At the last Council meeting we welcomed two new councillors to the team. Ian Rowe, who lives and farms in Whiddon Down, will be the third councillor for the ward and Ysanne James, who lives in Crockernwell, will be the second councillor for that ward. That brings us up to seven but we should be nine so, if like them, you would like to put something back into the community, do please contact the clerk or any councillor or better still come along to a meeting and get a taste of what goes on.

British Telecom have told us they will be removing the redundant telephone boxes in Crockernwell & Whiddon Down by the end of the year. Cllrs. Graham Hester and Anna Imrie had attended a meeting with the Dartmoor National Park who are producing a forward planning document. This is for discussion and a draft plan is being published next summer. We are in a slightly unusual position in Whiddon Down where social housing provision is around 60% of the housing stock in the village and it was noted that the last social housing built did take a long time to rent out.

We have not received any response for updating the Parish Plan so we will seek advice on how to progress this subject. There is still time if you would like to help.

Devon & Cornwall police are setting up a Councillor Advocate Scheme and Cllr. Graham Hester has agreed to be our representative. Our parish lengthsman has resigned from his job with us which means the signpost replacement will come to a stop and we have no one to clear the gutters & drains in the parish. We are checking with neighbouring parishes to see if we can work together with their staff but in the meantime it looks like DIY might be the only answer.

We noted the resurfacing works around the Preston area of Drewsteignton and the replacement of the signs at Ford lane. The clerk was going to thank Highways. Two more jobs which have been completed since our meeting are the replacement of the damaged fencing outside the Post Inn at Whiddon Down and the replacement of the unsafe fencing along the footpath in Crockernwell. In addition the contractor removed the overgrown weeds along the footpath and it now looks very good. The work was not undertaken by Highways staff but a private fencing contractor! The vice chairman of Sticklepath Parish Council, Cllr. Derek Holland Moore, attended the meeting and told us his council was looking to purchase a vehicle activated speed sign together with another council. By doing so it would release grant money from the Town & Parish funds to meet at least some of the costs of around £2,000.00. Cllrs. Graham Hester & Ian Rowe agreed to work with him to see how this might be progressed. Together with other interested parties we are pressing Devon Highways to expedite work on the A382 at Great Tree to repair the broken culvert and deal with the potholes caused by the water flowing along the road.

Allison Chapman gave a report on the very successful fireworks night which raised £1700.00 and the Council thanked her and her team for the brilliant work they do for us.

Our next meeting will be Monday 18th December 2017 7.30pm at Drewsteignton.

A very happy Christmas to everyone in the parish.

From John and Pauline at the Parish Post.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed and to those who help by delivering the Parish Post.
Drewsteignton Post Office.
Here for you this Christmas.
Now taking orders for
Cream, Sausages, Bacon, Bread.

If you need something we don’t usually hold in stock please ask and we will endeavour to get it for you.

Christmas stamps available
Latest recommended post date
2nd class 20th December
1st class 21st December

Christmas Eve Sunday 24th Closed
Christmas Day Closed
Boxing Day Closed
New Years Day Closed

We would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
Acorn Community Support

What’s on in January 2018

Cheriton Bishop Lunch Club – Lunches are held on the first Thursday of each month, next month it will be January 4th 2018. If you would like to come along and meet new people please phone; Jean Martin 01647 24586 or ring the Acorn Office on the number below for more details.

Minibus trips to Sainsbury’s from Cheriton – Dates are Wednesday January 10th & 24th. Help is provided in store and a wheelchair service is also available. We will help carry your shopping too! The fare is just £4 return.

Teign Valley Memory Café - Next month it will be Thursday 11th & 25th January. Meetings are held 10.30 – 12.30 at Strawberry Hill, Dunsford on the B3212 – look out for the sign.

Coffee Morning at Teign Valley Community Hall – The Bowden Room, Teign Valley Community Hall 10.30 - 12. Please drop in for a tea or coffee, a slice of homemade cake and meet up with friends, everyone welcome. Next month it will be Tuesday January 9th & 23rd.

Dunsford Coffee Morning – No coffee morning this month due to the pantomime.

What else do we do? – We have a fantastic group of volunteers who help to provide transport to medical social and wellbeing appointments. We can deliver prescriptions, and we also loan wheelchairs and equipment to assist you in the home.

Who should you contact - Should you need transport to an appointment, a prescription delivered, equipment hire or any other Acorn service, please telephone the Acorn office 01647 252701 – answering machine available 24 hours.

