

NEWS MAGAZINE



SUMMER 2025

CATSHILL & NORTH MARLBROOK

Parish Council

www.catshillandnorthmarlbrook-pc.gov.uk



PLAN FOR 605 NEW HOMES IN CATSHILL

Have Your Say - See Page 8

IT'S been a fantastic year working closely with our Junior councillors at Catshill First School. We've all enjoyed regular meetings and exchanged great ideas to make Catshill even more fantastic.

The children have had a special input into many of our local projects like Christmas light designs, keeping our streets clean of dog mess and future plans for Catshill. The councillors did a fantastic job of weeding and planting the flower bed outside the school gates. We hope it thrives all summer for everyone to enjoy. Well done and thank you to every Junior councillor.



*Mrs O'Brien, Cllr Jessica Parry
and the Junior Councillors.*

Cover Photograph by Carl Knowles

Sunshine on a Rainy Day

AS clouds roll over Catshill Fields, the sunflowers remind us of what we have, and what we hope to save. Thank you Carl Knowles for supplying our evocative cover photograph.

Could You Help Shape Our Community?

Joining the Parish Council is a great way to make a real difference to where you live.

It gives you a voice in local decisions, from planning applications to community projects.

You'll gain insight into the community and help influence how resources are used in the parish.

It's a rewarding way to give back, meet like-minded people, and help protect what matters most to local residents.

No previous experience is needed – just a genuine interest in your community.

Find out more by contacting:

parishclerk@catshillandnorthmarlbrook-pc.gov.uk

and see if it's for **YOU!**



I'D like to introduce myself as the new Chairman of Catshill and North Marlbrook Parish Council. Before I do, I want to express my sincere thanks to my predecessor, Bernard McEldowney, who served as Chairman from 2019 and as a parish councillor for an impressive eleven years.

There's much I could say about Bernard's contribution, but in light of the recent publication of Bromsgrove District Council's Draft Development Plan - which proposes three local areas for potential development - I'd like to particularly highlight his instrumental role in establishing our Neighbourhood Plan. His efforts laid the groundwork for how we as a community can respond to such challenges. Thank you, Bernard, for everything you've done.



Turning to the current Draft Development Strategy Consultation, I urge all residents to read the summary leaflet issued by Bromsgrove District Council and to submit your response by the deadline: **5pm on 22nd September**. It's vital that everyone makes their views known. You'll find more information about how to respond elsewhere in this magazine.

A little about me: I was born in Bromsgrove and have lived in Catshill since 1991, so I know the area well. I joined the Parish Council during the pandemic, having launched a local community support website that has since grown into the Catshill Community social media group.

One of the things I love most about our parish is the friendliness of the people—am I imagining it, or do more people in Catshill say hello to strangers than in other parts of the county? I also value our beautiful countryside and footpaths, and I'm keen to help ensure they are well cared for and accessible.

We are incredibly fortunate to have community leaders and volunteers who work tirelessly to put on events and create opportunities for us all. Whether it's something happening at the Meadow, the Village Hall, or you see someone planting flowers or picking up litter - please take a moment to say thank you. The same goes for our local businesses; many, like our pubs, are true community assets, and they rely on our support.

As Chairman, my priority is to work closely with my fellow councillors to best represent and support all parish residents. To do that, we need to hear from you. We meet every month in the village hall - please do come along and say hello. Alternatively, you can contact us via our Clerk, Carol.

If you're interested in becoming more involved, perhaps even by becoming a parish councillor yourself, please get in touch. It's a rewarding and meaningful way to support our community - and one I highly recommend.

Cllr Brett Laniosh

The Easter Experience



OVER a three day period in April, Catshill Methodist Church was home to “*The Easter Experience*,” where the story of Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday was explained to over 300 youngsters from local schools, by guides and story tellers, who told the Easter story from the point of view of various biblical characters such as Mary Magdalene. The children were encouraged to ask questions, and the

storytellers would answer “in character” before the children would then move onto the next scene, ending with the resurrection of Jesus.

This highly popular event follows on from “*The Christmas Experience*” which has been held at the Church for the last few years.



Where in the Parish?



THE spring News Magazine “*Where in the Parish*” was not that difficult for many of you. The answer (already published on our facebook page) was the large Costa Coffee advert at the petrol station at the top of Golden Cross Lane. Well done if you got it right!

This edition’s challenge may prove to be harder for you. Where in the parish will you

find these flower images pressed into the mortar of a brick wall?

Check the *Catshill and North Marlbrook Parish Council* facebook page in the next few weeks to see if your answer is correct, or wait for the answer to be published in our next News Magazine.



BANK Holiday Monday 5th May saw another successful Car Boot sale on the Meadow, one of several to take place over the spring and summer. Please remember that the Meadow is a registered charity and it's events like this that help fund this green oasis within our village. Next time you see that there's a Car Boot sale on the Meadow, why not visit and see if you can bag a bargain!



