The May meeting of the Parish Council is also our Annual General Meeting where the Council Officers are elected and representatives of the Council are selected. This year it was also the first meeting after the election day.

We welcomed Cllr Joy W alker to the team having replaced Paul Chadney representing Crockernwell Ward. Joy brings her knowledge of teaching, farming and countryside matters to the table, and Cllr Sue Power was heard to say it would be nice to have another female voice on the Council.!!

Bill Savage was re-elected as Chairman, Chris Gosnay vice Chairman, and the following councillors agreed to represent the Council: DNPA Planning & Forum meetings - Cllr Sue Power, Eastern Parish Links - Cllrs Bill Savage & Paul Ridgers, Whiddon Down Village Hall - Cllr John Dyke, Drewsteignton Village Hall and Playing Fields committees - Cllr Wayne Mudge, Devon Heartlands Forum - Cllr John Dyke and Cllr Chris Gosnay will be responsible for Drewsteignton Car Park.

Moving on to the business of the Council, we are still awaiting a reply from the National Park regarding the Teign Valley Commercial Shoot, we were also concerned to hear of a fire in the Teign Valley and are asking the Fire Service to inform us of the cause. We are compiling a comprehensive list of Highways issues in the Parish to be sent to Devon County Council and Cllr James McInnes (DCC) in an effort to get some jobs completed and see what has been dealt with.

Following complaints from parishioners we are also asking what action is being taken to deal with the road damage at the entrance to Whiddon Down Services. We resolved to make no comment on two planning matters - at Homelands Crockernwell and Middle Venton Farm Drewsteignton. We are consulting with West Devon Borough Council on the following matters at Whiddon Down: we would like an update on the Den Brook wind farm development as this has a bearing on the building of a new link road, what action they are taking on the remaining units occupying land owned by the Highways Agency and the possibility of a new children's play area in Barn Close on land owned by WDBC.

The Council were sad to hear our Parish Clerk - Jackie Bowden - wishes to resign, Jackie has been a valued member of the team for four and a half years and has worked extremely hard for the Parish. If there is anyone who may be interested in taking on this interesting and varied post please contact Jackie or any of the Councillors.

Our next meeting is at Drewsteignton on Monday 20th June at 7.30pm.

Bill Savage
Chairman Drewsteignton Parish Council

Parish Clerk Job Vacancy

Salary £4,420 per year, paid monthly. This is based upon an average of 10 hours per week. The successful candidate should be proficient in simple book-keeping, able to operate both word processing and simple spreadsheets. Access to the internet and email would be an important advantage. The ability to work on their own is essential as are good communication skills, both verbal and written. Please send applications to the Clerk, Jackie Bowden, 01647 281239.

Jackie is willing to work with the new Clerk to ensure a smooth transition. For further details please contact Jackie.
Chagford 2 Hills Race
On Monday 30th May it was the 2011 2 hills race and I ran in it for the first time along with 202 other people. In the 2 hills race you run once around the cricket field and then you run up Meldon hill and at the top thankfully, there is a drink stop! Then you have to run down Meldon but not too fast or you will fall over.

There is a bog you have to run through and I saw a boy who lost both his shoes in it, so his dad lent him his shoes and ran the rest of the race with no shoes on. Luckily my shoes stayed on. There was another drink stop at the bottom of Meldon before the steep run / walk up N attadon hill. We then had the windy path going down N attadon, through the houses and finally back to the cricket field and the finishing straight.

It was a great feeling at the end of the race and everyone cheering and all the runners getting a medal. The quickest person to complete the three and a half mile course this year did it in 27 minutes, but the course record is 23 minutes. My time was 44 minutes 39 seconds and I was very pleased with that. The first female runner to complete the course was N aomi Rubbra from D rewsteignton, closely followed by A lice Rubbra as the second female. L ivy Rubbra was the first under13 girl to finish. They all won trophies.

T illy Dixon.

