

CATCOTT PARISH MEETING

2005/2006 APM - 1

Minutes of a meeting held on Tuesday 10th May 2005
at 7.00pm in the Catcott School Hall

- APM 05/06/1 **PRESENT:** Cllr Westmaas (in the Chair)
- APM 05/06/2 **ALSO PRESENT:** DCllr S Kingham, CCllr Huxtable, Community Beat Officer Alison Giddings and 13 members of the public.
- APM 05/06/3 **IN ATTENDANCE:** Julia Marshall (Clerk to Catcott Parish Council)
- APM 05/06/4 **APOLOGIES:** received from Mr Culliford.
- APM 05/06/5 **WELCOME:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- APM 05/06/6 **MINUTES:** of the previous Parish Meeting were confirmed and signed.
- APM 05/06/7 **CATCOTT PARISH COUNCIL:** The Chairman opened by thanking all who had taken an interest in, and had helped with Council work during the year. He went on to say we extend our particular thanks to those who attend our meetings. We very much value and appreciate your being here and contributing to our work. On a personal note, I wish to thank my fellow councillors for their help and support as I stumbled and bumbled my way through this first year. Julia has had a busy year on the Council's behalf and I am particularly grateful to her for her advice and support throughout. Pete was as good as his word and has also been of great help to me. Thanks all.// **PLANNING:** Taken as a whole, it was a relatively quiet year for planning matters. Most applications were for minor works - conservatories and the like. One application for development outside the planning boundary was rejected and a recent major proposal for a development of three houses in the heart of the village has also just been rejected. Had this gone ahead, it would have had major consequences for the future nature and character of our village. It says something about our continued lack of confidence in the judgement of the Planning Department, that although we could see that the plans at the very least violated planning guidelines, we could not feel in any way certain that our views would have prevailed. Thankfully they did. So, can we now lower our guard? I think not!// **HIGHWAYS:** I don't know where to start! The most serious issue undoubtedly relates to the failure of the Highways Dept to take the opportunity of their Speed Management Review to do something about the Catcott and Moorlynch turnings on the A39. The Parish Council made numerous representations on this matter both verbally and in writing. Pete and I attended a special Speed Management Review meeting in October. We were not alone in pointing out the pressing need to do something about these dangerous junctions. Everyone at the meeting agreed that the junctions represented a serious hazard to safety. The result, of course, was that nothing whatever will be done. The problem was completely ignored when the plan was published. I hope they can sleep soundly with that decision. On another matter, we also objected strongly to the way in which our verges were vandalised by the Highways Department in August last year. We felt it was totally unacceptable that litter could be tipped and left on the verges as it was then. What was done about it? Nothing. I can't tell you how frustrating I found this experience. The sad state of our roads and lanes is plain to see. At every opportunity, we continue to pursue the Highways department in whatever ways are open to us but again we find it a most aggravating business. We invited Mr Gill, the Highways manager, to meet us in the village so we could show him the problems first hand. Our invitation was declined. We can assure you that we will continue to press for better service from this department.// **FOOTPATHS:** At one time it seemed that some interest was being taken in the footpath network. Sadly this didn't last too long. We once again have to spend much time and effort chasing people to get essential work done. At the same time we have seen signs put up in the wrong place and so on.// On the positive side, work on the War Memorial was completed and it now looks so much better. Whilst on this subject, on behalf of the Council I would once again like to thank the anonymous donor who so generously contributed to the repair fund. Whilst the War Memorial exists to remind us of those who fell in wars, the Jubilee Stone managed to fall in a war of its own. Its injuries were not terminal however, and during the year it has been restored, and lives to fight another day. Motorists beware.// We obtained a number of small grants from SCC and will be using some of these funds to improve

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disabled access to St Peter's. We will also renovate our Council notice boards, both of which have seen better days. We have also been able to offer some assistance to St Peter's and have made small grants to other local causes.// As many of you will be aware, Catcott Parish Council now has a website which was created, and is managed by Julia. Thanks for doing this Julia. Please visit the site.// There is now a new seat in the bus shelter and Syd's handiwork should last quite some time. Thanks, Syd. Ladies and gentlemen, we thank you once again for your continued interest and support.

APM 05/06/8 **COUNTY COUNCILLOR:** David Huxtable said he was feeling more positive with regard to highways and speed limits on the A39. There is now an overall limit of 50 mph. David noted that speed was the most mentioned topic during the recent county council elections. He suggested the parish council might consider looking at the speed limit outside the school. He felt County was about to enter a conciliatory stage and hoped that the parish lengthsman situation will be strengthened. David said he would be happy to help wherever possible. With regard to the Community Fund it appeared that this was likely to continue and should be borne in mind.

