

Crockernwell, Drewsteignton, Sandy Park, Venton, Whiddon Down

Drewsteignton Parish Post

ISSUE NO. 72

JANUARY 2012

JANUARY NEWS FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

The Council would like to thank those parishioners who have agreed to store additional stocks of road salt and who have volunteered to look after their respective stretches of road and pavement – all we need now is some freezing weather and snow to see if the plan works!!

Royal Mail have notified us they will not replace the post box at Bowden Cross. We feel we have done as much as we can on this matter.

No response regarding the development of a play area at Barn Close Whiddon Down has been received so we will not be taking this any further. A meeting has now been arranged with the National Park to see what permissions are required before work is commenced on the hedge of the car park at Drewsteignton.

The small portion of land unlawfully occupied at Whiddon Down is being transferred to Devon County Council by the Highways Agency and once completed we expect action will be taken to remove the remaining caravans.

An Environmental Health inspection report requested by the Council has been received showing no immediate concerns.

Our County Councillor James McInnes attended the meeting and a full discussion took place on the various highways matters in the Parish.

Concerning Turnpike Road closure at Whiddon Down the Council had received a plan for approval but as this varied from the original and appears to be more expensive, we are seeking a meeting with DCC to clarify the situation and progress the closure as soon as possible. You will remember in the August issue of the Post we reported work would commence after Christmas 2011; it will, but perhaps a little later than anticipated!! In the same issue Cllr McInnes agreed to follow up the matter of parking outside Drewsteignton Post Office; in view of no action he is

again chasing up DCC. Whilst talking about Drewsteignton Post Office, it has been reported to the Council that signs directing customers to the Post Office from Drogo direction have been **removed by DCC following “a complaint”** regarding unofficial signs. Whilst accepting the signs were unofficial, the Council were disappointed at the action of DCC following one complaint as these signs, which were professionally made and properly fixed, not only benefitted the Post Office but other businesses in the village. It also now **means that other “unofficial” signs in the Parish at Sandy Park, Trenaway Cross and Whiddon Down** would also have to be dealt with which will have an impact on those businesses.

ALL our businesses need support during these financial difficulties and the Parish Council hope to work with DCC to resolve this problem to the benefit of everyone.

Other highway matters which concerned the condition of the roads in the Parish are to be addressed by Steve Daw from DCC who will conduct a parish survey with Cllr Savage. Further details regarding the result of this survey will be reported next month.

A planning application for the creation of a pond for sustainable energy production at Ford House Drewsteignton was supported and the Council made no comment on an application for an information point at Castle Drogo.

The Localism Act came into force on 15th November 2011 and there is conflicting information at this time on what restrictions may be placed on Parish Councils in setting the Parish Precept (our bit of the Council Tax). A final decision will be made at the January meeting when we hope to have received accurate information and guidance. Our next meeting will be at Whiddon Down Monday 16th January 2012 at 7.30pm

Parish Profile.....

The Parish Profile has been an occasional feature of the Parish Post for some time now, if you would like to be featured, or have any other ideas for articles, please get in touch.



Philippa Allom

A delightful lady who agreed to meet with me in The Drewe Arms for our 'interview' over a glass of wine just prior to Christmas. Philippa lives with

P.J. in Drewsteignton with three children and was born across the valley on Cranbrook Farm.

Enjoying life here stating it's a comfortable place to 'be' knowing lots of people, it's a good community and very friendly.

She has visited Washington D.C. and would like to see more of the U.S.A. touring the National Parks and big open spaces with special reference to the Grand Canyon.

Rather than eating out in restaurants Philippa prefers al-fresco dining at home with her home grown salads and vegetables, a glass of

wine and good company.

A marathon runner, Philippa last ran 50 miles from Brecon to Cardiff. Next it will be the Swiss Alpine Marathon which is the highest **altitude run in Europe: "10% Ability - 90% Bloody mindedness" she says.**

Recently qualified with a Diploma from ITEC in Anatomy, Physiology and Massage at the School of Complimentary Health in Exeter and in the future will train in Sports Massage and Remedial Massage commencing this month. Philippa is a member of The Complimentary Therapists Association and insured with Holistic Services Insurance.

The benefits of massaging carried out by Philippa include improvement to joint flexibility, the relief of back pain, and can reduce anxiety along with quality of sleep.