Catshill Easter Trail 2025



The Trail Map.

DESPITE the wet weather, Catshill was buzzing this Good Friday as record numbers turned out for the 2025 Easter Trail.

Families followed the trail through each of the village churches, enjoying crafts, games,



A great turnout.

and Easter-themed activities at every stop.



Waiting for the off.



The Easter Bunny was waiting at the end.



The end of the trail.

The trail ended at the Village Hall, where children met the Easter Bunny, played games, and enjoyed a free hot dog and fries. Everyone went home with big smiles and an Easter treat.

A huge thank you to all the organisers and volunteers who made the day such a success — rain or shine, Catshill never disappoints!

CATSHILL BIGWEEKENDER

THIS past May saw the village of Catshill burst into life with the very first Catshill Bigweekender and VE Day Celebration — and what a spectacular debut it was. A true celebration of community, heritage, and local spirit, the event proved to be a resounding success, drawing smiles, laughter, and heartfelt moments from all who attended.

Held across a sun-filled weekend, the Bigweekender brought together local food vendors, charity stalls, and small businesses, transforming the village into a bustling hub of activity. The Meadow was alive with delicious aromas, handmade goods, community outreach, and a warm, welcoming atmosphere that made it clear: Catshill knows how to throw a party.

Entertainment was in full supply, with something for everyone — from live music and performances to family activities and a nostalgic cockney singalong that had everyone tapping their feet. A highlight for many was the special visit from MP Bradley Thomas, adding a sense of pride and recognition to an already outstanding community effort.



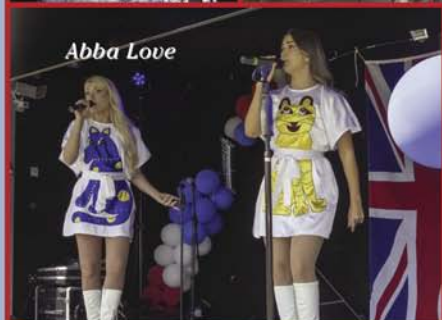
Rag 'n' Bone Man Tribute



Abba Love



Stars Dance Academy



Abba Love



Lucy Fur



Josh Davidson



Rag 'n' Bone Man Tribute

AND VE DAY CELEBRATION



The VE Day commemorations were especially moving. The weekend included a solemn wreath-laying and dedication ceremony, reminding everyone of the true meaning behind the celebrations. The event was beautifully complemented by a parade led by the Bromsgrove Boys' Brigade, drawing applause and reflection from the crowds as they marched with dignity and pride.



The VE Day theme continued with vintage wartime entertainment, offering everything from classic tunes to fun and laughter.

What started as a community idea became an unforgettable event that not only celebrated the past but also showcased the vibrant, caring, and creative spirit of Catshill today.

As the weekend came to a close, one message was clear: the Catshill Bigweekender wasn't just a one-off — it was the start of something truly special. With such enthusiastic support and glowing feedback, there's no doubt that this event will become a cherished annual tradition.

Catshill, you've done yourselves proud. Here's to an even bigger and better Bigweekender next year!

8 *Plan for 605 New Homes in Catshill: Have Your Say*

Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) is currently reviewing and updating the Bromsgrove District Plan, originally adopted in January 2017. This plan will guide where housing, employment, and supporting infrastructure will be developed across the district through to 2043.

To meet government housing targets, BDC must allocate land for just over 9,000 new homes. As part of this process, three potential sites have been identified in and around Catshill and North Marlbrook:

- **CA1** – 165 houses between Woodrow Lane and the A38
- **CA2** – 140 houses behind Four Oaks Drive
- **CA3** – 300 houses west of the A38, adjacent to North Birmingham Cemetery



BDC acknowledges that new development can be challenging for communities. However, this is also an opportunity for local people to influence where housing should go, what it should look like, and what infrastructure—such as roads, public transport, schools, health services, and local job opportunities—should support it.

In BDC's words: *"We don't know everything about these places and need to hear from you to 'fill in the blanks' to make the most informed choices to move the Plan forward."*

Residents are invited to attend local drop-in sessions to speak directly with planning officers and are strongly encouraged to submit their views before the consultation deadline at 5pm on 22 September 2025.

To take part, scan the QR code or visit: bromsgroveplan.commonplace.is

Catshill and North Marlbrook Parish Council has formally responded to BDC, highlighting

concerns and referencing the **Catshill and North Marlbrook Neighbourhood Plan**, which was formally adopted on 3 November 2021 following independent examination and a successful local referendum. The Neighbourhood Plan sets out a shared community vision for local development.