Acorn Office Telephone number 01647 252701 or email office@acorncommunitysupport.co.uk for further information. Visit our website at www.acorncommunitysupport.co.uk

Please note Acorn will be closed from December 21st until January 3rd 2018.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a very happy New Year

THE BIG QUIZ 2017

15 teams met up to do battle once again at the 4th annual Big Quiz at Fingle Bridge on the 25th November. Most of the teams were veterans of previous years of this event but, as usual, Quizmaster Alastair Greener had everyone’s brains working overtime to find the answers to a broad spectrum of questions. Half time sausages and chips, very generously donated by Fingle Bridge, obviously proved inspirational to some teams whilst some, possibly having enjoyed the libidinous break a little more, dropped back resulting in a very close finish. There was an excellent draw which made £538.00 and we owe a big debt of gratitude to the very generous donors of prizes. Very many thanks to everyone who contributed to another evening of good fun and friendly rivalry which ended up raising a total of £873.00 for the Friends of Drewsteignton Churchyard. By all accounts many of the same faces will be turning up for next year’s renewal and we look forward to seeing you all again on the last Saturday in November.

DREWSTEIGNTON CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAYRE

THANK YOU to everyone who came and supported the crafters over the weekend and their contribution of 15% of sales meant that they could give Holy Trinity Church £331.00. The scrumptious refreshments served in the church made a fantastic £468.00 and after deducting a few expenses the total amount for our beautiful church was £739.00. THANK YOU

Afternoon Tea

3pm on Saturday 27th January at Ford House, Drewsteignton to help raise money to repair the windows in Holy Trinity Church. Everyone is welcome
100 Club
Thank you for your support which is a great help to ensure our scheme can continue to offer as many people as possible the services they require. You may receive a written or telephone reminder when it is time for you to renew.

Congratulations to the winners of our recent draws – Thank you for your support. You can join the 100 Club at any time during the year, just send a cheque, payable to ODCTG for £12 to us at the address below or you can pay by BACS or Standing Order NatWest Okehampton Sort Code 54-21-14 Account No. 22127879 ODCTG

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Drivers
We are always looking for volunteer drivers and at the moment would particularly like to find someone from the Chagford and North Tawton areas. Please ring us for more information.

Coffee Morning
A big THANK YOU to everyone who supported our coffee morning on Saturday including the Co-op for providing refreshments, Minnow and Annie for serving refreshments, Liz, Scilla, Graham, Kathy and Vera for manning the tables, the stallholders and our other volunteers who helped unload and load the huge amount of boxes! We raised £647.35

Trips
Is there somewhere you would like to visit? If so, give us a ring and we will try and arrange a suitable date. We have added some extra dates, please ring to book ASAP.

Please let us know as soon as possible if you need to cancel a booking, to allow us time to try and fill the seats, especially if you are a wheelchair user as this involves us removing 4 seats for each wheelchair space. Thank you.

- Saturday 2nd December Homeleigh Garden Centre, Launceston £10
- Friday 8th December Exeter Christmas Market (3 hour visit) £10

Aviva Community Fund
https://community-fund.aviva.co.uk/voting/project/view/17-2039
We are raising money towards upgrading one of our wheelchair accessible vehicles – please vote for us on the link above. Everyone has 10 votes so you can use them all for us if you wish! Thank you.

Waitrose – Community Matters
Thank you to everyone who put their green tokens in our box during August, we were delighted to receive a cheque for £430.

Okehampton Inner Wheel
Sue recently did a presentation at their meeting and was happy to learn that they have chosen us as their Charity of the Year. They also presented a cheque for £200.

Okehampton Simmons Bowling Club
Liz recently attended a presentation to collect a cheque for £300 – We are grateful for their continued support of our services.

Christmas & New Year
The office will be closed from 4pm on 22nd December and re-open at 08.30 on 2nd January 2018. Please try and book your appointments in good time as although you can leave a message on our answerphone, we will only be picking up messages intermittently during the holiday period.

Okehampton Sunday Christmas Markets
Something to do on a Sunday – Festive markets with live entertainment spread across Parish and Charter Halls in Market Street and Red Lion Yard, Okehampton on 19th and 26th November, 3rd and 10th December from 10am – 2.30pm Facebook.com/Okehamptonmarket 07398 720015/07886 509131

Sue & Liz, ODCTG, Unit 3 Okehampton Business Park, Higher Stockley Mead, Okehampton, Devon EX20 1FJ 01837 55000 sue.odctg@btinternet.com www.odctg.co.uk Out of hours emergency mobile no. 07484525577

We wish you a Happy and Healthy Christmas & New Year!
This card was sent to my grandparents by Mrs Depree, Parford, Sandy Park who my granfer worked for. William and Emily White moved from East Underdown on Lady Day 1912 to 3 Sandy Park Cottage (now Whites Cottage) with two young children, William and Fred and all there possessions in the horse drawn cart. My mother Lillian was born October 1912 followed by Albert and Walter. The last member of the family Fred, moved out in 1992.