For more information or to make an appointment you can contact Philippa on 01647-281645 or e-mail doves@herplanet.co.uk

My School Christmas Play

Chagford primary put on a school Christmas play: Babushka. Our class got told what the parts were for Year 6 and we put our names down for which part we wanted: the trees (the most main parts that our class got), the Italian pizza people, the group of pop stars and body guards, the beggars and finally the American tourists (the part I wanted). So I put my name down for that part and then the next day we found out that only me and Livy had wanted to be girl tourists, so we automatically got the parts, yes! We then had to learn our lines and cues, and had to make some of the props. Me and some of my friends painted a palm tree that our teaching assistant had made. There were also pizza boxes to be made for the Italians, and the American tourists got 2 cameras.

We went up to the Jubilee hall to practice the play. The infants were also putting on a play called 'Humph the Camel' which fitted into the middle of our play. We all had to learn the words to our songs and we practised these in class with our class's scenes. We put on 2 performances, one at 2:00 and the second at 6:00. Both were really good fun and the person who played Babushka had so many words to learn yet she still learnt them all. It was really fun doing a school play and I'm sure every-one enjoyed it whether they were watching or in it!!!

It's been a year since we went away on our big trip around Australia, New Zealand and Singapore and each night after supper, I read what we did on that day a year ago. It's quite nice hearing about what we were doing. This time last year we were travelling the great ocean road in Australia, before heading off to new Zealand to see our cousins and travel round North island in a camper van.

Tilly Dixon

What A Swell Party It Was!

Music by Walter Shortage and the Hosepipe Band, dancing and party games were enjoyed by about 100 **guests at Mr William Savages' special birthday celebrations at The Drewe Arms last month.**

Bill and his wife Caroline are active supporters of, and fundraisers for The Devon Air Ambulance. Donations rather than birthday gifts, and money raised from the party games amounted to £635.

His birthday cake, made and decorated by Emma Green, was superb.

Congratulations Bill.



Bill and Caroline

Emma's cake



In the Deep Midwinter!

The Council's announcement that the winter supplies of grit and salt are in place was swiftly followed by the decision to cut road clearances to save money.

Devon has well planned Emergency Procedures for most eventualities, however, in a general emergency these inevitably focus on the areas of highest population with the small rural communities coming a poor second. We need to come up with, and fight for realistic options that can safeguard our villages and ensure that they are fully considered in any future plans, particularly when resources are under threat.

Here are a few ideas for consideration, I'm sure that others will be able to improve and expand on them: An accessible and up to date essential information system that includes when and where buses will be running, mail delivered (if necessary to a collection point if the roads are blocked), and rubbish collected. Flexibility in the transport services so that part runs can be made even if it is not possible to undertake full journeys. At present buses do not run on even cleared roads in many instances. The use of chains or winter wheels appears to be unheard of.

Consideration to be given to introducing 4 wheel drive Post Buses that are already used elsewhere in the U.K. and not only deliver mail but collect prescriptions for the housebound and provide transport to the local shop. They would be a lifeline for many and can provide a useful revenue earner for a service under threat.

Ask owners of 4 wheel drive vehicles and tractors to become part of an emergency transport register, if they are able and willing, and have a set scale of charges (including Insurance), for those who need to use their service when all other options are out.

Even if, hopefully, we do not have another severe winter, the greatest safeguard to quote Baden Powell, is to "Be Prepared".

Mary Graham.

Helping Birds through the Winter Months

I, as do many others, feed the birds in my garden during the winter months and I never get tired of watching their frantic comings and goings to my feeders. It really gets active when it is very cold and it is mind boggling in attempting to count the numbers of certain species, especially the blue tits.

I only start putting food out when it gets cold, which this year was only a few weeks ago. I put out peanuts in a wire hanger, a seed mix in another feeder and suet blocks.

The combination of these seems to provide food for a wide variety of birds including blue tits, great tits and coal tits, house sparrows, dunnocks, greenfinches, chaffinches, siskins, nuthatches, collared doves and great spotted woodpeckers. A couple of pied wagtails like to strut about under the feeders and investigate fallen food and the odd cock pheasant appears from time to time. If we are having frosts, I will often put out halved apples (the soft ones from the autumn collection from our tree) which will attract the blackbirds, and occasionally thrushes.

Occasionally I will put out Niger seed, a very fine type of seed that Goldfinches love but I have had mixed results with it. One of my neighbours, who also feeds the birds, rang me to say they had some new arrivals feeding on their niger seed, a pair of redpolls. I have never seen redpolls in my garden and went round to see them, and a female was on the feeder. Redpolls are members of the finch family, quite similar to linnets but very delicate and beautifully patterned, with a tinge of red on their foreheads. The males, as is the case with most songbirds, have the more flamboyant plumage and show a red tinge on the breast too, which is particularly noticeable in the spring. I think it is time to try the niger seed again!