Build Your Own Website
Grants available for farmers and smallholders in the South West to attend Build Your Own Website courses
If you sell your own produce direct, have holiday cottages or B&B’s to advertise, or need to put your farm, smallholding, breed society or small business on the Internet map, a website is an absolute must-have. At South Yeo Farm W est, just outside O kehampton on the fringes of Dartmoor, Andrew Hubbard runs the popular Build Your Own Website courses for farmers, smallholders, breed societies and other small businesses.

The course will give you all the skills and experience you need to build a website, and you will learn how to arrange web hosting and register your website domain name. Anyone with basic computer skills (emailing, producing simple documents and using the Internet), can attend. Customers leave very happy -- “I've spent my whole life delivering training and I wish all training days were as good as this one.” JM, Devon

A maximum of six people can attend any one course so that you are guaranteed individual attention. The courses held on Saturday 11th June and Saturday 16th July will attract a 50% refund of course fees for eligible smallholders and farmers based in the South W est region; half of the course fees are reimbursed to eligible participants through The Skills Project operated by Duchy College Rural Business School.

Courses are run throughout the year, but funding from The Skills Project is only available until the end of July. To check out course dates and for more information go to www.smallholdertraining.co.uk, or contact Andrew on 01837 810276 or Andrew@southyeofarmwest.co.uk

Drewsteignton Church Fete
Saturday 9th July at 2.30pm
In the garden at the Old Rectory by kind permission of Mr and Mrs Stephen Emanuel

Stalls selling cakes and savouries, preserves, bric a brac, books, plants and much more. Try your hand at all the games and enjoy a delicious cream tea on the lawn!
June Bird Notes from Drewsteignton (and further)

As a change to writing about Swifts and their decline in the UK, the nest boxes at Church-gate and my continual search for information on nests in Drewsteignton, I thought I would write about my favourite bird, and one which is increasingly found in our towns and cities, which makes it very easy to watch despite its considerable rarity.

The next time you visit Exeter, take a pair of binoculars (or a telescope/tripod if you have one) and if you should happen to be parking in Mary Arches or the Guildhall car parks in the city centre, train them up onto the nearby and imposing church to the north, beside the Iron bridge.

This is St Michaels and All Saints Church, in Dinham road. It was consecrated in 1868, and is the tallest spire of any church West of Salisbury Cathedral. It also happens to be the home of Devon's most publicised pair of Peregrine Falcons.

Peregrines in the UK have always traditionally been found on high sea cliffs and upland crags, but as their numbers have increased over the last 40 years, they have been increasingly moving into lowland areas by nesting in large quarries, and much more recently into our towns and cities.

Peregrines are highly territorial birds, and as such, this has limited their numbers in favourable areas, where suitable nest sites prevail and food is abundant. Food (or prey) for peregrines are other birds, always taken in flight in the upper skies, and mainly pigeons but they have the ability to take many other species of birds, both larger and smaller.

It is their aerial prowess and method of hunting that has attracted the attentions of man over the centuries but in recent years, technology has proven the peregrine to be the fastest creature on the planet, when they are stooping through the skies onto distant prey with their wings folded tight in to their body.

Peregrines were first recorded at St. Michaels in 1987, with a pair present on many occasions during the following year. These birds used the church’s tall pinnacles and perches to perch and feed on by day and occasionally to roost on at night.

Peregrines do not build a nest but just make a shallow depression (or scrape) in loose substrate on a rock or soil ledge to lay their eggs in, but they will also use old Raven or Buzzard nests, if suitably safe from predators such as foxes, or humans.

In 1997, a pair of Ravens that had previously nested in a tall Redwood tree beside the church, decided to build a nest on an east facing ledge of the tower, where the base of the spire begins. The peregrines immediately ousted the ravens and reared 4 young peregrines in the nest that year. They have reared young every year since then on the east ledge, and became Devon most productive breeding pair of peregrines.

They also became the most watched pair in the county due to the erection of a camera installed in 2001, which had a live feed on the internet. This worldwide viewing continued along with nesting on the east ledge until 2008, when the resident female then found a new internal nest box on the southern facing aspect, within the stone detail of a trefoil window of the upper bell-chamber in the spire. This box had, in fact, been erected shortly after the pair had been first seen but never been noticed by the birds.

