

NEWS MAGAZINE



AUTUMN 2026

CATSHILL & NORTH MARLBROOK

Parish Council



MEET MACK THE PARROT

SEE PAGE 11

New Marlbrook Sign

AS mentioned in our summer edition, Marlbrook now has its own parish sign, joining the similar signs already established for Catshill.

Shortly after installation, we added a plant container to match the Catshill signs, and despite the hot, dry summer, as shown by the colour of the grass in this photograph, the flower display looked fantastic thanks to our dedicated watering volunteers. We hope that you enjoyed the colourful flowers and the warm welcome to Marlbrook that they provide.



Remembrance Garden Wall



THE Parish Council is planning improvements to the Remembrance Garden, located between The Doc and the Baptist Church.

During the October half-term week, subject to conditions, a new low retaining wall will be installed to help prevent soil erosion and improve the appearance of the area. The work will create a tidier, more sustainable space and provide opportunities for an enhanced planting scheme next year. This is something that has been planned for several years, and we look forward to its completion.

Full Parish Council Meetings

Why not come along?

Everyone is welcome to attend our monthly meetings, which include an Open Forum, giving residents the opportunity to raise ideas, concerns, or question councillors.

When:

The last Thursday of each Month* at 7:30pm.

Where:

Catshill Baptist Church, Milton Road, Catshill.

**Except December & August.*



WELCOME to the Autumn edition of the Parish Magazine, delivered to every home in Catshill & North Marlbrook.

Now that the welcome rhythm of rain has returned to our parish, we can reflect on the extraordinary summer we lived through. The unprecedented dry conditions tested our resilience, placing an immense strain on our daily routines and the local environment. We all remember watching gardens turn yellow, fields become baked, and local wildfires rise. Our farming neighbours bore a heavy burden, watching vibrant green fields turn to dusty gold, resulting in noticeably poor harvests. Our thoughts go out to anyone directly affected, particularly those who lost their homes. As the

landscape slowly greens up under the autumn skies, this summer leaves us with a deeper appreciation for rain and a renewed commitment to protecting our shared resources.

Council News & Vacancies Since our last issue, three new residents have joined the Parish Council, bringing great ideas and energy to our ongoing projects. We still have three vacancies; if you would like to learn more about the role, please join us at an upcoming meeting.

Volunteers Welcome! Getting involved in your local community is one of the most rewarding ways to boost your health and wellbeing. Research consistently shows that volunteering reduces stress, enhances mood, and creates a strong sense of purpose and belonging. Whether you are looking to stay active outdoors, meet new neighbours, or clear your mind after a busy week, giving a little of your time to the parish is a powerful antidote to the pressures of daily life.

We have a wide range of opportunities available to suit your interests, schedule, and physical capability. You might help bring our vibrant local events to life, join environmental projects to green our shared spaces, or lend a hand with community administration and outreach. Whether you can spare two hours a month or a few hours a week, every contribution makes a tangible difference. Get in touch to discover how you can support Catshill & North Marlbrook while giving your own mental and physical health a positive lift.

Volunteer Litter Pickers Our volunteer litter pickers continue to do fantastic work keeping the parish tidy. Please consider joining them—we provide all the necessary bags and equipment. It is a rewarding way to make a big difference in a short amount of time. To join, contact our clerk, email clerk@cnmparish.gov.uk or phone **07813 671899**

Community Events As detailed in this issue, our Environment and Events working group is hard at work planning activities for the coming months. Stay updated by visiting cnmparish.gov.uk or following our Facebook page, and please do come along to our upcoming events.

Cllr Brett Laniosh - Chairman, Catshill and North Marlbrook Parish Council

4 *Community Fireworks Display Returns This October*

THE annual Fireworks Display has become one of the parish's most loved community events, attracting thousands of residents and visitors over the years for a spectacular evening of family fun.

Many readers will remember that the display was originally held on the Meadow and was entirely organised, funded and run by the Catshill Scouts. As the event grew, so did the financial risks. Purchasing fireworks and arranging facilities had to be done well in advance, meaning that low attendance due to poor weather could have resulted in significant losses for the Scout Group.

To help safeguard the future of the event, the Parish Council stepped in to provide financial support. This partnership enabled the Scouts to continue their invaluable fundraising efforts without the worry of a major financial loss, while allowing local families to enjoy a high-quality fireworks display at an affordable price.

Today the event takes place at **Lingfield Park** and is organised by the Events working group for the Parish Council.

However, it is important to recognise that this event simply could not happen without the incredible commitment and hard work of the volunteers from the **6th Bromsgrove Scouts**.

Planning for the display begins many months in advance. Preparations include booking the professional pyrotechnics team, arranging security and first aid cover, organising fencing and toilet facilities, confirming car parking arrangements, booking food vendors, lighting and the sound system, ensuring risk assessments are completed and much more besides.

Then comes the physical work of setting up the site, managing the event on the night and carrying out the considerable clean-up operation afterwards. All of this is undertaken with public safety as the highest priority.

