

CROCKERNWELL
DREWSTEIGNTON
SANDY PARK
VENTON
WHIDDON DOWN

Drewsteignton Parish Post

ISSUE NO 43.

AUGUST 2009

JULY NEWS FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

The application to build five houses for affordable rent at Lamb Park, Drewsteignton attracted a number of parishioners who live close to the development and their views were listened to by the Council. We are satisfied as to the need statement and agreed to support the application but draw the attention of the National Park to concerns over the height of the development and the proposed car parking arrangements.

The area highways engineer is to be contacted to make progress on the potholes in the Parish. (It was suggested that where they have been marked, the paint would have faded before the potholes were filled in!)

The highways engineer will also be asked to take action to clear the low scrub at the Venton lay-by, to repaint road markings at the entrance to Whiddon Down services, to repair the road edges near East Underdown and in accordance with the Parish Plan to conduct speed surveys on the approach roads to Drewsteignton.

Footpaths in the Parish to be walked by Councillors and reported on at the October meeting were allocated.

The Council received a letter from the Parochial Church Council requesting financial help in the cost of repainting the church clock in Drewsteignton. This was received too late for this month's meeting and will be dealt with next month.

A progress report was given on the travellers' site at Whiddon Down and we heard the Land

Registry is still investigating the ownership of the land. It is hoped a site visit can be arranged so the Parish Council can update itself on the site and be able to make more informed observations.

Taking items from the Parish Plan, one set of bus timetables has been distributed and we are waiting to receive Dartline's timetables for publication.

The Council has now updated the Parish website www.drewsteigntonparish.co.uk -- with the agendas and minutes and that will now occur monthly. Rather than waiting for the minutes of meetings to be ratified and be over a month out of date before appearing on notice boards, copies of "draft" minutes will be posted. These are very rarely altered at a subsequent meeting, and if they are, it would only be a minor amendment. Thanks to the Parochial Church Council a set of minutes will be available in the church porch.

We have now been told that Cladco roofing company will assist with a new roof for the bus shelter in Crockernwell and the works will commence when Councillors can fit in the time.

Talking of bus shelters, somebody located a set of keys in Drewsteignton, opened the notice board and interfered with the notices. The subsequent criminal damage in the form of graffiti is not appreciated. Provided the keys are returned it will not escalate into a case of theft.



Parish Profile...The Young Ones

The Parish Profile has been an occasional feature of the Parish Post for some time now, but while we have the crack team of Hope (cub reporter) and Viva (photographer) available, we're going to focus for a time on the youth of the Parish. If any other young people fancy trying their hand at doing a Profile, or have any other ideas for articles, please get in touch.



Seth Hocking, 13, lives in Drewsteignton village with his parents Tim and Jane. In September, he'll start in Year 9 at Okehampton College.

What are you like at school?

A pain in the bum! I think I annoy the teachers a bit...

Describe your perfect day

It would be hot and sunny, and I would have loads of money and go to Chagford pool.

If you could have a ticket to anywhere, where would you go?

Jamaica, just because it's hot and I've seen it on the telly quite a bit. It looks like a pretty cool place.

What was the first film you remember seeing at the cinema?

Shrek.

Where was your first holiday?

Portugal, I think. Yeah, Portugal. First abroad, and last abroad. I was three. I can't really remember anything I did there, probably nearly drowning in the swimming pool or something.

What's your favourite meal?

Roast pork.

What was the first book you read?

Skip and The Golden Key, the Chagford Primary School reading books.

What's your Favourite colour?

Blue.

How do you relax?

I ride my motor bike in the garden and fields.

I'm getting a new one tonight because I broke my old one. And if it's hot I like to sunbathe in the garden.

Do you play any sport?

Yeah, I like cricket.

What would you like to do when you leave school?

Be a farmer up at Bowbeer Farm, driving quad bikes and stuff. Or maybe working with PCs or something.

Do you have any role models or is there anyone you admire in the public eye?

Err ... Paul Walker off the Fast and Furious films. He's a good actor and I love the films.

How would you like to be remembered?

For being cocky!

News from The Post Office: Goodbye Eme

We are sad to be losing Eme as our Saturday girl, she has been such an asset and a pleasure to work with. We would like to thank her for all her hard work over the last 4 years.

She has carried out her job in such a lovely manner and we will miss her lovely sunny personality, we wish her well for the future.

Eme is being replaced by Viva and we are looking forward to working with her.



Swift encounter



The swifts that visit Drewsteignton each year didn't think much of our summer either, writes Nick Dixon.

After the glorious spell in June and the headlines predicting "a barbeque summer", the poor weather in July came as a great disappointment. Whilst not only affecting our work, holidays and moods, the wet and windy conditions had a noticeable effect on the amount of swifts present over the village.