The peregrines are using it this year again and within the last few days, I have finally seen 3 youngsters in the trefoil window (all ready to fly) from the other side of the valley.

It is a wonderful opportunity to watch young peregrines learning first how to fly, then catch food with help from the adults and it is all visible over Exeter over the next two months. They are always present on the church unless airborne above (you will hear them calling!) and viewing from the car parks and Bartholomew street provide great views over the old cemetery towards the church.

Do not forget to take binoculars next time you’re off to town!

I am still very keen to hear of any swift nests in the village. Contact me on 281681.

Nick Dixon

Chagford Swimming Pool, A.G.M.

Mon 13th June, 7.30pm at the Globe Hotel, Chagford

Everyone welcome and if you come it doesn’t mean you get roped on to the committee!

We do need new, fresh people to learn how the pool is managed otherwise we could reach the situation where there is no pool! And we need fresh ideas. Dramatic but honest! There is no one on the current committee under 40 and too many of us are over 60!

If you have any skills to offer and are interested in helping to manage the pool, please feel free to ask one of the current committee for further information. If you e-mail back to me I will put you in touch with someone. N.B. A committee meeting will follow the AGM. Marion Symes marlonsymes@eclipse.co.uk
Drewsteignton Gardeners' Club

Our Plant sale at the beginning of May was a great success and thoroughly enjoyed by all who came and supported us. We have two garden visits before our Village Show on the last Saturday of August. Tony and Angela Thomas are kindly showing us round their garden on Saturday 11th June and to Cadhay, near Ottery St Mary, on 1st July.

If you are at all interested in any of the visits please contact: Carol Mason 01647 281185 or Bunny Johnstone 01647 432068 : Joint Hon Secretaries.

Classic Cycle Sportif

Dartmoor National Park Authority has been notified of the Dartmoor Classic cycle sportif (this means it is a cycle event not a race) which will take place on Sunday 26 June 2011.

The map of the 100 mile (in blue) and 100km (in red) routes can be viewed online at http://www.dartmoorclassic.co.uk/routes.html and as before the routes will either pass through, or run adjacent to, Drewsteignton Parish. The organisers have supplied the National Park with a comprehensive list of where signs will be erected advising other road users of the event. These will be put in place before the first riders are through and all signs will be removed by 18:30, at the latest, on the same day. The organisers will also have vehicles leading and following the event, as well as marshals at major road junctions. The organisers will be providing refreshments for riders only at Princetown and we used to invite George to come out and have a cup of tea with us.

It was a shame to think that when the army came in they pulled it all down because it was a very handy place to shelter in from the weather up there.

Down Memory Lane

Most people enjoy going for a walk in the country, but in the past there was often no alternative to walking to work and school, and it wasn't always such fun, remembers Henry Scott.

A lot of men used to walk three miles to work and then they would walk behind a horse ploughing each day and then they'd walk home. By the time they were 60, they'd be crippled, walking with two sticks.

I started work when I left school at 14. But we'd started working on the farm before that of course. I used to milk as soon as I was old enough to sit on the stool. Later on Jan and I used to get up at 6 in the morning to turn the turnip cutter, and feed the turnips to the cows, and then we'd have to run to school. Some children used to walk in from Weir Mill.

Very often the children who used to come in to school in Chagford from Dartmoor would come late because they'd sheltered somewhere, the weather was so rough. There was a chap whose mother was a housekeeper for George Hutchins at Teignhead Farm out in the middle of Dartmoor. He used to come in Mondays, arrive in school about half past twelve. He would have been in for a thrashing before he'd started but we all told the new school master that he had to walk six mile to school. He used to leave Friday dinner time to go back over the moors and he used to lodge in Chagford in the middle of the week. He went into the air force.

We used to turn cattle out there on the moor from 1st July to September. That would give the pastures at home a chance to come up nice again after we had cut hay. The cattle up at Teignhead -- about 20 head, 18 months old to two and a half -- would have a tape through their ear, tied in two knots. Next enclosure over was done with whipcord. We used to take 150 sheep up there, too. We used to go out on a Sunday and make a picnic of it, go up to Cranmere Pool, and we used to invite George to come out and have a cup of tea with us.

