

CATCOTT PARISH MEETING

2004/2005 APM - 1

Minutes of a meeting held on Tuesday 11th May 2004
at 7.00pm in the Catcott School Hall

- APM 04/05/1 **PRESENT:** Cllr Mackay (in the Chair)
- APM 04/05/2 **ALSO PRESENT:** DCllr S Kingham, CCllr Huxtable and 17 members of the public.
- APM 04/05/3 **IN ATTENDANCE:** Julia Marshall (Clerk)
- APM 04/05/4 **APOLOGIES:** received from Mr Barnett.
- APM 04/05/5 **WELCOME:** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- APM 04/05/6 **MINUTES:** of the previous Parish Meeting were amended (03/04/23 - Established in 1898) and signed
- APM 04/05/7 **MATTERS ARISING:** None.
- APM 04/05/8 **CATCOTT PARISH COUNCIL:** The Chairman reported that, in the main, the situation had remained unchanged since last year. However, the Jubilee stone had been knocked over and the plaque broken; the water leek in Brook Lane took a year to repair; there was a possible increase in interest in the Parish Council; there is a full complement of councillors. Planning continues in much the same way and he outlined the types of applications dealt with over the year, commenting on his bafflement at SDC's inconsistency. Renovation of the War Memorial is due to start on 14th May. The Council Tax rose with a particularly large increase in the proportion going to the police. Locally we seem to get little support from the police and it has to be wondered what we get for our money. He thanked all those connected with the council and Mr S Jones for his invaluable help with the footpath report, and Mr R Cox for his much appreciated work in keeping the area round the war memorial so tidy.
- APM 04/05/9 **NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH:** Report from Mrs Mackay. This continues to run well. Street co-ordinators come and go but generally the village is covered.// Police presence in the village is whenever PC Jacobs is able to pass through. He recently held a workshop for parishioners to air their concerns and several of the street co-ordinators attended.// Thefts from properties in the village continue regularly - power tools from a farm, the King William Inn broken into and a clamped caravan stolen. An elderly resident was the victim of a distraction burglary.// A new computer system was started by the police in January 2004, the old system having ceased in October 2003. Messages arrive via email - most being irrelevant to our village.// The role of the Neighbourhood Watch is to pass on information to villagers when it relates directly to them. We are not necessarily going to hear of all local incidents and are unable to do anything after the event.
- APM 04/05/10 **PLAY AREA:** Mrs Chilcott and Mr Mackay reported that a meeting is planned for next Thursday night. There has been the odd incident of vandalism and trees on the North and south side need attention by the landowners.
- APM 04/05/11 **LEVELS AND MOORS PARTNERSHIP:** Report from Mrs Sandra King. In 2003 LAMP agreed that it should develop a scheme to become England's first Cultural Landscape under UNESCO's "Man and Biosphere" programme and is now consulting with parishes and partners and it is hoped to adopt the Plan in July 2005.// LAMP is helping SCC with work on improvements to the Rights of Way map. They are currently working with the Poldens parishes in clusters of 4 parishes at a time and this process should be finished by December 2004.// A website is currently being set up www.avalonmarshes.org.uk.
- APM 04/05/12 **POLICE:** PC Rob Jacobs had sent his apologies with a message that there were no significant incident reports relating to the village for the year.
- APM 04/05/13 **CATCOTT VILLAGE ASSOCIATION:** Report from Mr Drake. During 2003 the CVA held ten events for villagers, some of which were open to others from the general Polden Hills area. The highlight was the Summer Open Gardens Day on the last Sunday in July which raised £1100 for the CVA (£700 for the Children's Hospice in Barnstable and about £500 for St Peter's Church). We also held a most popular disco for children and a lunch for senior citizens.// Overall the finances of the CVA improved in 2003, recovering from losses in 2002.// The CVA Committee, at six, is currently smaller than before, but perhaps more

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importantly, the number of people in the village willing to run events has increased. A similar number of events are planned for 2004, some of them different from those we have tried in the past. The first of these new events is on Saturday, 5th June when there will be an adults only disco with a very good DJ at Edington Village Hall. Hope to see you all there.