I try and avoid seed mixes that leaves unwanted grain or food on the ground as it attracts rats, and I now no longer put out bread for the same reason. Putting a variety of foods out can be costly, especially if feeders need topping up daily through high demand in cold periods, so I try and avoid waste, and will make my own suet blocks with seed in.

Attracting garden birds to the feeders also provides the local sparrowhawks with opportunities to feed and I have noticed the odd hawk whipping through the garden, causing the birds to scatter into the safety of nearby bushes with much alarm calling.

Another raptor (bird of prey), which I mentioned in the last Parish Post is the red kite, and my sighting of a pair over Chagford a few years ago. I have managed to miss any that have been seen in the Parish and would love to see them from the garden. While they are still not resident in the county, due to various release programmes, their numbers are increasing across the country, and sightings of them increases each year in Devon. I have a friend in Buckinghamshire, where they are very common now, who has erected a tall wooden platform in a hedge at the end of his garden, which backs on to fields. He collects fresh road kills (dead rabbits, pheasants, squirrels, etc) and ties them onto the platform to feed the kites, which then come down to feed.

Kites are scavengers and feed on carrion, as well as small mammals and birds and like buzzards, can often be found on newly ploughed fields feeding on worms. The fortunes of the red kite in the UK have fluctuated massively over the centuries, and they were a very common species in London during Shakespeare's time, and referenced in 'King Lear', due to their habit of keeping the streets clear of carrion and rotting food. Times changed, sewage went underground and birds with hooked beaks became persecuted until very recently. The red kite population became restricted to a handful of pairs in mid Wales until the recent introductions took place, and they are now increasing across the UK.

The landscape of Devon, and especially around the Moor edges would be ideal habitat for these dynamic birds. If anyone happens to see a red kite locally, can you let me know as soon as possible, and I will put up a new bird feeder in the hedge at the bottom of my garden!

Nick Dixon 281681



Whats On At The Post Inn

We would like to thank everyone so much for making our first Christmas at The Post Inn so special - We have had a wonderful time.

Just a few dates for January to look forward to.

Sat 21st Jan 9pm - Live Music solo artist called Nic plays everything from Beatles, Oasis, Bob Marley to Razorlight and Stereophonics etc. Definitely worth a look!

Tuesday 23rd Jan 7.30 pm Quiz Night - teams of 4 to 6 win a couple of bottles of wine etc - New Quiz master and some interesting new features - come and have a go!

Come and try out our new menu with our home made chips etc and not forgetting our Sunday carvery every Sunday between 12 - 3 pm also watch out for special offers etc.

If you are thinking of having a function of any kind, or a meeting etc - please contact us on 01647 231242 we would be glad to help in any capacity we can from outside catering to bars, music etc.

We now offer gift vouchers for meals etc - an ideal present birthdays or anniversaries etc.

And finally we would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year!

From Everyone at The Post Inn.

Ian & Marg would like to thank everyone for the many cards and gifts received this Xmas. Truly overwhelming – THANK-YOU. We also wish everyone a Happy New Year and look forward to serving you all in this our 40th year as a family in Drewsteignton Post Office.



West Devon Borough Council Connect

The Chagford sessions of Connect outreach services will be held at Chagford Library from Friday January 13, 2012 at a new time of 10.30am to 12.30pm. After the first session on January 13, the service will continue to be held at the library on the 2nd and 4th Friday of every month from 10.30am to 12.30pm.

An advisor from Okehampton Children's Centre will be attending the first session to promote the centre's work in the Chagford area, and to learn about the needs of the community.

As always, a customer service advisor from the borough council will be present to answer questions about public services.

Everyone is welcome to drop into the outreach sessions, and the organisations in attendance will vary across the sessions.

For more information about Connect Outreach, please contact West Devon Borough Council's Customer Services on 01822 813600 or email services@westdevon.gov.uk



Burn's Night

7.30 for 8pm, Saturday 28th January

The Long Room, Drewe Arms

3 course meal and a shot of whisky

Smoked salmon or cheese board,

Haggis (meat or veggie), neaps & tatties,

Raspberry pavlova

Tickets £12.50 each from

Drewsteignton Post Office

All proceeds to Chagford Swimming Pool,
Drewsteignton Village Hall and Playing Field.