It was a shame to think that when the army came in they pulled it all down because it was a very handy place to shelter in from the weather up there.

Richard Drysdale, Sustainable Development Officer, Dartmoor National Park Authority, 01626 831003, rdrysdale@dartmoor-npa.gov.uk
View from the Farm

I enjoyed visiting France. I still struggle with French farmers who have such a low opinion of British farming, but you can’t help admiring their pride in French agriculture and food.

The weather was good, the roads were quiet and I stopped in lots of quaint places in the Loire and never had to pay for parking.

The French have lots of schemes to encourage new entrants. They have a substantial starting grant (15,000 euros) that only has to be paid back if they give up in less than five years. Then there is a low-interest loan that is guaranteed by the government coupled with strict rules on land usage.

So compared with England, things look good to go farming in France.

I met a few new entrants but they where quick to explain that they were a rarity and young people were not going farming and the ones that were, are retraining and leaving in their 40s. As in the UK, the new entrants were all exceptional people, prepared to take high risks and be innovative. But those risks are so much lower than we expect the next generation of farmers to take here. The average farm business tenancy is three years in the UK, whereas in France the tenancy can be no less than nine years, and a rule preventing landowners occupying their land unless they are farming fulltime means that land is available. Forgetting the grants and loans, if we had rules like that in the UK, it would reduce the value of land and farms to a true agricultural value. Then we may stand a chance of making a living from the land.

And why are they leaving? I couldn’t find that one out. It seemed to be a general feeling that more money and a better lifestyle could be made elsewhere. French farms are generally getting larger and more specialised.

The land rules help encourage this with local competition for the better land meaning the market is far from free even though the price (rental and buying) seemed comparatively low.

So I still don’t understand French Farmers, but I was told that they think there must be no good British farmers as we don’t demonstrate everytime CAP is reformed and we were stupid enough to go with a decoupled Single Farm payment. Maybe they have something there …

Rona Amiss

Cubs and Scouts News

Drewsteignton/Chagford Scouts are seeking a new leader!

The 1st Drewsteignton & Chagford Scouts are seeking a new leader to take over from the current leaders from September 2011. We need at least two people (the more we have the more the workload is spread) so you wouldn’t be on your own! It’s a challenging, but hugely rewarding, role and the Scout Association offers full training as well as all checks and other support. If not you personally – can you think of anyone else who might consider taking this on? We need to recruit someone as soon as possible to ensure the survival of our Scouts!

The Scouts meet in the village hall in Drewsteignton on a Thursday evening and have children from all over the area. There is also a thriving Cub Pack which meets before the Scouts on the same evening in the same place. For more information or to talk through what the role entails, then please phone Paula Allen on 01647 281144.

Cubs had a successful bike ride to Castle Drogo with a lovely picnic made by Akele and Kaa.

Thank you to Dave and Charlotte for all they’ve done over the last three years. Also add a big thank you to the Chagford Bulletin for their kind donation of high-visibility vests and a camp cooker for the Cubs and Scouts. Akela

Drewsteignton Ladies Club

Book Sale and Cream Teas
Drewsteignton Village Hall
Saturday August 6th 2.30pm
in Aid of Devon Air Ambulance

Royal British Legion Womens Section,

Drewsteignton Branch
Drinks and Lunch Bites
Saturday August 13th 12 to 2pm
Undermoor, Broomhill, Chagford.
Veg Plot

Still Plenty of Time to Sow Vegetable Seeds
If you haven’t sown any veg seeds yet, or your early sowings have struggled with the dry weather, now’s a great time to get some more seeds in the ground. Practically all salad veg can be sown in June – lettuce, spring onions, mange tout, beetroot, carrots, as well as herbs like coriander and parsley.

French and runner beans can go in now too. Create a frame from bamboo canes and push two beans, two inches deep at the bottom of each one - where the mice won’t get them! Remove one if both come up.