William worked for Mrs Depree for a number of years and Lilian also went there to work in service as a cook. The children all had jobs to do, including fetching the water from Parford well.

People would call at the Cottage to leave parcels to be collected by the driver of the Devon General bus who would also drop off deliveries for people to collect from granny.

I can remember going to work with granfer spending a lot of time playing in the Pound House, ( now a holiday cottage), there used to be a ladder going up into the loft where we used to play.

Like a lot of villages Sandy Park has changed, the traffic being the most notable, the bus wouldn't be able to stop at our cottage and pass the time of day now.

My granfer was a very keen gardener but he wouldn't grow flowers as he said “you couldn't eat flowers.”

They had a hard life but were happy and were loving grandparents.

Pauline Rowe

3 Sandy Park Cottage, first house on the left where my grandparents moved to in 1912
Bird Notes

The countryside around Drewsteignton is now looking like winter is properly here with very few leaves left on the trees, other than on sheltered beech trees and some oaks. We had a few morning frosts towards the end of November, which brought many of the last leaves off.

There are many birds coming to my feeders to take the crushed sunflower hearts and the niger seed that I put out. It is only goldfinches that feed on the niger but it really draws them in, and I can have up to about twelve goldfinches either feeding or perching nearby awaiting their turn. I regard the crushed sunflower hearts as the best food to feed the birds, and many species seem to enjoy it. A further advantage is there is no waste, and any spillage is eaten by ground feeding birds like blackbirds, which means it will not attract unwanted visitors such as squirrels or rats.

Over the past weekend, I did a few quick counts through the windows with my binoculars of birds on and around my feeders, and was amazed at some of the numbers of different species. The maximum counts at any one time were: goldfinches 14, greenfinches 7, chaffinches 5, blue tits 12, great tits 4, collared doves 4 and blackbirds 4. My bird table was also visited by robins, dunnocks, coal tits, a nuthatch, greater spotted woodpeckers and house sparrows. I was delighted to spot that one of the greenfinches had a small metal leg-ring which would have been put on either as a chick in the nest, or if it had been intentionally caught in a mist net during a trapping and ringing session, undertaken by licensed and trained ringers. If anyone should ever find a dead bird with a metal leg-ring on, do please put it in a plastic bag and get it to me (tel: 281681) as I will happily get it reported, as the information gathered from bird ring recoveries is increasingly vital to some species.

I keep on hearing predictions that we will be soon be facing some very cold weather, and if this happens, I fully expect the above numbers of birds seen in my garden and at the feeders to double, plus also get other species in such as, long-tailed tits. I rarely get starlings at my feeders despite spotting some huge flocks moving around locally, and even more when I am at work in Cornwall. I work on land just north of Bodmin moor, and we get hundreds of thousands coming across on their way to roost in the conifer forest surrounding Crowdy reservoir. For some reason, these huge flocks always seem to pass right over where I work, sometimes in a single group but mainly up to about six different flocks and often spread over a fifteen-minute period.

As I was leaving the village one morning a few weeks ago, I spotted a sparrow hawk flying ahead of me up the road, at about the hedgerow top instead of the normal two foot height above the tarmac. I slowed my driving to watch as it swooped up and landed on a branch of an oak tree over the road, just as another sparrow hawk left the same branch and carried on along the road above me. The first one I had seen then followed the second along the lane and both flew up into another mature tree in the road hedge about forty yards along the lane. They both perched briefly before one then dropped off the branch, swiftly followed by the second as they carried along the lane again before both landing in a tree to the left of the road. I stopped to watch what they would do next and after a few seconds, they both took off along a field hedgerow away from the road and I lost sight of them. From the brief views of them in flight and perching that I had, it appeared that one was larger than the other indicating they were a female and male, as female birds of prey are often larger than the males of the species. I was unable to tell if they were in adult or juvenile plumage, but the behaviour I observed seemed to indicate that they were hunting together, which is something I have never seen in sparrow hawks before, or even heard of.

Last weekend, I was in Exeter and met up with a friend who lives in Norwich, and was visiting her family in Devon. She is involved with the peregrine project at Norwich Cathedral and had asked if I could show her the peregrines at St. Michaels church at Mount Dinham. I always enjoy showing people the Exeter peregrines, and so we met up in town and visited St. Michaels. Both falcons were easily seen from the roadside beneath the church, as they were perching beside each other in the trefoil entrance to the nest box. I did my normal weekly collection of fallen prey remains, which mainly consists of feathers from birds they have caught and plucked on the tower. After we had walked around the church and I had collected a bag of feathers from a variety of different bird species, we noticed the female falcon had moved. She was now perching on the apex of the ridge above the trefoil and she was utterly focused on something below her and to her left. With binoculars, I checked where she was looking and just visible about four metres below her, was a magpie on the corner of the flat ledge that runs along the top of each side of the tower. She appeared to be glaring furiously at the magpie which was obviously interested in something edible on