Drewsteignton Branch Royal British Legion

Women's Section

Coffee Morning

Friday 17th February

10.30 am

3 Glebe Cottage

Drewsteignton

Bring and Buy

Raffle

Chairman: Phillip Evans 01647 281285
 Hon Sec: Bunny Johnstone 01647 432068
 and Carol Mason 01647 281185

Drewsteignton Gardeners' Club

Gardener's Club members braved the gale and rain and enjoyed a delicious Christmas dinner at the Fingle Bridge Inn. Many thanks to the Colton family and staff for providing such a festive atmosphere.

Our first meeting of 2012 featured a talk by Paul Bartlett from Stone Lane Gardens.

On 16 January is the Cheriton Bishop Gardening Quiz at 8pm. Call Carole if you'd like more information.

On 13 Feb at 7.30pm we will hold a Gardener's Question Time. John Rippon from Drogo and Barry Starling will be there to answer your questions and to talk over the highs and lows of the 2011 gardening year. Do try and come. It will be a fun and informal gathering, and sure to be enjoyable.

Everyone is welcome (non-members £1 donation).

Research for a Youth Drop-In Centre

Hi All

Myself and On The Edge have been looking at the idea of having a centre/building that we can rent and use as a youth centre. This would allow the young people in the parish the opportunity to really make a space their own and would look to be open a couple of afternoons and evenings a week with the possibility of Saturdays too. This will not affect the current groups that are running, but is an initiative to reach out to more young people who may otherwise not get involved. Before we make any big decisions, we are doing research into how much it would be used and for what purposes.

I am sending out a questionnaire to various contacts around the parish for young people aged between 11-18 years old. If you are able to distribute these to any young people you know or work with, please do. If you can then either send them in the post to me to the address below, or give them to me when you next see me.

Thank you for your continual support.

Wez

1 Gregory's Court
 Chagford
 TQ13 8AP



Jiggerypipery

Burns Night Blast

Saturday 21st January at the Drewe Arms, doors open 8pm. Band 8.45

Tickets £6 from the Drewe Arms on the door £7.50

Whiddon Down

What a busy year we've had in Whiddon Down. During 2011 we have had numerous occasions to celebrate in the Village Hall, from Church and village fetes and markets to the fabulous 50th Anniversary Celebration which drew a great crowd for a memorable and enjoyable afternoon. There are several local organizations and clubs using the Village Hall regularly but if you would like to hire it for an event there are still lots of dates available.

If you are planning a party or need a venue for a meeting or event why not hire Whiddon Down Village Hall? It is a good sized hall with a kitchen and a car park - ideal. To book the hall (very reasonable at £5.50 per hour, £4.50 per hour for local hirers) please contact Clare Rowe tel. 01647 231643.

In 2012 Whist drives will continue to be held at the Village Hall on the last Saturday of the month starting at 8pm. The Village Market may resume at the Village Hall in March, so look out locally for posters.

The Post Inn has a new landlord and landlady, Bob and Mandy (and their family) who have been welcomed warmly into the community. The events they have planned should appeal to many local people, celebrations for the New Year, regular Quiz nights, live music etc. We wish them good luck.

On behalf of Whiddon Down Village Hall Committee I'd like to wish you all a very Happy New Year.

Pat Sheridan.



News from the Castle

What a difference a year makes! This time last year I was up to my knees in snow (for most people it would only have been up to their ankles, but you get my drift) as shown in this picture, taken on Christmas Day 2010. As a result the whole property had to be closed for several days, ruining all our **carefully laid Christmas plans as even Santa couldn't get up the drive.** By comparison this year feels positively tropical, even down to what feels like the occasional monsoon, and this was reflected in the number of people who came to see us in the days leading up to the festive season. It was especially good to greet so many younger people for **whom the highlight of their stay was a visit to Santa's grotto** – the expressions of excitement, on their faces, really brought home the joy of Christmas that is so easily forgotten by those of us in the advanced stages of training to become Grumpy Old Men.

If you are thinking of coming to visit us over the coming weeks then you will find the Visitor Centre, Café, Shop and Gardens open from 11am to 4pm, every day. However, the house will now be closed, for maintenance, until half term week (11th – 19th February) when you will be able to come into the house and see preparations underway for fully opening the house at the start of the new season.