June is also the ideal time to sow some of my other favourites - kale, rainbow chard and perpetual spinach. Sow direct into your plot or start them off in small pots or modules and plant out about one month later.

And of course, if you’ve been growing any frost-tender veg like squash courgettes and cucumbers in pots inside, now’s the time to transfer them to your plot if you haven’t already. The frosts are well and truly over and these plants will romp away once they get their roots down into your soil. Make sure you keep them nice and wet though.

Enjoy your plot!
Peter Clement -- Advice, seeds and other gardening goods available on www.seedtoplate.co.uk

Playing Field News
We had a great turnout of more than 20 people for the AGM and the decisions made are as follows:
• to push ahead with getting both sets of swings back in operation as soon as possible
• to replace the zip wire, again, as soon as possible but after a little more research
• to put on hold the All Weather Pitch until such point as a dedicated sub-committee can be put together to lead this

STOP PRESS! Great news. After doing some research Jasper will be able to undertake the repair of the equipment, but not only will we be getting the zip wire replaced but a new frame for the swings too, and all for within our budget. This is thanks to the generosity of Emanuel Hendry who will be donating two days of their company’s time, a massive thanks to them!

We hope work will begin very soon so that the Field is at its best for the summer -- especially after our Maintenance Day, Saturday 11 June from 10am. PLEASE come and lend a hand for an hour or two, refreshments provided.

And don’t forget, Family Fun Day, Saturday 2nd July from 3pm. Jennifer

Coming Together
The Transition Movement has been spreading in popularity. There are thousands of initiatives around the world and here in the UK.

The movement was set up to address the problems of Peak Oil and Climate change and help build resilience for communities for the coming oil shortage.

The movement’s message is: “We have to work together and we have to work now, rather than waiting for the government or someone else. We are very clever and creative whilst using large amounts of energy and we will need to be just as clever as we learn to live with decreasing levels. Our communities currently lack the resilience to withstand some of the disruptions that will accompany climate change and unplanned energy descent.”

People in Chagford already seem aware of this challenge. Increase of food prices and high petrol prices are an indicator and they are here to stay!

What I find alarming is we have nothing set in this village for any event! Yes, we get together for Teignton Fayre, music at the pub, the village fete and plant fairs, which is a good sign of some community cohesion. But we don’t have any plans for any energy descent.

How will we grow our food without easy access to fossil fuels for fertilizers and transport, and shape our communities to face these challenges?

I know many people of the same mindset elsewhere, but are there any people here in Drewsteignton Parish who would like to join together in forming a Transition Movement group?

Julia Whatley jullia_whatley@hotmail.co.uk

All of us could take a lesson from the weather. It pays no attention to criticism.
News from the Castle

June is now upon us and it will soon be summer. Mind you, it doesn’t feel like it, as I look out on another chilly, overcast day and listen to those around me alternately lamenting the lack of sun and the lack of rain. Here at Drogo we’re keeping our fingers crossed that we’ll have some warm and sunny weather over the weekend of the 18th and 19th June, for our Classic Car Event. For the past few years this has been run annually in order to celebrate Father’s Day. However, as this has become so popular we will, for the first time this year, have the cars on display for the whole weekend, not just on the Sunday. Once again we will be providing a beer tent and, of course, there will be a special Father’s Day menu; with a traditional roast and chef’s special pudding, all washed down with local bottled ales.

Those of you who have been up to see us over the past few weeks will have noticed that the hard-standing, at the top of the drive, has now been removed. Over the past couple of years this area has proved to be something of a mixed blessing with opinions split between those who liked the option to park there, rather than in the main car park, and those who felt that it detracted from the spectacular views across Piddledown Common and the Teign Valley; which were created by Lutyens as an integral feature of the property. As you may remember this hard-standing area was laid in order to provide a parking area for delivery vehicles, during the re-development of the Visitor Centre. However, we only had permission to maintain this on a temporary basis and it was, therefore, necessary to have the site reinstated. Though the parking will be missed, I hope that you will all be pleased to have the view restored.