This Year's Event:

Date: **Friday 31st October**

Venue: **Lingfield Park, Catshill**

Gates Open: **5:30 pm** Fireworks: **7:15 pm**

Parking is available at:

The Welcome Hall - Catshill Methodist Church- Catshill Baptist Church

Please be considerate of residents if you park on nearby roads.

If possible, please walk to the event!

Important Information:

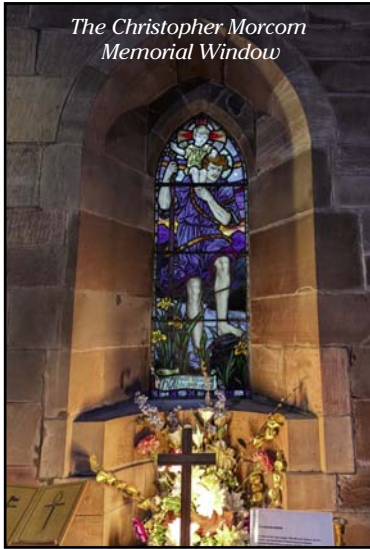
No alcohol is permitted on site.

Personal fireworks, including sparklers, are strictly prohibited.

Please follow all steward and safety instructions throughout the evening.

We look forward to welcoming you for another fantastic community fireworks display!

Heritage Open Days Reveal Christchurch's Rich History



*The Christopher Morcom
Memorial Window*

CHRISTCHURCH welcomed visitors over the weekend of 19th and 20th September as part of the national Heritage Open Days event, offering an opportunity to admire the church's stunning stained-glass windows and discover the remarkable stories behind them.

The church has strong connections to the renowned poet A. E. Housman. His grandfather, Rev. Thomas Housman, was instrumental in the construction of Christchurch in 1838 and served as its first vicar for more than 30 years. A. E. Housman himself was baptised in the church on Easter Day 1859.

Visitors also learned about Christchurch's fascinating link to Alan Turing, the pioneering mathematician whose codebreaking work at Bletchley Park helped shorten the Second World War. Turing's close schoolfriend, Christopher Morcom, lived at the Clock House near Catshill.

Following Christopher's tragic death at the age of 18, his mother commissioned a stained-glass window in his memory, which was installed in Christchurch.

Deeply affected by the loss of his friend, Turing continued to visit both Christopher's grave and the memorial window in the church. Today, the window remains a poignant reminder of a friendship that helped shape one of the greatest minds of the 20th century.

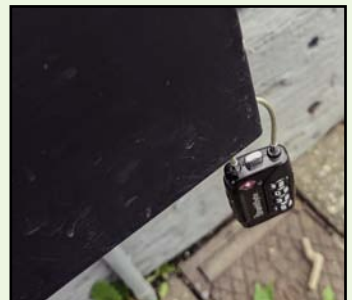
The open weekend provided a fascinating glimpse into the church's heritage and the extraordinary people connected with its history.

Where in the Parish?



THE answer to our Summer Edition *Where in the Parish?* challenge was the litter bin beside the children's play area in Lingfield Walk. Well done to everyone who guessed correctly!

This edition's challenge might be a little trickier. Earlier this year, the black section of this mystery object was simply unpainted metal, so that could make it a bit harder to recognise.



Think you know the answer? Keep it to yourself for now and see if your friends and neighbours can identify it too! We'll reveal the answer on our Facebook page in a few weeks' time, and we'll also include it in the next edition of the magazine.

Good luck!

Cllr Paul Masters.

Scarecrow Festival Enjoys a Sunny Start



Smiles All Round



Fun! Fun! Fun!



Woody & Jessie

THE weather was kind on Saturday 12th September, as sunshine over Catshill Fields helped make the second annual Scarecrow Festival a tremendous success.

Families gathered between 11am and 1pm to enjoy a range of activities, including playing with the hay and scarecrow-making. A special highlight was the attendance of **Woody and Jessie** from **Toy Story**, who proved very popular with the children. Visitors were able to pose for photographs with the pair, while Jessie also delighted youngsters by creating sparkling glitter "tattoos."

Music played and refreshments were available throughout the event, adding to the festive atmosphere and providing a welcome opportunity for residents to catch up with friends and neighbours. Many youngsters took the opportunity to take hay home to create their own scarecrow masterpieces there.

The festival also marked the launch of the parish's annual **Scarecrow**

Trail. This year's theme was **Books**, which inspired residents to create imaginative scarecrows which could be seen throughout the parish.

Catshill and North Marlbrook Parish Council would like to thank everyone who attended and contributed to another successful community event..

STOP PRESS: Winners Announced!



A Photo Opportunity!



On Top of the Haystack



Free Sparkling tattoos



Golden Cross Lane



Wildmoor Lane



Golden Cross Lane

Catshill Together Remembers

SERVICE OF MEMORIAL
8TH NOVEMBER, 2026

Service at Catshill Social Club - 10am
Service at Memorial 10:45am

Tea, Coffee & Bar
Open at Catshill Social Club

ALL PROCEEDS TO POPPY APPEAL 2026



The Greenhouse at Barnes Close



HAVE you heard about The Greenhouse at Barnes Close? Find a place of rest and peace that is on your doorstep; we invite you to find out more about us.