Good summer weather is critical for swifts due to the availability of flying insects needed to sustain adults and non-breeding birds and for feeding their young in the nest.

Each year, I try to record the maximum number of swifts over the village during their brief time here, but counting swifts in the air is not the easiest task due to their speed, and that they are often flying with swallows and house-martins.

We had about 22 swifts over Churchgate cottages in the first week of July, while the weather was good. Sadly, throughout the rest of the month, there were only one or two present at any one time, though on the odd occasion, I recorded five. The very low numbers were solely due to the poor weather and those still around were adult birds bringing food back to their young in my nest boxes.

The non-breeding swifts, which would have stayed in the vicinity if the weather was good, moved away to feed where insects are present. The highest number I saw locally was about 70 over Cheriton Bishop, early on Sunday, July 26, many of which I suspect were Drewsteignton birds.

The detailed movements of many bird species are known through ringing recoveries; these are individual birds with numbered aluminium rings put on their legs as juveniles in the nest, being recaptured or found dead.

This scheme is organised by the British Trust for Ornithology who estimate a 41% drop in swift numbers between 1994 and 2007 based on their annual breeding bird surveys.

A friend, who is a licensed ringer, came on July 14 to see how the swifts in my nest boxes had done following the potential disturbance caused by the scaffolding and thatch repairs.

My daughters were fascinated to see these birds up close as they were very carefully and successfully ringed, a total of five juveniles and two adults. A repeat visit on the 27th found another adult which was also ringed.

I was delighted that out of my six boxes, five were used and five young swifts fledged successfully.

As in all birds, fledglings have a much lower life expectancy than adults and at least 80% of all fledged young will probably die before they breed, mostly in their first year.

However, swifts are long-lived birds with ringing records providing evidence that they can live up to 20 years. It is estimated that in attaining that age, they may travel between 1 million and 3 million miles in their lifetime. This is a phenomenal achievement for a bird that weighs only 56 grammes (just under 2 ounces) and has a wingspan of 40cm (14 inches).

The swifts have now all left the village and will be starting on their long journey to Africa.

My last sighting of them was of about 30 birds briefly screaming as they chased each other around on the morning of August 5. I look forward to their return next May, wild groups chasing and screaming around the rooftops but I would recommend to anyone interested in swifts to investigate an excellent website called www.swift-conservation.org

Wanted: Background on The Poor House (aka the Drewsteignton Village Hall)

Help, please. I urgently need any photographs, letters or any documents that have any reference in part or whole to what is now the Drewsteignton Village Hall, and was previously known as the Church Rooms. Going back even further, the building was The School, and before that The Poor House and conceivably before that The Church House.

The last major rebuild and refurbishment was in the early 1930s and any record of that taking place or its condition prior to that date is of considerable importance. Any documents loaned to the Committee will be treasured, copied and returned as soon as practical with our very real thanks.

Tony Thomas, Netherton Vine, Drewsteignton EX6 6RB. Tel: 01647 281602



Sam Peirce resides in Exeter and has been a regular columnist in a number of regional newspapers. Never shy of expressing an opinion, she writes about all manner of things but is happiest when ranting about the things that impinge on her otherwise harmonious existence. Every month, she will share her thoughts with us in The Parish Post.

Staged...

It has been eight years since the first Harry Potter movie came out and as my boys are old enough to take themselves to the cinema, I no longer have to suffer the likes of Dumbledore, Snape and Malfoy. One of the reasons that I didn't enjoy the movies, or indeed, most British movies aimed at children and containing children, is because the kid actors make me cringe. I know it's really unfair as they are children and being mean about them or to them isn't really the done thing, but they are always so flipping posh and precocious, even when they are trying to be street urchins. Virtually all child actors in this country come out of the luvvie-factory known as the stage school, costing their aspirational parents (who nearly made it to the top, you know, once), an arm and a leg. They are schooled in the multi-disciplinary show business arts of dance, music and theatre, so that any specific raw talent is spread thinly across all disciplines with any sparkle, idiosyncrasies or character wiped out, to prepare them for a life of pretending to be someone else, and all those who don't have their jagged 'cockney sparra' vowels smoothed down for received pronunciation are forever left to stew in the ever-stirring and not mutually exclusive vats of Eastenders,

The Bill and, once upon a time, Grange Hill.

I know there's a lot wrong with America but the kids that end up on the screen over there tend to be 10 times more convincing than their counterparts this side of the Atlantic. When I was a child watching Little House on the Prairie I thought I was looking at reality. Nowadays, we have the likes of Frankie Muniz and the rest of the young cast in Malcolm in the Middle who are all phenomenal, as are child actors Abigail Breslin and Dakota Fanning. I would like to think better of our young thespians, really I would, and recently caught the very rude but very funny Inbetweeners, a TV comedy about some boys in sixth form. The boy that plays Will is fantastic. I googled him, thinking he was a stage school brat. He's no brat and never was. He's 25 years old. So to play a convincing British teenage nerd with all sorts of social hang-ups, it is necessary to hire someone of 25. No doubt if a stage school brat were hired, it would take all the self-control he could muster to stop him expressing his angst through the medium of song and dance.

