted in memory of all the residents who have lost their lives during the pandemic.*
- 5). Park benches, at a number of named locations.*

**We look forward to receiving many suggestions from you.**

*Councillor Bernard McEldowney*



**WE** have recently updated our website. If you have never visited it, then maybe you should! If you do, you will see lots of information about the council, including sections explaining what we do, along with access to meeting agendas and minutes and much more!

Our website address is [www.catshillandnorthmarlbrook-pc.gov.uk](http://www.catshillandnorthmarlbrook-pc.gov.uk)



An easy way to find the site is to simply search for “Catshill parish” in your browser.

Although the site contains some photographs of the parish, we would love there to be lots more.

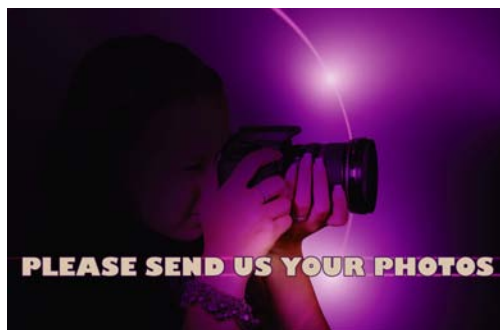
Therefore, we are appealing to you, to help us make our website even better by sending us some stunning photographs of our community - It might be a colourful sunset or sunrise, a snow

scene or a lovely sunny day. It could show an event taking place, or just capture a lovely garden or tree - anything that showcases what a lovely area we live in will be appreciated.

There are no prizes, but all selected photographs will be added to the site, and you will be given full credit for your photograph (unless you wish to remain anonymous).

Please email your photographs to: [parishclerk@catshillandnorthmarlbrook-pc.gov.uk](mailto:parishclerk@catshillandnorthmarlbrook-pc.gov.uk)

***Thank you for your help!***





**THE** War memorial fence has now been installed with the little memorial garden being moved into the centre and I would like to thank everybody involved from the clearing teams to all the volunteers and a special mention to David Medcalf and his team at All Tech Midlands for completing the project to a high standard. Work however on the memorial will continue and I have been given permission to seek further quotes on refurbishing the original memorial garden gate to bring that up to the same standard as the new fence. Cleaning of the memorial will be looked at very soon and I will update you all later in the year.



## The Dock Memorial Garden – Update

**FIRSTLY** I would just like to thank everybody that volunteered and helped with the Parish Dock Memorial Garden at the Dock and the start of its renovation. The garden was overgrown and a face lift was needed so that it could be appreciated by



*Cllrs Phil Baker, Sam Osman & Ian Hooper work on the garden.*



*Phase one of the refurbishment is completed.*

the general public. On a survey it was decided to remove the fence and install a footpath through the garden with sleepers to support the soil where needed and then to add extra planting at a later date. Phase 1 is complete with the footpath being laid and the memorial stone put in place. Phase 2 the planting and levelling will take place over the next couple of weeks so that the memorial garden can be appreciated by everyone.



*Stone with the garden name.*

*Regards Ian Hooper, Chairman, Highways and Environmental*

## Plant Sale Success for Christian Aid

**CHRISTIAN** Aid is the official relief and development agency of Christian churches in the UK and Ireland, and works to support sustainable development, eradicate poverty, support civil society and provide disaster relief in many parts of the world. Each year, during Christian Aid Week, it organises the UK's largest door-to-door collection.

This year Christian Aid week was 10th - 16th May, and one fund raising event in



*Plant sale at Catshill Methodist for Christian Aid.*



*Just some of the plants for sale.*

our community was a Plant Sale held on the car park of Catshill Methodist Church on Saturday 15th May.

Even though the weather could have been better, and social distancing had to be applied, there was an excellent turn out, and much to everyone's delight the sale of plants and other items, plus donations for tea and coffee along with other donations raised £725.83 for Christian Aid.

## Free Flowers Much Appreciated!

**SUNDAY** 14th March was Mothers Day or Mothering Sunday as some prefer to call it.

This year Catshill Methodist Church wished everyone a happy Mothering Sunday by placing a big box of flowers on their car park next to the pavement, with a large sign saying *"Please take a posie for yourself or someone you care about, love from Catshill Methodist Church."*

This kind gesture was soon publicised and shared on social media, and it appears to have been appreciated by the wider community.

***Thank you Catshill Methodist Church!***





**IF** you live, walk or drive through Catshill, you may well have caught site of a miniature horse grazing on the various grassy areas within the village.



*Peanut grazing in Golden Cross Lane with Patrick.*

The horse is actually called Kilcummer Pluto, but is better known as “Peanut”, and his owner is Patrick Smith REMT-P, Dip E & PHC, Dip SMT.

Patrick is a professional and highly motivated tutor, with 40 years experience working in various health care settings. He runs a business called PS Training, offering a large range of health and Social Care courses. But how did Peanut come to join Patrick’s business?