- APM 04/05/14 **ST PETER'S CHURCH:** Report from Lady Hollis. As usual the year has been dominated by thoughts of money. We have just been granted a Faculty to replace the lead on the roof of the tower, the cost of which may run to five figures. The long-running story of the gallery railing (to meet Health and Safety demands) looks set to end, with agreement reached on a glass screen. Another Faculty will be needed for this and the cost is likely to be around £1000 + VAT. The new Archdeacon was unimpressed with St Peter's describing it as museum-like and unwelcoming. He refused to give us a certificate for the gallery work despite it being well within the De Minimum limit.// A ramp for wheelchairs at the West Door is being fitted by Syd Jones. A query from the Prish Council concerning the gates to the churchyard was received, the answer being that our architect had advised that they are listed. The gate at the east end can in fact be lifted off to give easier access.// The chancel ceiling has been redecorated and the walls remain to be done.// The upkeep of the churchyard in 2003 cost more than double what it did in the previous year - £715 as against £313.// In addition to all these expenses we have to pay the Diocese £5,415 this year.// A new churchyard plan was produced showing the position of all identifiable graves. This found favour with the Archdeacon who was going to recommend it as a good example to other parishes. The churchyard is now virtually full.// Finally, a new St George's flag has recently been purchased and flew for the first time on St George's Day.
- APM 04/05/15 **CATCOTT SCHOOL:** The Clerk reported that there is currently a locum headmaster. A new headteacher has been appointed and will take up his position at the start of next term.
- APM 04/05/16 **MARY GODFREY CHARITY:** Mr Wheeler reported that this is running very quietly with income on a par with last year at £574 just providing for the Christmas distribution. Land has been let on a 2 year basis rather than a 1 year basis with the three main plots taken for the two year period.. This will result in a saving on advertising and the farmers will also take more care and use fertiliser etc. The other plot is a millstone with rent not covering expenses and has not been let this year although arrangements have been made with a farmer to take a cut of grass off. There have been the same trustees for many years. There is a small financial reserve for contingency.
- APM 04/05/17 **CATCOTT EDUCATIONAL CHARITY:** Mr Mackay reported that this continues as before with about £40 per year being given to Catcott Primary School for the purchase of books.
- APM 04/05/18 **RHODA NORRIS CHARITY:** Mrs Chilcott reported that this is dormant, as last year with £104.51 in the account.
- APM 04/05/19 **SEDGEMOOR DISTRICT COUNCIL:** SEDGEMOOR DISTRICT COUNCIL: DCllr Stuart Kingham reported another year with more directives from Central Government but no money to assist with implementing them. Best Value is still present but on the back burner as they go through their Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) in May. The Executive is still working well keeping decision making easier and faster. They have been looking at various budgets in Sedgemoor and by doing so kept the Council Tax rate down to 3.5% and were able to put in place finance to refurbish Bridgwater House to make it more efficient and a better environment for staff to work in. In 2004/5 they will be making the Council debt free. When the current council came into power six years ago there was a £17m deficit.// By refurbishing Bridgwater House and part of Colley Lane stores they will be able to vacate the Town Hall buildings, move staff into Bridgwater House and have a feasibility study done and hopefully create a new culture centre for Sedgemoor in Bridgwater.
- APM 04/05/20 **SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL:** Alan Jones the new Chief Executive is doing a very good job. Approx 17,500 people are employed by SCC. It is likely that SCC might now find out what property it owns and how many vehicles it has. New speed limits put into force throughout the county had not proved at

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all popular and are being reviewed and in some cases reversed.// Of great concern at present are the potential developments on the levels and moors and the resulting increase in HGV traffic on the peat levels. Thanks were paid to Mr McGerr for his work on this and the need to demonstrate that all the uses stated on the recent applications had not been in force for the required ten years was stressed. Anyone who had reason to believe that the criteria to meet the lawful determination regulations had not been complied with for the statutory unbroken ten year period was asked to contact CClr Huxtable.// Problems experienced by the Police are mainly Government inflicted

- APM 04/05/21 **SEDGEMOOR ACTION GROUP FOR OUR ENVIRONMENT:** Report submitted by Mrs Hill-Cottingham. Much time has been spent establishing the SAGE website www.sageinsedgemoor.org.uk. This includes information and advice on all the focus areas: Education and awareness raising, waste, transport, built and natural environments, energy, economic development, health and pollution together with ideas for community projects and sources of help.// Members have helped with the promotion of Fair Trade week in Bridgwater and a major forthcoming event is the Wildlife Gardening weekend to be held on 24-25 July at Sanders Gardenworld at Brent Knoll where plenty of help and advice will be available. Members are willing to visit groups to give talks and advice on community projects.// There is a symposium to be held at Richard Huish College in Taunton on 10th July "Somerset Wetlands - historic peatlands with a future?" Details are available from the Clerk.

- APM 04/05/22 **JAF LUTTRELL MEMORIAL CHARITY:** Lady Hollis reported that this has been in existence since 1898 to help those in the parishes of Edington, Chilton Polden, Catcott and Burtle who are in need, hardship or distress. Grants may also be made for the general benefit of the inhabitants of these parishes.// With the removal of various charity tax benefits the income has naturally decreased, but while it has been necessary to be more prudent in the allocation of grants, we have so far been able to meet most of the applications after assessing the suitability of each individual case. Larger grants were made to those suffering financial hardship, to those needing to travel to hospital in Taunton or Bristol, or to those who required convalescent care. There was one educational grant for specialist educational equipment and three grants to benefit the local community, as well as the gift of Christmas hampers.// In spite of publicity in the villages, it can be difficult to identify those who could fall within the boundaries of the help we are authorised to give, and we would always be grateful to be told of possible cases as some are naturally hesitant about applying or unaware that they could do so. Any applications, should be addressed to the Clerk, Mrs Agnes Auld, West Close, Edington, to the Vicar or to me. The Trustees appointed by Edington Parish council, Mrs Panter and Mrs Westcott, may also be approached.

- APM 04/05/23 **CATCOTT JUBILEE COMMITTEE:** Mr Barnett advised that there is £716.37 in the account.

- APM 04/05/24 **CATCOTT AFTER SCHOOL CLUB (CATTS):** The club provides after school childcare for working parents in the Poldens. There have been many new families this year and the service is in great demand. They hope to start a breakfast club where children can be cared for before school starts. This would enable parents to leave their children in a safe environment early morning.

- APM 04/05/25 **SEDGE MOORS TWINNING ASSOCIATION:** Report received from Mr Stuart Wilkinson. The past year has been successful but there is a need to consolidate and keep membership numbers up.// Those who went to Normandy last year were blessed with good weather as well as good hospitality.// Two social events failed to attract the hoped for numbers but the newsletter continues to be published regularly. Our French visitors are due over here 20-22 May and it is hoped to find the 20 or so host families without too much difficulty. Anyone interested should contact the Clerk who will provide the necessary details.

- APM 04/05/26 **SPEED LIMIT - SCOTTS LANE:** The Clerk was asked to look out the correspondence and chase this matter up.

Chairman

Date