Local MP **Bradley Thomas** commended the parish council for its proactive involvement, stating: *"This is excellent to see such proactive engagement from Catshill and North Marlbrook Parish Council. You have my full support."*

The Parish Council urges all residents to get involved in the consultation and share their views. Your feedback may cover concerns about traffic, schools, GP surgeries, public rights of way, green spaces, community facilities, or general infrastructure capacity.



Your voice matters. Help shape the future of our community.



THIS edition's From our Past depicts a somewhat dramatic scene. The photograph shows Coles of Catshill, the DIY trade centre just after the premises in Golden Cross Lane had been destroyed by a fire in 1986. If you did not live in the village at that time, you may not even know that this business ever existed, because there is no longer any trace of it. This is because for a while the land was fenced off, and ultimately a modern house was built on the plot where Coles once stood.



This photo was kindly supplied by Michael Wagstaff (taken by his father Roy) and reminds us once again of how our village is constantly evolving, sometimes very slowly and subtly and sometimes, like in this case, very dramatically.

As a teenager, I remember visiting the upstairs of this building to buy model aeroplanes which at the time I used to build and attempt to fly! I

hope this photograph has brought back memories of the past for you too.

If you have any old photographs that you would like to share with our community, PLEASE let me know, email:

p.masters@catshillandnorthmarlbrook-pc.gov.uk

Many of you tell me how much you enjoy this feature, but without YOUR help it's hard to constantly find old photos to use, so please help. Thank you.

THE Hub Kitchen has quickly become a much-loved part of the Catshill community. Originally set up to support the Games Hub, it now offers delicious, quality food at affordable prices to everyone — all from the heart of the village.

Open every Tuesday from 9:30am to 2pm, the kitchen is run entirely by a team of dedicated volunteers, whose passion and hard work have helped it go from strength to strength.

Whether you're popping in for a hearty meal, a warm drink, or a friendly chat, the Hub Kitchen is more than just a place to eat — it's a welcoming space where community comes first.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

AUTUMN/WINTER 2025 EVENTS

HAYFEST AND SCARECROW TRAIL

27th September - 12pm–1:30pm

At Community Orchard, Catshill Fields - Free! Scarecrow Trail runs for a whole week

HALLOWEEN PARTY

31st October - 3pm–5pm

At Catshill Village Hall - Free entry

Catshill Big Bang Fireworks Display

1st November - 5pm–8:30pm

At Lingfield Park £3 adults/£2 kids – tickets on the gate

Christmas Market & Lights Switch On

22nd November - 3pm–6pm

Catshill Village Hall - Free

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS PARTY

19th December - 12:30pm

Catshill Village Hall - Free, for anyone spending Christmas alone – bookings open soon

Rocking Around The Christmas Tree

20th December - 5pm–6:30pm

Catshill Village Hall Free entry & festive tunes guaranteed



**Catshill Community Events
Presents**



Catshill Community Orchard Hay Festival & Scarecrow Trail 27th SEPTEMBER 12pm til 1:30pm

**Celebrating the Harvest of Hay
from our Beautiful Orchard, Catshill Fields, Milton Road
Light Refreshments and Entertainment**

Introducing our First Ever Scarecrow Trail

Theme is Disney Pixar

**A Week Long Scarecrow Trail around Our Village.
to get involved and create your Scarecrow and register
your address using the link**





IT is with great pleasure that I write to introduce myself to you. My name is Rev. Amanda Arthur ("Manda"), and I am the newly licensed part time vicar of *Holy Trinity & St Mary's, Dodford, and Christ Church, Catshill*. I, my wonderful husband, and our beautiful son moved to Bromsgrove from Stafford at the end of February with much anticipation and excitement for this new chapter.

My time here began officially on Sunday 9th March with the most profoundly moving service at *Holy Trinity & St Mary's*. The sun was shining, the sky was blue, and as I was led through the doors of the packed church to be presented to the Bishop, my nerves fell away and I felt overwhelmed with a feeling of peace and joy. The warmth of the welcome was palpable, and I am deeply grateful to everyone who helped to make the service and the celebration afterwards so very special – thank you. And so our journey together has begun!

In my first sermon here, as we pondered *1 Corinthians 13*, I spoke about faith, hope and love. I have no idea where our journey will take us, or what we will encounter along the way. But one thing I am sure of, is that for us to grow together and thrive as a community, we will need faith, hope and love.

Faith in each other, and faith that God has brought us together at this time for a purpose. Hope which dares to dream and believe that with God's help, we can do amazing things. And most importantly, we need to love one another and God with everything we have, because that is the kind of love that transforms lives. I hope you will join me.

And so to finish, I want to say that the church is here for all, and all are welcome exactly as they are without exception, without judgement and without agenda. Whatever you believe or not, whatever your political stance, whatever your achievements or failings, whatever your class, your race, your gender, your appearance...you are welcome, and I look forward to meeting you very much.

Every blessing, Manda

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**

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