APM 05/06/9 **POLICE:** Community Beat Officer, Alison Giddings, reported that she had been in this post since August last year. Her beat covers Chedzoy, Burtle, Edington, Catcott, Woolavington, Puriton, Stawell and Sutton Mallet but the worst problems are in Woolavington and Puriton. She sometimes has the help of a PCSO (Police Community Support Officer) and the response time to rural situations is expected to be a maximum of 20 minutes. At present there is a Sergeant and 3 officers to cover a 32km area. She is aware of the problems relating to parking at the school but has to prioritise her work. During discussion at the meeting it became clear that members of the public would much prefer more police recruited and fewer PCSOs who have very little power. Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) aren't necessarily effective and many at the meeting thought that punishment seldom fits the crime these days. It was also noted that the Police are often unable to enforce things these days. Alison then mentioned a recent armed robbery (iron bar) from Cossington Post Office last week.

APM 05/06/10 **NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH:** Hilary Mackay said she was glad she had not much to say fortunately. The new Ringmaster works with messages relaid to villagers and posted on noticeboards and at the Post Office. There is a new street co-ordinator for Hector Road. There is very low crime in Catcott. Steel Lane and The Standards still have a co-ordinator. The group meets three times a year.

APM 05/06/11 **CATCOTT PRIMARY SCHOOL:** The Clerk did not have a written report but understood that an Ofsted inspection had just taken place and she believed the findings had been very favourable.

APM 05/06/12 **LAMP:** No report received.

APM 05/06/13 **SAGE:** No report received.

APM 05/06/14 **CATTS CLUB:** Esther Rushforth's written report. The Club is going from strength to strength. We currently have an average of 20 children each night and as a consequence of the club's popularity and a reduction in the rental charged by the school, we are financially self sufficient. We will not therefore be asking the Parish Council for a grant this year. I would like to emphasize however, our gratitude for the support you have given us in the past in establishing what is now a successful and vibrant After School Club.

APM 05/06/15 **SEDGE MOORS TWINNING ASSOCIATION:** In the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting were the following: LAMP was being very helpful, in spite of staffing difficulties and Sandra's departure. Members agreed that public liability insurance should not be purchased for the Association. Individual members would have their own insurance for trips abroad and venues,

vehicles etc would be likewise insured. **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:** Workload: more, active members were required to focus on specific areas of work. This could ensure the progress of outstanding tasks eg village directory, membership leaflet, school links, membership campaign, newsletter (thanks to Keith Martin for his continuing help with newsletters), fundraising/social events, involvement of clubs/associations/young people, etc. Trips to France: the trip arranged for 29 April-2 May was going ahead with a minibus and car, from Poole to Cherbourg. The week planned for September as part of a membership drive had been cancelled. Members felt that a week in October, possibly during half-term would attract more members. This would be considered for 2006. The chairman would write to thank LAMP, LAMP officers at Moorlinch, Magalie in France, Richard Bradford, Mike Smith (for auditing the accounts) and David Blackburn, who had resigned as secretary. **Membership:** Members would look at a number of ways of expanding membership and keeping existing and former members aware of developments. Ideas to be considered were ways of targeting groups, clubs and associations (eg fire officers, sports teams, music groups, schools, postmen) which is a common feature of many twinning organisations. The use of parish notice-boards, magazines, parish meetings, a display board and village newsletters was discussed with a view to looking afresh at all means of recruiting new members. The chairman thanked all those who had supported him and helped with the work of the Association in recent years, emphasising the need for new ideas and more active members to take the Association forward. **TREASURER'S REPORT:** Paul Ashley distributed copies of his accounts. He felt that the balance of approximately £780 was not enough for the next visit by our partners. This amount was in part due to a successful Quiz Night.

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DISTRICT COUNCILLOR: Stuart Kingham told us that over the last year since our last parish meeting many things have gone on at Sedgemoor.// CPA inspection after many months of hard work from officers and members, and a few days of inspection, Sedgemoor came out with a FAIR.// Bridgwater House was given the green light for refurbishment to go ahead. This is almost complete, on time and on budget with many extras included. This will now allow all Sedgemoor services to be located in one place - Bridgwater House.// Stock Appraisal on Sedgemoor's housing stock has been carried out to see what condition the properties are in and what the tenants' requirements are for the future. A final decision on whether to sell to a housing association or keep them and form an ALMO to be made.// On the financial side Sedgemoor has gone debt free through the sale of land for development. The council tax set this year was one of the lowest in the country and SDC is still providing a good service.// The introduction of green boxes and wheelie bins for garden waste has helped Sedgemoor with its recycling targets. New signs are on order to try and prevent fly tipping and Sedgemoor aims to quickly remove offending items.