© Sam Peirce 2008

DREWSTEIGNTON LADIES CLUB

Cream Teas—£2.50,

**Books, bric-a-brac, produce & raffle,
Saturday 22nd August**

2pm at

Drewsteignton Village Hall

Proceeds to Village Hall Funds



Macmillan Cancer Support BIGGEST COFFEE MORNING

Friday 25th Sept.

Village Hall, Drewsteignton

10.30am

Raffle

Pauline Rowe 281638

Wanted: your views on waste

West Devon's waste and recycling service is about to change and West Devon Borough Council needs residents' views on how it can be improved.

The Council's waste and recycling contract must be relet by 1 April 2010 by law. Over the summer, residents have the opportunity to make some positive changes to the way the service is carried out.

The council wants to know what residents think and is holding a series of road shows across the borough over the next few weeks.

The consultation period starts on 13 August and finishes on 20 September. Residents can fill in the questionnaire online at www.westdevon.gov.uk.

The will be road shows at:

Okehampton Show 13.8.09

Whiddons Tea Rooms, Chagford 14.8.09, 9.30 to 12.00

Chagford Flea Market 21.8.09, 10 to 1pm

Okehampton Waitrose 29.8.09 10 to 1pm

Okehampton Somerfield 9.9.09 10 to 1pm

Together with numerous other locations, a poster will be placed on Drewsteignton Notice Board giving more details of the road shows.

August in the veg plot

It looks like August weather is going to deliver a mixture of sunshine, showers and warm temperatures -- perhaps not the perfect barbeque month, but great for growing vegetables.

No need for fiddling around with watering cans. And the abundance of water in the soil will ensure super speedy growth for veg with a high water content/shallow roots like courgettes, cucumbers, squash, sweetcorn, French beans and peas.

There's not so much to sow right now, so the focus this month is on caring for your plants.

Feeding

We expect most veg to grow from seed, produce vast amounts of leaves, and in many cases lots of fruit, all in the same year. So it's no surprise that many are hungry feeders. Feeding's not essential, but plants are more susceptible to disease and you'll get a smaller harvest. Tomatoes do best with liquid tomato food once a fortnight. The same feed is equally good with all fruiting veg, especially squash, courgettes, cucumbers and chillies. It's also worth applying a few handfuls of a general purpose feed like chicken manure to any ground you're going to repeat sow this year.

Mildew

You'll probably soon notice some powdery mildew appearing on courgettes, cucumbers and squashes. This normally happens at this time of the year and is generally nothing to worry about. Cut/pull off rotten leaves if you want to tidy up the appearance of the plants, but it's not essential.

Caterpillars

Brassicas (everything from radishes, mizuna, rocket, kale through to cabbages) are growing at full tilt too. And those succulent new leaves make extra attractive egg-laying sites for Cabbage White butterflies. Of course plants can be netted to keep them off, but I don't bother. The plants can withstand the odd nibble, and you can pick off most of the caterpillars by hand. Look out for the eggs too – rub/wash off any clusters of white or yellow balls you find on the underside of leaves.

Seeds to sow

On a crisp, fresh, lighter note, don't forget August is a great month for sowing mizuna, mustard leaves and lambs lettuce to give you salad leaves right into the winter. Sow coriander and chervil too. In the cooler autumn temperatures they'll produce stacks of leaves without going to seed.

Charlotte's Choice.....



The Old Inn
Drewsteignton

www.old-inn.co.uk

Tel: 01647
281276

Fresh start

I struggle daily to think up new and delicious ways to present fruit for my guests at breakfast. These are a couple of dishes that have proved to be the most popular. I serve them up with Greek yogurt, local honey and muesli.

No 1) Minty Pineapple

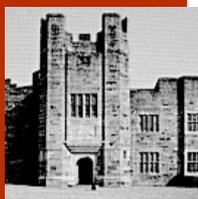
One large ripe pineapple
A handful of fresh mint
One tablespoon of caster sugar

Cut the pineapple straight down the middle, cut off the skin and take out the woody core. Cut it into small sections, and put it in a bowl. Mash the mint in a pestle and mortar and add the sugar. Mix it all together and sprinkle it onto the pineapple. This can be eaten straight away or left in the fridge overnight, and by the morning the pineapple will be sitting in a green minty syrup. Just give it a mix and put it in a glass bowl (looks pretty) and serve it up with the yogurt and honey.

No 2) Cinnamon Honey and Clove Apples.

