

NEWS MAGAZINE



SPRING 2022

CATSHILL & NORTH MARLBROOK

Parish Council

www.catshillandnorthmarlbrook-pc.gov.uk

Where can you have
SNACKS WITH ALPACAS?
Find out on Page 8



The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Big Picnic

Catshill Village Meadow on Sunday 5th June

See Rear Page for Details

Tune In – Turn On



*Cllr Webb & Gillespie chat to
Cllr Paul Masters*

SADLY we had to cancel the Christmas Lights Switch-On event in November at relatively short notice. Even though legally we would have been allowed to hold the event with the usual large crowd outside the Village Hall, the problem was that almost all the acts set to perform had to cancel, because Covid restrictions over the previous months had prevented them meeting up and rehearsing etc.

However, we still had a short ceremony outside the Village Hall (minus the crowd) which was broadcast live on the Parish Facebook page, which has been viewed by well over 500 people.

Cllr Paul Masters was the host, and after chatting to County & District Cllr Shirley Webb and Parish Cllr Tessa Gillespie; with the aid of his atomic clock, he ensured that Santa appeared and pressed the button to switch the lights on at exactly 4pm on 27th November 2021.

We hope to return to the traditional crowd switch-on event this year.



Neighbourhood Plan

ALTHOUGH the Neighbourhood Plan has now successfully passed the Referendum process and has achieved a formal legal status, the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, which consists of several lay members from the local community and Parish Councillors, will continue to remain in existence, so as to work with the Parish Council to regularly review and monitor the compliance and implementation of the plan.

The original chair of the NPSG, Dr Chris Fabray has stood down, and fellow steering group member Richard Eccles has now been elected chair. I would like to thank Chris for his formidable leadership and the many hundreds of hours of his time spent to help us produce a high-quality Neighbourhood Plan. Chris also created our Neighbourhood Plan website: <https://catshillandnorthmarlbrookplan.org.uk>

We now wish to recruit a 'Project Officer.' This role will focus on the implementation, monitoring and annual review of the Neighbourhood Plan. This individual will support the Parish Council Steering Group and Parish Council Committees to process responses to planning applications and be responsible for dealing with the District Council, landowners, developers (and their agents) and residents, on all planning applications and related matters. The ideal candidate will have a good working knowledge of Planning regulations. Applications for this post can be directed to our Parish Clerk.

Councillor Bernard McEldowney



THE Neighbourhood Plan Referendum was held on the 7th of October 2021. Over 800 people voted and approximately 88% of voters voted in favour of the plan. This was a much higher turnout than we had anticipated. I want to thank everyone who voted and all members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group for the hard work they have done over the past 5 years to create the plan. Thanks also go to Kevin Dicks (Chief Executive of Bromsgrove & Redditch District Councils) and his staff, who managed the Referendum process on our behalf. The plan now has a legal status, to influence the future development of our parish.

In recent months, two Parish Councillors, Michael Johnson, and Ian Hooper have resigned for personal reasons. I want to thank them both for their contributions during their time on the council, and I wish them well for the future. Abdul Jilani has now been co-opted onto the Parish Council and we look forward to working with him. There are still several vacancies for Parish Councillors, and we welcome expressions of interest from residents who would like to join us.

Since our last News Magazine, the Parish Council has participated in the Remembrance Service, which had a good turnout. My thanks go to Daren Lacey of the British Legion for the work that he and his colleagues undertook to make the event a success (see page 5).

We also hosted an On-line Christmas Lights Switch-On, with local District Councillor, Shirley Webb (see page 2), but we were unable to hold our local senior citizens Christmas Dinner due to the Covid risk; fortunately the Baptist Church Food Bank supplied us with Christmas Hampers, which Parish Councillors delivered to our usual dinner guests. My thanks go to the Food Bank.

The Parish Council has agreed a return to holding a Fireworks event this year. The agreed date is Saturday 5th November 2022.

