



=

Dear Villagers,

I really love this time of year, the coming to life of trees and hedgerows, longer nights and warmer sunshine.

Work on the Common (Bickenhill Lane) both by our team from Catney and the gardeners from Newlands Bishop Farm, has made great improvements. Do go and have a little walk around and appreciate this great facility and the new growth flourishing.

It would be nice to add a couple of seats of the rustic kind, which I am sure would be appreciated by those who cannot walk far but would like to sit and watch the birds and squirrels. If anyone could help with this, do get in touch. Perhaps you would like to donate a seat in memory of a loved one, or for a special occasion? The seat would need to be anchored to the ground though – just in case!!



**APRIL 2017**

## **MEMBERSHIP OF CATNEY RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION**

We have had a good response to our request for villagers to join our Residents Association. In addition, we have had some very generous donations. Thank you so much.

Sadly, there seems to be quite a few of you who have been members before, but have not yet paid your subs for this year. Have you forgotten? Please don't leave us, we need your support now more than ever.

Annual subscriptions per size of Household: £3 for one person, £5 for two persons, £7.50 for three persons, £10 for four or more persons over 16. Children under 16 join for free and there is no need to give their details just indicate how many people live at your home. We will collect the envelopes regularly and information given will be kept securely. Thank you!!

Christine Cluley  
Editor

## **NEWS FROM YOUR RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION**

### **Butty Breakfast /Brunch** Village Hall Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> April 9.30am ‘til 12.00

Come and join us for a bacon or sausage buttie and a cup of tea or coffee. There will be an opportunity to talk through local developments and to pay your membership subscription if you haven't done so already. We cater for vegetarians too, so no excuses! We look forward to seeing you!!

### **Motorway Service Area planning application 2015/51409**

Highways England in a letter to SMBC on 23<sup>rd</sup> February requested a further extension in their response time of 2 months. We understand from SMBC (after taking legal advice) that this application and Applegreen's application for an MSA at Junction 4 have to be considered together which could result in quite considerable further delays.

**Airport Issues** At the recent ACC meeting the Airport Company presented their Night time Flying Review which would cover the next 3 years. To give you a little history -as part of the planning approval for the extended runway back in 2009 SMBC placed a number of conditions on the approval ( a S106 agreement) one of which stated that the 'when practical the Night Time ATM's ( air traffic movements –broadly flights) currently standing at 5% of total ATM's be subject to a phased reduction down to 4% or lower'. At the ACC meeting in August they had offered a reduction of 4.5% but due to limited discussion time it was agreed that they would do more work and report back in February. This they did but reverted back to the 5% figure and asked that the ATM's be calculated on future planned ATM's rather than the best of the last 5 years which is the current basis. The community organisations , including us, were extremely unhappy with the Airports position and as a result a letter was sent to both the Airport Company and the Airport Working Party requesting that the Airport review their position and bring it into line with the 'spirit of the 106 ' agreement .

We have been working closely with Balsall RA, Balsall PC, Knowle Society, Hampton PC, Hampton Society, and Marston Green Residents Association on this issue and will continue to do so to try and achieve a balanced position for local communities. We recognise the importance of Airport in the regional economy but also believe this has to be balanced with the effects on local communities around it.

### **SMBC – Reporting**

At a recent meeting SMBC requested that all issues related to lighting, drainage, fly tipping etc., should be reported by telephoning their Connect line 0121 704 6000/8000 rather than e mailing specific individuals. This is to ensure issues are recorded correctly. I have to say recent experience has shown that you could be hanging on for 5 minutes plus before you get through. We would be interested to hear how you get on reporting issues. DC

**We are so pleased to receive positive comments .....** *“Just to say “thank you all” for the work you do on our behalf.” /”After attending the AGM, we wanted to say thank you for all of your efforts on the residents’ behalf – it is much appreciated how much personal time this takes” / “Enclosed a donation to help expenses for all that you do and thank you so much”.*

## Copt Heath Wharf – A Spring cruise down the canal?

### Day Boat Hire the Grand Union Canal from Copt Heath Wharf

For a different day out, why not hire one of our easy to drive narrowboats for a day or half day self drive cruise along the Grand Union Canal near Catherine de Barnes?