Four pink eating apples.
Honey
Cinnamon stick
Four cloves

Peel and core the apples, cut into slices or cubes and put in a saucepan with enough water to just cover. Add the cinnamon stick, the cloves and one teaspoon of honey or brown sugar. Bring to the boil very gently and simmer for only about three or four minutes (otherwise the apples do what cooking apples do ... go mushy) and put aside to cool and infuse with the spices. Again, dish up with yogurt and some muesli.



News from the Castle

Last Month's Open Evening

Thank you to all who came to see us last month for the open evening. It was great to meet so many of you and put names to faces and to show you around our new biomass boiler and Visitor Centre. I hope to be able to do similar events in the future and do some behind-the-scenes tours and open up the café for us all to enjoy.

Busy Times

August has been very busy for us and currently we are seeing on average 400 more visitors per week than we received last year. The teams here are working hard in giving great customer service and welcoming over 5,000 visitors per week at the moment which certainly keeps us on our toes. By the end of the month we will be looking forward to a slightly quieter September but until then we will enjoy the buzz of the busiest time of the year!

Our new facilities are holding up really well with the summer onslaught and I am pleased to say that we are coping with the numbers in the café so no need to extend again in the near future! The boiler has now been running continuously since the middle of last month after a few teething problems and is happily providing all our hot water and heating for the Castle and heating for the Visitor Centre.

Heating

It may be a bit odd to think of heating in the middle of summer but our heating requirements are a bit different to the average household. Our radiators don't

respond to temperature; they respond to humidity. This is to ensure that the contents of the house stays at a stable humidity level, which they like much better than fluctuating levels. This helps protect and conserve the contents for the future. Therefore, at this time of year when it is hot and humid, the heating will come on, especially with such a leaky Castle as ours! So, if you like it hot and steamy, come to Drogo in a thunderstorm. On the opposite side of this humidity conundrum though is that in the middle of winter when it's crisp and cold with low humidity the heating stays off. This is the only job where I have had to wear a pair of gloves, scarf and hat to do my work! Have you ever tried to type in gloves?

September

But when things do eventually quieten down there are a couple of events that are back as ever... Firstly, Heritage Open Days are on and around the weekend of September 12. At Drogo we will be open and admission is free on Saturday, September 12, so it is a great opportunity to come and visit and bring friends and family and get in for nothing. We are also running roof tours and boiler tours for a small fee on the Saturday only.

Lock it or lose It

Our local PC writes: Although we live in a very safe part of Devon, please be sensible and lock doors and sheds and either consider security lighting or shed alarms.

I also have property-marking pens and I am happy to assist those who would like to have a home security check done -- small adjustments might prevent your items from going walk about!! It need not cost a lot!!

Unfortunately, the recession seems to have affected us all and there has been a small increase in sheds and outbuildings being broken into, with power tools like strimmers, chainsaws, hedge trimmers etc. going missing. Please don't let your property become an easy target!

PC 4647 Nadine Wilson. Tel: 08452 777444 if non-urgent, 999 if urgent. Email:

nadine.wilson@devonandcornwall.pnn.police.uk

Drewsteignton Gardeners' Club

Chairman—Phillip Evans—01647 281285
Hon. Sec. Daphne Greener—01647 281256

Calling all gardeners!

The Annual show of the Drewsteignton Gardeners' Club, which takes place this year in Drewsteignton Village Hall on Saturday, August 29, is open to everyone in the Parish, regardless of whether they are a club member or not.

Schedules are available in the Post Office. Exhibits to be put on show between 9am and 11am, when judging will take place, and the show is open for viewing from 2pm onwards.

The club starts its winter programme on Monday, September 14 with the AGM (always a good boozy do) followed on by Phil Page talking about fungi on Monday, October 12. He's a very good speaker, and you'll learn what you can safely eat and what not. Howard and Sally Wills will talk on the beauty of leaves in November, and there will be a slap-up Christmas Dinner in December. Although it may be mid-summer now, it will be mid-winter before long, so come and join us for a series of entertaining illustrated talks, all of which take place in Drewsteignton Village Hall at 7.30pm on the second Monday of each month from September through till March.

Drewsteignton Gardeners' Club: Chairman: Phillip Evans – 01647 281285. Hon Sec: Daphne Greener – 01647 281256.

Glorious 12th in Whiddon Down

Come along to Whiddon Down Fete on Saturday, September 12, starting at 2.30pm. The many stalls will include Cakes and Produce, Cream Teas, Skittles, Bric-a-brac etc.

We're sure, with the increase in vegetable growers within the parish, some of us must have managed to produce a vegetable that is as God intended -- not a perfect shape but with lumps, bumps and bits sticking out where they aren't supposed to be (just like many of us !). We want you to bring along your potential prize-winning vegetables for our strange/weird/comical-shaped vegetable competition. No need to pre-enter, just turn up on the day.

We look forward to seeing you on the 12th. May the rain stay away and the sun shine.