We have recently awarded a grant of £5600 to the Village Hall for urgent maintenance work, a grant of £5263 to the NWWA to replace 5 benches at the Meadow, and we have agreed to provide funding towards the cost of the Queens Platinum Jubilee *"Big Picnic"* on the Meadow (see back page). Finally we have agreed to a request to pay for 50 Easter Eggs, for the forthcoming Easter Egg Hunt in Bromsgrove.

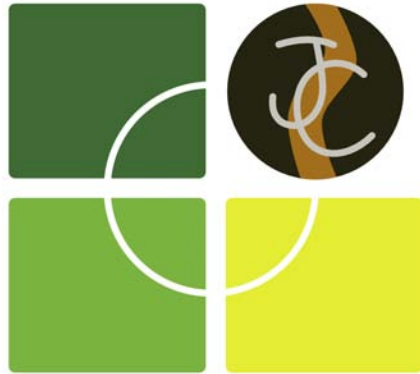
Councillor Bernard McEldowney (Chair)

Catshill Junior Councillors



CATSHILL Junior Councillors are giving the young people of Catshill & North Marlbrook a voice to express their opinions on living in the village. The group was set up following a visit to Catshill Middle School by Parish Clerk Carol Blake and Councillor Brett Laniosh with the help and support of Assistant Headteacher, Danielle McCrory.

Brett and Carol met a group of pupils from across all year groups who shared what they liked about Catshill (safe and peaceful, nice environment and people, bonfire night, big fields and footpaths, play areas, Peanut the pony, the fete); their dislikes (lack of a skateboard area, litter and dog mess, speeding drivers when trying to cross the road, busy roads and noise, aggressive behaviour) and finally what they would like to see (play areas for 4-6 year olds, wildlife areas, bird feeders and trees, better footpaths, skatepark, dog friendly walks).



Following the visit the pupils were keen to get more involved and with the full support of the school have formed a group **"Catshill & North Marlbrook Junior Councillors"** with their own logo. As well as an opportunity to feed back directly to the council, termly meetings will take place as part of the school Life Skills programme.

"The aim was to find out what the young residents of the village felt about living in Catshill, their likes and dislikes and what steps could be taken to improve amenities. Having worked in schools as a teacher and an education advisor for many years, I was interested to hear the views of younger residents", Brett said.

Talking about the initiative, Mrs McCrory added, *"The pupils love being a part of Catshill community and really enjoyed working alongside Brett. They are excited to be Junior Councillors and are looking forward to helping The Parish Council."*



DUE to Covid, there was a shortened Remembrance Sunday event last November. The joint churches service part of the event that is held in the Social Club opposite the War Memorial was cancelled, but instead there was a short parade which marched from the Middle School playground to the memorial, where the usual Act of Remembrance took place with a large crowd in attendance.

It is hoped that this year the event will be back to the usual format.



Footpath News

YOU may have noticed a number of improvements to footpaths in and around the village.

Footpath Improvements

The Assistant Public Rights of Way Officer at Worcestershire County Council (WCC) has inspected the waymarking issues that were reported online; this has resulted in a number of new roadside footpath posts and other improvements. (If you come across an issue, log it at bit.ly/WCC-FP)

In February, I joined the Assistant Public Rights of Way Officer for an assessment of the footpaths that run behind Willowbrook Nursery and the footpath by the side of the Stourbridge Road cemetery. This has resulted in steps being added to the footpath to improve accessibility.

Catshill Footpath Work Party

A new volunteer group has been established to carry out low maintenance improvements to our footpaths. Successful groups are already established in Alvechurch and Redditch who meet on weekdays and carry out tasks such as vegetation removal or basic repairs. This can be unsupervised, or supervised by WCC public rights of way officers, depending on the nature of the work. It is a great way to get out in the fresh air and get some exercise so please get in touch if you would be interested in joining the new group.