We are an ecumenical Retreat Centre on the edge of the Waseley Hills just outside Bromsgrove, close to Junction 4 of the M5. In the former home of George Cadbury, Quaker and Birmingham Industrialist we have 17 bedrooms, self-catering and dining facilities and relaxing spaces including comfortable lounges, library and meeting spaces, as well as 5 acres of gardens and grounds to explore. You can hire our spaces for day and residential events of all kinds.

We host our own day & residential events, community gatherings and more as we make space to explore faith and justice, reconciliation and peace in a place for all faiths and none.

Soulcraft is our monthly retreat day for rest and reflection for individuals. You are invited to come and breathe deep for a day.

To book: bookings@greenhouseatbarnesclose.org.uk.

Volunteering. As a small charity with five acres of land and 100-year-old heritage house we need volunteers to help garden, paint, fix, cook, clean and administrate. You can become a volunteer committing as little as 4 hours a month on our monthly volunteer days. We also have weekly volunteer roles for those with more time to give. With lots to do there is sure to be a role for you. Come for good company and new friends; come to find your own peace and wellbeing. Enjoy our beautiful space.

More info. volunteering@greenhouseatbarnesclose.org.uk

Monthly Volunteer Mondays are on the 2nd Monday of each month from 10 to 4pm and Sunday afternoon volunteering, is every month from 1 to 4pm.

Contact us: **The Greenhouse at Barnes Close, Chadwich Manor Estate, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B61 0RA**

Website: www.greenhouseatbarnesclose.org.uk

Please note our new address:

**CNM Parish, PO Box 18931,
Redditch. B97 9AP**

**Or you can contact us at: clerk@cnmparish.gov.uk
or by phone on: 07813 671899.**



Christmas Lights Switch On

21st NOVEMBER

3pm till 5pm

NEW VENUE:

**Outside Catshill Methodist Church
Golden Cross lane.**

**FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT
MUSIC, FOOD AND DRINKS**

**CHRISTMAS, STREET AND
TREE LIGHTS SWITCH ON AT:**

5pm



IN this edition, we find ourselves in **Meadow Road**, looking at what is now the **Clock Shop**, formerly the original **Catshill Post Office**.

There are several interesting details in the photograph, including an advertisement for Lyons Tea and the building next to the Post Office, which still stands today with its distinctive black-and-white detailing on the upper storey.

A useful clue in dating the photograph is the white box outside the Post Office. It is a **K1 telephone kiosk**.

Following the unification of private public telephone companies under the control of the General Post Office in 1912, the K1 became Britain's first standard national telephone kiosk. Its design was based on the wooden kiosks previously used in Birmingham, although most K1s were constructed from pre-cast concrete and topped with a distinctive pyramidal roof.

Introduced in 1921, following delays caused by the First World War, the K1 was not particularly popular. In 1924, the GPO therefore launched a competition to find a better design. The winning entry came from Sir Giles Gilbert Scott and resulted in the iconic red, cast-iron K2 telephone box.

However, the K2 proved expensive and extremely heavy, so modified versions of the concrete K1 continued to be installed for several years. They were eventually succeeded by the K3 and, in the 1930s, the familiar K6.

The presence of the white K1 in this photograph suggests that this image probably dates from the 1920s or 1930s.

Avoncroft Museum of Historic Buildings, home to the **National Telephone Kiosk Collection**, has an example of the K1 on display.

As always, if you have an interesting old photograph that you would like to share, then please let me know.

p.masters@cnmparish.gov.uk

IF you've spotted a beautiful blue-and-gold parrot flying around the parish, don't worry, it will be Mack the Macaw!



Mack is an 18-month-old parrot owned by Catshill resident Chris Beech. Thanks to weeks of careful training by Chris, Mack can now fly freely but still return when called, making him quite a rare sight in the UK.

Chris and Mack can often be seen around the local area, including the Beacon, one of Mack's favourite flying spots. They also share videos of their adventures on Facebook, where you can watch Mack soaring through local lanes while Chris tries to keep up on his quad bike!

With the excellent care, healthy diet and plenty of exercise that Mack is getting, he should have many years of flying ahead of



him. In fact, macaws can live for up to 80 years.

So, if you see a flash of blue and gold overhead, be

sure to say hello to one of the village's most colourful residents!

Why not add Chris Beech on your Facebook feed to enjoy some lovely videos of Mack.



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

Jessica Mathews, Clerk to the Council,
CNM Parish, PO Box 18931
Redditch. B97 9AP

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e-mail: clerk@cnmparish.gov.uk

www.cnmparish.gov.uk



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Published by Catshill & North Marlbrook Parish Council

**Catshill & North Marlbrook
Parish Council**

FIREWORKS

31st OCTOBER 2026

**LINGFIELD PARK
CATSHILL**

GATES OPEN:

5:30pm

FIREWORKS:

7:15pm

Suggested Donation:

Adults £3 - Children £2

(Card Payment Preferred)



WORKING TOGETHER