The choice is yours.

This is a delightful stretch of lock free waterway which winds its way through leafy cuttings and farmer's fields away from the noise and bustle of road and motorway.

Or you can descend the impressive flight of five locks at Knowle and cruise through open countryside to Rowington or beyond. There are at least four good pubs for lunch if that is your pleasure!

**Full day hire** is from 10.00 am to 6.00 pm. **Half-day hire** is available weekdays between 10.00 am and 1.30 pm or 2.30 pm and 6.00pm.

Monday to Friday full day	£130.00	Saturday, Sunday, Bank Holiday	£170.00
Monday to Friday half day	£80.00		

\*\*\*\*\*

### HOLY WEEK EASTER SERVICES AT HAMPTON IN ARDEN CHURCH

**9<sup>TH</sup> April: Palm Sunday: 10.45 am.** Procession from George Fentham School to Church for 11 am.

**Monday 10th, Tuesday 11th and Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> April:** Compline services at **7.30 pm**

**Maundy Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> April: 10 am and 7.30 pm:** Including stripping of altar at 7.30 pm.

**Good Friday: 10.30 am :** Various children's activities, making the Easter Garden and an Easter Egg Hunt. **7.30 pm** Choir sing "The Cross of Christ" **Easter Sunday: 8.15 am :**

Sunrise service **11 am:** Easter Celebration Service with dressing of Cross of flowers.

Please bring one or two flowers with stem ends wrapped in wet tissue (in a little plastic bag) to dress the Cross. There will be no 6.30 pm service on Easter Day.

**You can now follow "Catney Village Hall" on Twitter (@catneyA)**

**Contacts: Secretary of the Residents Association: Frances on 0776 8502039 or [secretary@catney.co.uk](mailto:secretary@catney.co.uk)**

**Anything for the Catney News: Contact Chris at [CatneyRA@outlook.com](mailto:CatneyRA@outlook.com)**

**Spar Shop/Hall Bookings: Gareth on 0121 705 6135**

# Crime Prevention

More than 40 people came to the meeting on March 8<sup>th</sup> with two members of the Rural Neighbourhood Police team responsible for this area. PC Simon Harrison explained that they are neighbourhood PCs, based in Chelmsley Wood, not part of an emergency response team but a group that seeks to reduce the impact of crime and liaise with communities. They admitted that there has been a general increase in break-ins in Solihull recently but did not seem aware of the recent epidemic of crime in Catherine-de-Barnes, and they could not tell us if the area was being targeted by one gang or just random criminals. They were not aware of any pattern in the recent criminal activity locally.

However, the evening was a useful exchange of information and a chance for residents to express their many concerns. Topics raised included car crime, burglary, shed break-ins, drug related activity, street lighting, police response times, CCTV etc. We heard that burglaries of dwellings have priority over burglary of buildings (sheds, garages etc.) unless the building has very valuable items in it. We learned that there are not that many council owned CCTV cameras in Solihull and many of them are targeting antisocial behaviour hot spots. The PCs said that work is going on behind the scenes, using ANPR and other methods to solve some of these crimes.

General advice on home security was given – most of it common sense reminders like locking side gates and all windows, using light timers, always putting on your burglar alarm and not keeping car keys in sight/reach from a door. It was suggested that we use the internet to look for ideas and there are some inexpensive solutions out there including random light timers, prickly hedges, anti-crime paint, a gadget that gives the impression that a TV is on and possibly CCTV.