Patrick had been in the Army, and had witnessed many things that most

civilians will never witness; so much so that on leaving after 22 years service, he was suffering from PTSD.

Five years ago, on watching a documentary about animals as therapy to help with different mental health conditions including “Therapy Horses” and how they can help on the road to recovery, he bought Peanut. Much to Patrick’s delight, Peanut did indeed help with his mental health, and along with regular sessions from Combat Stress he started to feel better.

Patrick then realised that he could use Peanut to help others with problems, and made him available to visit schools, hospitals, Care homes and private premises to assist with the relief of anger, anxiety, autism, low self confidence and trauma etc.

Peanut, who is fully house trained, now spends 70-80% of his time inside Patrick’s home in Cobnall Road, where he is free to wander in and out as he pleases.

If you would like to find out more about Patrick and Peanut, then visit [www.pstrainingandtherapyhorse.co.uk](http://www.pstrainingandtherapyhorse.co.uk)

A book is being published at the end of June called “Men Talk Health” by Alison & Sam Ward and Patrick has written a chapter on his journey from military to civilian life suffering from PTSD.

*By Cllr Paul Masters.*



*Peanut watches TV*



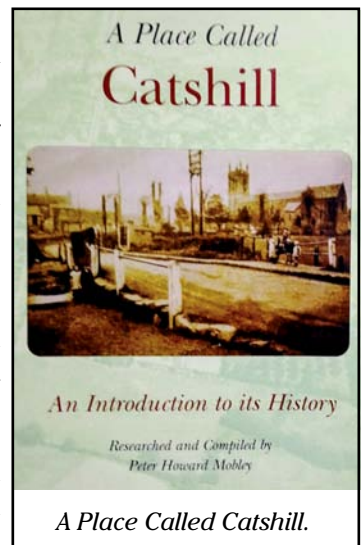
**ABOUT** ten years ago, this feature showcased a rather blurry black and white photograph of Church Road taken in c1925. It was the best copy we had at the time, and it was certainly interesting to view. However, a regular reader has now supplied us with an original colourised postcard from which the black and white image must have been taken.

This postcard version is not only hand coloured, but is amazingly sharp, showing much more detail. It really does show how Church Road looked around 100 years ago.

I wonder if anyone has any idea who the six children in the photograph are.

Back in 1977 the book *A Place Called Catshill* by Peter Mobley was published, and when it was updated and republished in 2006 a version of this image was placed on the front cover. It's not as clear as our latest version; but it does give me an opportunity to recommend this wonderful book to you!

As ever, I hope you enjoyed looking at this old photograph, and if you have an old photograph that you would like to share, please let us know. Remember, any recent/modern photographs of the parish that you supply for inclusion on our updated web site, could well become interesting old photographs for future generations.



**YOU** may have noticed that Catshill now has its own electric charging point for private vehicles. It is installed on the Car Park next to the Pharmacy, opposite the Village Hall.

It was installed by Bromsgrove District Council who will be investing over £400,000 by installing electric charging points like this in various parts of the district. This new charging point is one small step in our battle to lower our carbon footprint.



## Centenary of the Royal British Legion

**COUNCILLOR** Bernard McEldowney, the chair of the Parish Council, attended a wreath-laying service at Catshill War Memorial at 10am on Saturday 15th May, to commemorate the centenary of the Royal British Legion (RBL).



*Councillor Shirley Webb, Daren Lacey, Councillor Bernard McEldowney and Councillor Jo-Anne Till.*

The socially distanced service was organised by the Catshill and Lickey End Branch of the RBL. A wreath was laid by Councillor McEldowney on behalf of the Parish Council. Further wreaths were laid by Daren Lacey, chairman of the Catshill and Lickey End Branch of the RBL, Councillor Shirley Webb, for Worcestershire County Council and Councillor Jo-Anne Till, for Bromsgrove District Council.

## Catshill Car Boot Sale

A bright sunny Bank Holiday Monday (31st May) plus the latest relaxed Covid-19 measures ensured a good turnout for a Car Boot Sale on the Meadow.

This well organised event with free parking on the school playground opposite and an entry fee of £7 for cars and £10 for vans was a fund raiser for the Meadow itself.





## *Catshill in Bloom*

**DUE** to the pandemic *Catshill in Bloom* has been run by a few volunteers looking after the planters in the village. The hanging baskets will be replaced soon too, students from Chadsgrove are unable to leave the school premises so I took the baskets to be replanted to the school, they look beautiful and students worked so hard and really enjoy helping to make our village look blooming beautiful. The rest of the baskets will be replanted by 6th Bromsgrove Scouts and placed around the village soon.

We are always looking for volunteers, if anyone would like to get involved please do get in touch.

*Cllr Shirley Webb 07818516682*



### *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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