Cont. on page 7
the ledge, and was probably a part-eaten carcass left by the peregrines. I mentioned that this could be
worth watching, and almost immediately the peregrine dropped from her perch toward the magpie which
took flight too. The magpie flew around the side of the church staying very close to the stonework, mak-
ing it difficult for the falcon to strike, and then disappeared behind the ridge of the roof. The peregrine
then flew out high over us and looped round and back up onto her normal perch in the trefoil entrance
to the nest box, forcing her partner to make way and find somewhere else to perch. I have seen a variety
of birds attempting to steal the peregrines prey before, including crows, magpies, jackdaws and gulls but
never quite so brazenly as this magpie. What is interesting is that we found tail and wing feathers from a
magpie around the church two days later, so I wonder whether it returned but then ran out of luck in the
hope of getting a free meal! My booklet ‘The Exeter Peregrines’ is on sale in Drewsteignton post office at
just £5, a perfect Christmas gift for anyone with an interest in birds or wildlife.
I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!
Nick

Christmas Recipe for Children
Rudolph cupcakes

Ingredients
- 200g butter, cubed
- 200g plain chocolate, broken into squares
- 200g light soft brown sugar
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 250g self-raising flour

For the icing
- 200g plain chocolate, broken into squares
- 100ml double cream, not fridge-cold
- 50g icing sugar

For the reindeers
- 12 large milk chocolate buttons (we used Cadbury Dairy Milk Giant Buttons)
- 24 white chocolate buttons
- 12 red Smarties
- black icing pens
- mini pretzels, carefully cut in half horizontally

Method
Get started: Heat oven to 160C/140C fan/gas 3. Line a 12-hole muffin tin with paper cases. Gently melt
the butter, chocolate, sugar and 100ml hot water together in a large saucepan, stirring occasionally. Set
aside to cool a little while you weigh the other ingredients.

Make your cakes: Stir the eggs and vanilla into the chocolate mixture. Put the flour in a large mixing
bowl, and stir in the chocolate mixture until smooth. Spoon into the cases until just over three-quarters
full. Bake on a low shelf in the oven for 20-22 mins. Leave to cool.

Ice the tops: To make the icing, melt the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of barely simmering
water. Once melted, turn off the heat, stir in the double cream, sift in the icing sugar and mix well. When
spreadable, top each cake with some icing.

Have fun decorating: Position a milk chocolate button on top of each cake, then 2 white chocolate
buttons above it. Use a little icing as glue to stick a red Smartie onto the milk chocolate button for a
nose. Then use your icing pens to draw black dots on the white buttons for eyes. Stick 2 pretzel top
halves into the top of each cake for antlers, and stick the bottom half of a pretzel under the Smartie for a
mouth. These cakes will keep in a sealed container for up to 3 days, but we doubt they’ll last that long!
Chagford Show Community Fund

The Members of the Chagford Show have decided to donate a % of any profits made in 2017 to a charitable fund to be used to help local people or projects within the Show District, which comprises the parishes of Chagford, Drewsteignton, Gidleigh, Manaton, Moretonhampstead, North Bovey, Thrownleigh, South Tawton, Spreyton, Lustleigh, Cheriton Bishop, and an area within half a mile of the Bridge at Postbridge.

Applicants need to apply in writing with full details of their request, to the Secretary at 42 The Square, Chagford, TQ13 8AH by 10th January 2018.
All applications will be considered by the Funding Committee and the successful applicants will be notified early in 2018.

The Parish Post

The Post is designed to keep everyone in touch with life in the Parish. We’d love to hear about your forthcoming events, hair-raising experiences, fundraising efforts, funny stories, memories, recipes. Your thoughts, opinions, comments, views and concerns are important too.
Please tell us. You don’t have to be a great writer, just email or phone John Shiell or Pauline Rowe, details below.
If you don’t tell us we can’t print it

John and Pauline

Drewsteignton Parish Post

Contact Details:

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Contributions                Pauline Rowe    plrowe43@gmail.com ☎️ 281638

Village Hall Bookings        callum.chapman@btinternet.com or
Drewsteignton                Alison Chapman  ☎️ 01647 281197
Whiddon Down                 Clare Rowe      whiddondownvillagehall@hotmail.co.uk
For Parish Council           Lucy Bruckner   clerk@drewsteigntonparish.co.uk ☎️ 01647 252306
Business

The Parish Post reserves the right to edit contributions and wishes to state that views expressed are not necessarily those of the Parish Post.

Contributions for the next edition by 1st January - Thank You