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ST PETER'S CHURCH: Val Hollis reported that various long discussed plans for necessary repairs and maintenance were eventually fulfilled in 2004, and at some considerable expense. The roof was re-leaded to the tune of some £11,000, and the tower repaired - another £7,000. The gallery screen has been duly installed, but the heating is still unsatisfactory. With falling congregations and the consequent fall in income, our accounts are showing a deficit for the second year running. We are very grateful for the help we get from the Parish Council towards the upkeep of the churchyard which last year amounted to £600. The annual payment of the Parish Share to the Diocese was some £5,000.// We have had our usual fund raising events such as the ever popular Vino Venture, a jazz supper dance and the provision of teas for Open Gardens Day when the church tower is open to visitors.// We had a visit from Bishop Peter on 24th April when, besides celebrating and preaching, he blessed the gallery screen and the recently installed wheelchair ramp.

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CATCOTT VILLAGE ASSOCIATION: Miles Drake reported that of the 9 events organised in 2004 one had to be cancelled, resulting in the loss of a deposit; 7 ran at a loss; the 9th made

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a profit - Open Gardens. The CVA do expect to make a loss on some of their events, particularly those for senior citizens and children. The Open Gardens had a net profit of about £1,100 taking their balance from about £76 to about £1,200. The pensioners' lunch at the Crown was particularly well supported with 67 taking part.

- APM 05/06/19 **JAF LUTTRELL MEMORIAL CHARITY:** Val Hollis reported that the Trust, which is still active after 100 years, exists for the benefit of those in the parishes of Edington, Chilton Polden, Catcott and Burtle who may be in need, hardship or distress. Grants may also be made for the general benefit of the inhabitants of these parishes.// In this connection we have recently agreed, for a trial period of 6 months, to help the Cardiac Rehabilitation Group which meets weekly in Chilton Polden. This was previously subsidised by a charity whose funds have now dried up. We can help those who have to make frequent journeys to hospitals in Bristol and Taunton, or who need convalescent care. Educational grants may occasionally be granted, and we also distribute Christmas hampers which are much appreciated.// A great problem is in identifying those who might qualify for help. In spite of local publicity, they may be unaware that they could apply or are hesitant to do so. So we would always be very glad to be told of likely cases. Application can be made to the Clerk, Mrs Agnes Ault, of West Close, Edington, to the Vicar or to me. The two Trustees appointed by Edington Parish Council, Mrs Westcott and Mrs Andrews, are also ready to help.
- APM 05/06/20 **RHODA NORRIS CHARITY:** Eileen reported that the charity is still dormant with a sum of £104.51 in the bank.
- APM 05/06/21 **CATCOTT EDUCATIONAL CHARITY:** Pete Mackay reported that there is currently about £1,100 in investments which this year produced an income of around £38 which was donated to Catcott Primary School for books. With three small charities in Catcott it was felt by the meeting that they should consider looking at the possibilities of combining in some way.
- APM 05/06/22 **MARY GODFREY CHARITY:** Gerald Wheeler said his report would be the most exciting of the charity reports! This charity holds various parcels of land in Catcott and Moorlinch since c1700. These produce an income of about £700-£800 per annum from the sale of grass. This income is used to service the properties with any surplus being distributed among villagers. The residents of Wellfield benefited this year. Unfortunately one of the tenants recently died - this brought to light the interesting fact that nobody quite new where the parcel of land he tenanted actually is! The charity must now find its parcel of land in Moorlinch!
- APM 05/06/23 **CATCOTT PLAY AREA:** Eileen Chilcott reported as the Parish Council representative. She opened by making an appeal for new committee members, stressing the importance of this. They have just received the resignation of the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer and there is no Church representative. That leaves only four committee members who will meet on 27th May to reform the committee. There is a very active, business minded vice-chairman in Candy Brooks. Hopefully they are aiming to hold annually 4 winter months table top sales as these involve little organisation and the two held last year raised approx £200 each.// The insurance and inspection each cost about £90 annually (and rising) and there is general wear and tear and grass cutting on top of this. Eileen said we need to replace monies into our contingency fund which has covered these annual costs over the last 3 to 4 years without any fund raising taking place. Including the last two table top sales the total funds stand at about £800. Our contingency fund has always been maintained at £1,200-£1,500.// The area is very well used so an impassioned appeal is made to the parents of those children to support us to enable this area to be there for our children of tomorrow.

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