As some of you may know my role here includes Health & Safety responsibilities. As a result I thought I'd finish my bit, this month, with the following that I received over Christmas. – I hope you enjoy it (even if it is a bit late to put the advice into practice, this year)

Health and Safety at Christmas; Please Note:-

All employees planning to dash through the snow in a one horse open sleigh, going over the fields and laughing all the way are advised that a Risk Assessment will be required addressing the safety of an open sleigh for members of the public. This assessment must also consider whether it is appropriate to use only one horse for such a venture, particularly where there are multiple passengers. Please note that permission must also be obtained in writing from landowners before their fields may be traversed. To avoid offending those not participating in celebrations, we would request that laughter is moderate only and not loud enough to be considered a noise nuisance. Benches, stools and orthopaedic chairs are now available for collection by any shepherds planning or required to watch their flocks at night. While provision has also been made for remote monitoring of flocks by CCTV cameras from a centrally heated 'shepherd observation hut', all users of this facility are reminded that an emergency response plan must be submitted to account for known risks to the flocks. The Angel of the Lord is additionally reminded that, prior to shining his/her glory all around, she/he must confirm that all shepherds are wearing appropriate Personal Protective Equipment to account for the harmful effects of UVA, UVB and the overwhelming effects of Glory.

Following last years well-publicised case, everyone is advised that Equal Opportunities legislation prohibits any comment with regard to the redness of any part of Mr R Reindeer. Further to this, exclusion of Mr R Reindeer from reindeer games will be considered discriminatory and disciplinary action will be taken against those found guilty of this offence.

While it is acknowledged that gift bearing is a common practice in various parts of the world, particularly the Orient, everyone is reminded that the bearing of gifts is subject to Hospitality Guidelines and all gifts must be registered. This applies regardless of the individual, even royal personages. It is particularly noted that direct gifts of currency or gold are specifically precluded, while caution is advised regarding other common gifts such as aromatic resins that may evoke allergic reactions, and all such items must first be cleared with the Drug Enforcement Agency.

Finally in the recent instance of the infant found tucked up in a manger without any crib for a bed, Social Services have been advised and will be arriving shortly. All out-of-season visitors to Inns and other places of refuge are advised to pre-book accommodation, particularly at this time of year.

We'd like to wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year, from all of us working on the National Trust's Dartmoor Properties.

Andy Dawson

Telephone: 01647 434117 Email: andy.dawson@nationaltrust.org.uk



JOAN BAINBRIDGE RETIREMENT

After 24 years of service within the community, our Co-ordinator Joan Bainbridge has now decided to retire. Joan has devoted much of her life to our charity and many families have cause to be thankful for **her help and support. She has often said “I love people and it has been my privilege to work with them”**. In recognition of her work, we will be arranging a presentation (date to be advised) to which all are welcome to attend. We will also have a memories book located in each surgery in which those who would like to write a message to or about Joan are invited to do so. The Trustees would like to assure everyone that all of the services currently provided by Acorn will continue.

COMMUNITY CARE MANAGER

Acorn Community Support are looking for a Community Care Manager to work within the area covered by the Cheriton Bishop & Teign Valley GP Practice. This is a part-time post based on a 15 hour week working either fixed or flexible hours. We are looking for a caring person who is a good communicator and who has experience dealing with elderly and frail people. Experience in working with clients with dementia and/or some medical knowledge would also be an advantage. Applicants should have use of their own car and have modest IT skills including ability to email and type up documents in Word.

Duties include working closely with the GP practice team and our Office manager who is based at Christow surgery, visiting referred clients to assess their needs, appointing and organising volunteers for our new befriending service, working with the Trustees to plan new initiatives to expand our overall community wellbeing services and helping with medical appointments transport.

For a more detailed job description and/or an application form please email our Chairman at johnbarker3@btconnect.com or telephone 01647 252622 no later than February 12th,

An Enchanting Early Evening Event; Evensong & Entertainment (Free)

Sunday 22 January, Holy Trinity Church, Drewsteignton

3pm Evensong

4pm High Tea: sandwiches, pizza, quiche and cakes

5pm Film Show: an opportunity to watch 'Howell's School, Denbigh 1859 to 2009' (by kind permission of Miss Catherine Martineau) a fascinating social history film about the school at which Catherine was both a student and a teacher, featuring amazing footage (some in colour!) from the 1930s.

5.45pm Q&A with Catherine Martineau, who created the Howell School Museum, and was content editor and narrator for the DVD.

Do feel free to come along for all events or for just Evensong or the film or just the tea & cake!

All welcome.

Drewsteignton

Parish Post

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If you have trouble reading this publication please let me know and I will arrange for a large format version to be sent to you

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Contributions for the next edition by
1st February — thank you