They were not very knowledgeable on the subject of Neighbourhood Watch, how it works these days and if it actually protects areas. They were keen to sign people up for “WMnow” which is their latest way of communicating with the public. This service sends out regular news of arrests, incidents and warnings of scams. It does give subscribers options to reply but it is not a way for us to communicate with and update one another. For this the PCs advocated the use of Facebook. If you would like to join the WMnow network go to:

<https://memberregistration.neighbourhoodalert.co.uk/172/Join>

Our best way to reach our rural police neighbourhood team is to call 101 (which is designed to connect any mobile phone call to the nearest police station) or email [rural@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk](mailto:rural@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk) . This email address is checked everyday and you should get a reply from one of our neighbourhood officers.

As a result of the meeting and feedback from residents, we would like to set up a new Neighbourhood Watch scheme. If you are interested in participating or running a scheme, please come to an informal gathering at the Village Hall on Wednesday April 5<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 pm. Thank you.

Did you leave a scarf at the Carol Singing in December? If you did, please contact Frances Cook
---

## CATNEY CHAT AND CRAFT CLUB FIRST ANNIVERSARY

Our club has celebrated its first anniversary - how quick that 12 months has gone.

In addition to working (and chatting) on our own projects the 12 months saw us do yarn bombing in the summer to decorate the Hall inside and out in red white and blue pom-poms to celebrate the Queens 90th birthday - even the village post box got a hat! Then in the autumn we had very busy fingers making Christmas tree decorations, bags, dolls, jams, etc., to sell at the Craft Fair in November, in order to raise funds towards running costs of the Village Hall. In total £480.12 was raised from the Christmas fair and we can happily report that this money paid for a much needed new cooker for the kitchen and a new tea urn, so a very big pat on the back and thank you to everyone involved in raising such a wonderful amount.

We are a 'happy band' of crafters and several of us have learned new crafts from each other. Currently there are 12 of us who meet regularly between 2.00 p.m and 4.00 p.m on Wednesdays. If anyone would like to come and join us you would be very welcome, all it costs is 50p for a cup of tea or coffee and a piece of home made cake. If anyone would like to know more call me on 07776480813 **Lesley Cuthbert**



### **Midland Business Equipment Ltd, Knowle.**

01564 776198 <http://www.midlandbusinessequipment.co.uk>

They've been supplying office equipment, furniture & stationery for almost 40 years and now print our Catney News and supply stationery and equipment to the Church Office at Hampton. They give superb service. I recommend them. CC

# Bluebells

Residents who walk around the village will soon notice the bluebells; on the towpath, in the wood above the towpath, Henwood Lane and on the common. There have been reports on the media about the 'invasion' of the Spanish bluebell causing anxiety that, like the red squirrel, our native species may be displaced. So last year, I investigated our locality and am happy to re-assure residents [those who are interested] that there are no Spanish bluebells amongst our local native species. For those who want to impress their grandchildren when they take them for a walk; this is how you tell the difference:

- 1 Colour – the Spanish one is only ever a pale blue, the English variety come in all shades of blue as well as white, purple and pink.
- 2 The leaves are narrow
- 3 The petals curl up
- 4 The English ones are supposed to have a scent, but that was lost on me!
- 5 The easiest way to tell the difference without even getting close is that the English ones 'nod'. As the flowers grow up one side of the stem, the weight of the flowers makes the tip of the stem 'tip over'. The Spanish ones have flowers all around the stem and the stems stand upright.

The photo below is of some growing on the towpath last year and shows most of the features of English bluebells. Enjoy them while they flower!