Andy Dawson, Compliance & Environmental Practices Co-ordinator, Dartmoor Properties, 01647 434117, andy.dawson@nationaltrust.org.uk

Church Cottage

As I reported to the Parish AGM, the Parochial Church Council have permission to sell the Cottage, and use the proceeds for general church purposes in the Parish. This would allow us to rebuild our capital reserves, and develop new projects to serve the community. Past experience has shown the role of landlord is an uncomfortable one for the Church, and sale of the Cottage would relieve the small group of volunteers who run the Church of an onerous responsibility.

However, we recognise it is a problematic time to sell. We also recognise the reality that if the Cottage is sold it might very well end up in the holiday-cottage or second-home sector. The issue of housing is understandably a very sensitive one in the community. We are therefore looking again at the net cost of putting the Cottage into an attractive condition for the rental market, and whether the Church can find the financial means to do this.

Renting the Cottage out is subject to the following constraints: a) the Church now has no Fabric Fund and the next time we face a major bill for church repairs, the Cottage will almost certainly have to be sold; b) the deeds restrict the length of any tenancy agreement (other than for a Church caretaker) to one year. c) the use to which the rental income can be put is restricted; d) under charity law, a fair market rent must be charged.

We face a complex situation in which there is no ideal solution, and it is difficult to know how best to further the Church’s task of expressing God’s love and care, while being prudent stewards of resources. With all these factors in mind, please feel free to help the work of the PCC by giving us your thoughts in writing. Letters should be sent to the Acting PCC Secretary, Parford Cottage, Chagford TQ13 8JR, to arrive by July 13.

REMINDER: June 12 – 11.15am, Nameday service and blessing of Coat of Arms; 7.30pm, Courtenay Players, Concert of Elizabethan Music (tickets £6). Please join our celebrations if you can.

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Know how to prevent sagging?
Just eat till the wrinkles fill out.

The easiest way to find something lost around the house is to buy a replacement

Always Remember This: You don’t stop laughing because you grow old. You grow old because you stop laughing.

It’s scary when you start making the same noises as your coffee maker
Whiddon Down

‘Sit up straight and face the front of the class. No talking at the back!’

Did you go to school in Whiddon Down? This year Whiddon Down Village Hall is 50 years old! Before that the building was the local School. If you used to go to school in what is now the Village Hall and have memories, photos or any anecdotes you would like to share and that we could use in our 50 year celebration please contact me, Pat Sheridan 01647 231580 or any of the other Whiddon Down Village Hall Committee members.

The Village Hall is being used regularly by a number of organisations and groups. The Dog Training Group, Whiddon Luncheon Club, Okehampton Beekeepers, Mother’s Union, Rosemary Conley Fitness Group etc. are making the most of this really good facility. If you are planning a party or need a venue for a meeting or event why not consider hiring 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.

Whiddon Down Village Hall Produce Market is held on the fourth Saturday of the month 10am – 12 noon, the next dates being June 25th, July 23rd, August 27th, and September 24th. Please try to come along. There are a wide range of local produce items for sale including fresh meat, plants, cheese, and cakes. We now have a fishmonger, fresh eggs, seasonal fruit and vegetables. There are opportunities to buy locally made jewellery, cards, wooden items, framed photos of Dartmoor scenes and more... Refreshments are also available including delicious bacon rolls. Come along and see for yourself, meet friends, enjoy a cuppa and have a chat. You will be sure of a cheerful welcome.

If you have something suitable to sell and would like to, please book a table - it only costs £4 for the morning. Contact Patrick Sullivan tel. 01647 231411 or Catherine Dunn tel. 01647 231452.

Citizens’ Advice

There is a new telephone number for the General Public to contact the Citizens Advice Bureau in West Devon, Teignbridge and South Hams. It is 08444 111 444.

This will enable the three bureaus to work together to answer more calls. Clients will still be able to receive appointments in their local bureau.

The West Devon CAB home visiting and outreach service remains contactable on 01837 52105 for clients who are unable to access our bureaux in Tavistock or Okehampton.

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

Pauline Rowe: pauline_lily@hotmail.com

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