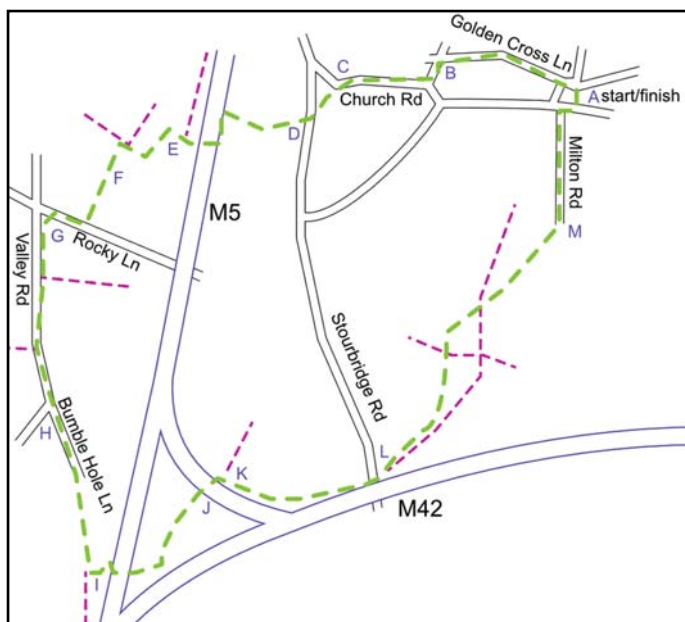
Cllr Brett Laniosh b.laniosh@catshillandnorthmarlbrook-pc.gov.uk

THREE miles, moderate terrain which can be muddy and wet in places.

Start point (A), flower beds and notice boards at the junction of Gibb Lane and Golden Cross Lane.

Carefully cross the road and walk down Golden Cross Lane, past the shops on your left. At the junction (B) turn left, cross the road and walk down the pavement on the right side of Church Road passing three small roads on the right. As you reach the last of these (Cowslip Close), cross over Church Road and turn into the footpath (C) that runs beside Battlefield Brook.

The path continues to Stourbridge Road, where you will turn left and walk a short distance until you see the footpath (D) on the opposite side of the road. Cross the road and head onto the footpath which follows an uphill route past the graveyard, across a field, through some trees and across the motorway.



After crossing the M5 (E), ignore the path to the right but continue straight on following the path with the hedge on your left, turning left then right. Halfway along the hedge turn left and follow the path (F) with the hedge on your right, until it exits onto Rocky Lane where you will turn right onto the road. Carefully follow the road until you meet the junction of Valley Road (G) where you will turn left.

Follow Valley Road past the former home of A.E. Housman until you reach Bumblehole Lane (H) where you will turn left. Follow the lane which eventually peters out into a footpath in a deep, attractive cutting. Follow this until you meet a footpath on your left (I) which you will follow back across the motorway, up a slope and under the motorway (J) where standing water often collects. The track meets a footpath (K) on your right which you take. The footpath runs parallel to the motorway (on your right) and comes out on Stourbridge Road which you will carefully cross (L). Follow the tarmac cycle way to the left as it runs by the side of Battlefield Brook, past a play area until at (M) it meets Milton Road. Walk up Milton Road until it reaches Barley Mow Lane. Cross over and turn onto the footpath adjacent to the supermarket and you will be back at the starting point.

HELLO everyone, my name is Katie and I have recently started as the new Catshill Community Builder.

I have lived in Catshill for the last 12 years and until recently did not realise how much is taking place in our local area.

In this new role, I am looking at what is going on, so if you are currently doing anything interesting in Catshill please let me know.

I am also interested in people's ideas/dreams of what they would like in Catshill. Have you got any skills you would like to pass on? Maybe you would like to start a new group but are not sure how to, or perhaps you are just looking to get involved in something new.

I am here to connect the community and hopefully make Catshill an even friendlier and happier place to live.

Please contact me on **07518292367** or via email ***Katie@newstarts.ork.uk*** for more information, or with current activities or new ideas.