The other photo is of the celandine lining the path through the wood above the canal  
**Liz Boxall**



\*\*\*\*\*

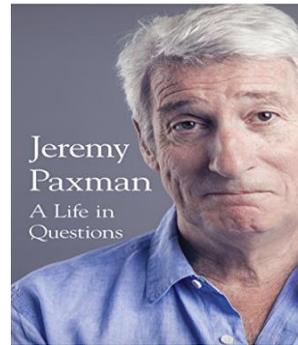
## THINGS TO DO IN THE GARDEN IN APRIL

**Keep weeds under control / Protect fruit blossom from late frosts /  
Tie in climbing and rambling roses / Sow hardy annuals, herbs and wild flower  
seed outdoors/ Start to feed citrus plants Increase the water given to houseplants  
/ Feed hungry shrubs and roses / Sow new lawns or repair bare patches / Prune  
fig trees / Divide bamboos and waterlilies**

# A LIFE IN QUESTIONS

an Autobiography by Jeremy Paxman

## A book review by John Alderson



I was very disappointed with this book. I suppose I was expecting lots of interesting anecdotes about the people he has met and interviewed and hopefully something too about himself, but not a great deal is revealed and there is rather a lot of self-opiniated nonsense about life in general.

He seems to feel he has been misunderstood, given inappropriate labels, but can't really be bothered to explain himself, as he probably feels that to be unnecessary, whilst at the same time referring to himself as just an ordinary chap, nothing special and with nothing important to say. He then frequently does the opposite.

His memories of early life at school are quite amusing but he seems to lose his sense of humour in a rather dry run through the rest of his life. He clearly experienced great personal danger as a reporter in various war zones around the world, but even his writing on his time there is a bit throw away and inconclusive.

However his time working for Tonight and Panorama, which I have to confess to having forgotten about, is quite interesting and you do wonder how the BBC functioned at all successfully.

You learn nothing about his family, apart from his distaste of his father who left at an early age, and this may be due to simply a wish to keep his private and public lives separate, but if you going to write an autobiography it might be a good idea to cover as much as possible before someone pens an unauthorised biography, which might bring you a load of grief.

\*\*\*\*\*

## CATNEY CRICKET



We are looking for Players both Senior and Junior for next Season ,  
We are currently undertaking nets at Lode Heath School on Sundays from 1 - 2.30 PM for Juniors from 9 to 14 Years of age and from 2.30 - 4 pm for the over 14's till any age,

The nets run through till the 9th April and will then be outdoor at the ground behind the Boat pub on Wednesday nights from 5.30 pm, All will be made welcome, For more information please contact Eddie Hewitt on 0782645805.

# Spring Clean on the Common



A 'Friends of Catney Common' Group has been formed to get involved in the future maintenance and improvement of the Common. Did you know that our little 1 1/2 acre common is unique? It is the only remnant of 'Common Land' in the whole of Solihull. It lies within Hampton in Arden Parish and we are very grateful that the parish Council have allocated a budget to allow the work to go ahead.

Many of you will have noticed that brambles, holly and undergrowth have been cleared from around the trees and path and this work is now complete. A huge 'Thank You' to Andy and his team from Newlands Bishop Farm. They have worked hard to cut and clear away under the trees. Also many thanks to Derek Hands who volunteered to clear all the undergrowth on the right of the path and the path itself. This work has really opened up the space; it now seems twice as large! The aim is to maintain it as a 'natural' space as far as possible but it needs the occasional helping hand. We have other ideas for the future, for example an information board, bird and bat boxes and perhaps a few new trees.

Already this year we have seen a number of flowers and bluebell leaves are pushing through. Some Knotweed has been treated and another clump will be dealt with. The open area of the Common will not be mowed until autumn to allow the meadow flowers to become established. Who knows what else will appear? Please help us to keep it litter free and open for everyone to enjoy.

## **Heather Bird and the Friends of Catney Common.**

---

### **Thoughts for April:**

- My goal for 2017 is to accomplish the goals of 2016 which I should have achieved in 2015 because I made a promise in 2014 and planned them in 2013.
  - Eyelashes are supposed to stop things getting in your eyes, but when I have something in my eye, it's usually an eyelash
  - The fact that jellyfish have survived for 650 million years despite not having brains, gives hope to many people
  - Another goal this year was to lose 10 lbs. Only 15 to go.
-