I also have a Facebook page - *Catshill community builder* on Newstarts page, please add and follow and share your stories/groups/what you are up to on the page.



New Bus Shelters

OVER recent years, your parish council has installed four new bus shelters, and now, courtesy of Bromsgrove District Council our community is to get two more!

District Councillor Jo-Anne Till (***j.till@bromsgrove.gov.uk***), has informed us that the old battered bus shelters located at Halesowen Road and Lydiate Ash (Catshill Side) have been removed in order to make way for some new shelters that (at the time of writing) are still to be installed.



We will include photographs of the new shelters in a future edition, once they are in place.

ALPACAFÉ is a small family run business on the edge of Perryfields & Dodford. Located at a former plant nursery site on Bumble Hole Lane (just off Fockbury Mill Lane), it is now home to a converted horsebox catering trailer, with plenty of outside space to enjoy a “*brew with a view*” as well as a selection of baked goods, ice creams and cold drinks.

Having opened its doors in May 2021, the little field café offers a relaxing atmosphere in a charming countryside setting. It is primarily a walking destination,



located along many popular walking and cycle routes within 20 mins walking distance from nearby Catshill and Bromsgrove Town Centre. It is a family friendly destination for local families to enjoy and encourage children to get active and enjoy the outdoors.



The alpacas live in the paddock adjacent to the café and offer plenty of entertainment. For those who wish to get up close and personal with these beautiful animals, Alpaca Experiences are also on offer, these have to be pre-booked and are run at set times during weekends throughout the year (weather

permitting). The Alpaca Experiences are a great way to learn about the animals and enjoy their company one-on-one during a stroll across the 4 acre fields, meeting the other resident animals along the way. Lasting approximately 45 minutes, this is the perfect way to unwind and de-stress.

The Café is due to open for the summer season from April onwards during weekends, so head down for a Peruvian brew and enjoy the view, perhaps even walk with the alpacas too!



For more information and booking enquiries, visit the website:

<https://alpacafe.co.uk/>

or the Facebook page: www.facebook.com/AlpacafeUK

COVID Memorial Walk – Finding Light in Darkness 9

SUNDAY 26th September 2021, saw members of our community gather to embark on a walk around Catshill to acknowledge the many ways loss and grief have touched the village, and to affirm those that have supported and helped us through.



The event began outside Chadsgrove School at 10:00am where some deeply touching poems about their experiences of Covid-19, written by children of the village, were read out.



Next, the procession moved to Christ Church where walkers were free to express their own thoughts, with some lighting candles; each sharing their light to create one light.



The third stop was opposite the Village Hall by the shops where walkers reflected and expressed their gratitude for those who have cared for us, particularly the emergency services and shop workers who continued to work whilst at risk.

The fourth stop was outside Catshill Baptist Church, where by placing small stones in bowls of water, walkers were able to symbolically lay down their burdens for the wider world and begin to let the light of hope in again.



Finally the walkers made their way to Catshill Methodist Church car park, where refreshments were supplied and the walkers could sit at tables, talk and symbolically prepare for the future and a new beginning.



Those that took part in the walk will agree that although many had

experienced loss and suffering over the last two years, it was an uplifting and worthwhile experience.

At some future point the Parish Council will create a Covid Memorial of some form within the parish. If you have any suggestions, then please let us know.

IN the autumn 2019 edition of From Our Past I published a photo of “Caddy Corner” in Catshill, which showed Lily May Fisher outside the shop in 1926.

I now give thanks to reader Trevor Harper who has written giving us more information...

Lily was born in 1898, and was one of the children of Henry Fisher and Rose Tustin. Henry was a local Grocer and Market Gardener in Catshill, who owned and ran his business from the original shop.



Catshill Social Football Club played in the North Bromsgrove Football League, and they were League Champions of the 1921/22 season. William was awarded with a Gold Medal with the inscription “Champions 1921 - 22 Catshill Social FC William Harper (Capt).”

Lily married William Harper, a Catshill man, who originally lived with his parents George and Mary, in Woodrow Lane, together with their six other children.

William, who was born in 1893, was a keen footballer and at the age of 28, was Captain of the Catshill Social Football Club. Here he is on the left of the middle row:



Trevor also supplied another photograph of his Grandfather (William Harper) in a football team that we assume was also in Catshill; again he is on the left of the middle row:

William looks a bit younger in this photo and it's possible that it was taken on the Meadow.

Do you have any other records of the history of Catshill Social Football Club from this period, or do you recognise any of the other players and people shown in the photos. If so then please let us know.

LAST August your Parish Council purchased a **VAS** (*Visual Aid Sign*), to capture vehicle speed data within the parish. The **VAS** captures data from both directions, not just the visual display side, which informs drivers of their speed. The **VAS** was initially placed on Woodrow Lane, but can be moved around the parish.

The VAS does not capture registration numbers

The **VAS** has two functions that we are using:

1. **Visual Display**; where vehicle speeds are displayed with a red warning to drivers who are speeding and a “Thank you” message to those within the legal limit.
2. **Spy Mode**; where there is no visual display, but data is still being recorded!

We analyse the data between both modes to highlight whether the presence of the signs actually slows traffic down. Here is a summary of results that get passed to Parish and District councillors:

Clearly the **VAS** has had an impact. Speeding went up when the camera was in Spy Mode which shows that when drivers think the device is off they speed more.

DATES	SPEEDS	PERCENTAGES OF VEHICLES SPEEDS INCOMING	PERCENTAGES OF VEHICLES SPEEDS OUTGOING	MODE
24 TH SEPTEMBER 2021	BELOW 30MPH	89.88%	86.48%	VISUAL DISPLAY
TO	31MPH -40MPH	9.49%	12.82%	
27 TH OCTOBER 2021	41MPH – 50MPH	0.58%	0.61%	
WOODROW LANE	51MPH - 60MPH	0.05%	0.08%	
	61MPH – 75MPH	0.00%	0.01%	
Total amount of cars	47,962 recorded			
AVERAGE SPEEDS	INCOMING TRAFFIC	25.18 MPH	OUTGOING TRAFFIC	25.75 MPH
MAXIMUM SPEED RECORDED	INCOMING TRAFFIC	58.00 MPH	OUTGOING TRAFFIC	76.00 MPH

DATES	SPEEDS	PERCENTAGES OF VEHICLES SPEEDS INCOMING	PERCENTAGES OF VEHICLES SPEEDS OUTGOING	MODE
13 TH NOVEMBER 2021	BELOW 30MPH	83.52%	85.98%	SPY MODE
TO	31MPH -40MPH	15.63%	13.30%	
16 TH DECEMBER 2021	41MPH – 50MPH	0.79%	0.60%	
WOODROW LANE	51MPH - 60MPH	0.05%	0.07%	
	61MPH – 75MPH	0.00%	0.04%	
Total amount of cars	92,683 recorded			
AVERAGE SPEEDS	INCOMING TRAFFIC	26.39 MPH	OUTGOING TRAFFIC	25.85 MPH
MAXIMUM SPEED RECORDED	INCOMING TRAFFIC	63.00 MPH	OUTGOING TRAFFIC	88.00 MPH

The highest recorded speed on Woodrow Lane was 76 mph in Visual Display, and a staggering 88 mph in Spy mode. However, the statistics show that MOST drivers stick to the speed limit.

*To celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee
you are invited to*

THE BIG PICNIC

Catshill Village Meadow - Sunday 5th June

*This is a free community event
simply bring your picnics, blankets and folding chairs
We will have food and drink vendors to keep your picnics topped up*

11am

A Jubilee Service organised by the Churches in Catshill

12 noon to late afternoon

THE BIG PICNIC

with local entertainers, activities and music

Various stalls around the meadow

Have a selfie with "The Queen"

Dress up in Red White and Blue

No awnings or BBQs please



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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