

*Crockernwell, Drewsteignton, Sandy Park, Venton, Whiddon Down*

# Drewsteignton Parish Post

ISSUE NO. 73

February 2012

## JANUARY NEWS FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

The new Sergeant in charge of the Neighbourhood Policing Team and the Community Support Officer attended the last meeting and gave the Council an explanation of the recent reorganisation. We drew their attention to parishioners concerns over speeding vehicles in Whiddon Down, Crockernwell and along Venton Straight and they have agreed to pay some attention to the areas. The Community Messaging system was highlighted as an excellent way to get information about crime in the area out to the parish quickly and with the hope of getting information back to help catch the criminals, if you are not part of it contact Okehampton Police or one of the Councillors.

The parish survey with Steve Daw from highways was very useful, he was fully appraised of areas needing attention and most of the problems have either been resolved or have been tasked to be done, it is hoped this will be a regular occurrence every three months or so.

The Council welcomed the development over the commercial shoot in the Fingle Gorge following the work done by the National Park and parishioners represented by Nigel Padfield. The Council have agreed to support the suggestions the shoot should be reduced in size and achieve a balance between the need of the residents and the business, shooting should not take place on the public footpath, dates should be provided to selective recipients, all

birds should be collected up where possible at the end of the season and any new organisation would work within the confines of the good practise guide issued by the British Association of Shooting and Conservation. DNP were to be informed of our views.

The Council agreed to support two items of planning at Castle Drogo and Wisdom Cottage, we welcomed the work done by DNP at Whiddon Down and were informed of installation of solar panels in a field within the West Devon Borough Council area of the parish.

We have asked WDDBC for their policy on planning for Solar Panels.

A site meeting was held at Turnpike Road Whiddon Down to discuss the final details of the closure, it is hoped the Traffic Order will be published this month and the work completed by April 2012. The Parish Council have not forgotten the crossing highlighted in the parish Plan but thought we would achieve one thing at a time!! Still at Whiddon Down, we have asked Sanctuary Housing if something can be done to prevent the continued damage to the grass verges at Turnpike Close.

In an effort to gain some income and with the part sponsorship from DNP, the Council have agreed to progress the honesty boxes in the car park and public toilets at Drewsteignton, we hope they will appear in the near future.

*(Continued on page 2)*

(Parish Council Continued)

Parking restrictions outside the Post Office are being finalised and once the public donations are confirmed we hope this will be progressed, certainly before the holiday season. Details of a working party in the car park arranged by Cllr Wayne Mudge will appear elsewhere in the Post.

We discussed the Parish Precept part of the Council Tax and had to find a balance between continuing to give value for money, be able to achieve our targets for the year for the Parish and to keep any increase as low as possible, we resolved to increase the precept by an amount less than 5% which means the annual increase for a band D property will be £1.88pence or 15pence a month.

Our next meeting will be at Drewsteignton, Monday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2012 at 7.30pm

## A Busy January

**I have been very busy over this month. I am in the Chagford pantomime “Mother Goose and the 5 gold rings” along with a few other’s from Drewsteignton, Livy, Alice, Ella and Fifi.** I have two roles, a dancing icicle and a gosling so I go in on Saturday to practice our dance. On Sundays in the afternoon, we practice some of the scenes and we have started to do full run throughs. So far we have only tried on our costumes, and they are really bright and **colourful. Tickets are still for sale in Chagford but get them quick because it’s next week (in half term).** The evening performances start on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> until Saturday 18<sup>th</sup>, when there is also a matinee.

**I have also been busy with football with both my teams. Chagford school “A team” haven’t** been doing so well but when we played North Tawton, we won 4-2 which was great because last time we lost 4-0, so this was a MUCH better result. It was also our 1<sup>st</sup> match that we won this season as we have drawn a couple and lost some games.

**West Exe under 12’s girls are doing really well as we are unbeaten so far and 2<sup>nd</sup> in our league with a game in hand.** Due to the bad weather some of our games have been cancelled, which hasn’t been too bad as I have had the pantomime practices.

*Tilly Dixon*

## This Should Brighten Your Day Or At Least Make You Smile!

A government warning said that anyone travelling in icy conditions should take a shovel, blankets or sleeping bag, extra clothing including a scarf hat and gloves. Also a 24 hour supply of food and drink, a de-icer, rock salt, torch & spare batteries.

In addition you should take a Safety triangle, tow rope, petrol can, first aid kit & jump leads .... I felt a right fool on the bus this morning !!

## Your Parish Needs You

Drewsteignton car park wall has become unstable, To enable us to effect repair works the hedge on the top of the Wall will need cutting & laying.

On March 3<sup>rd</sup> **we’ll be having a working party to cut & lay the hedge & burn up the arisings** so come along & help from 9 o clock have some fun maybe learn a new skill & save the parish some money .

Refreshments will be served at lunchtime

## Feeding The Garden Birds.

Since the last Parish Post came out, we have finally had a brief spell of proper winter weather, albeit not as extreme or prolonged as last year, but there is still a way to go before the spring arrives with settled and milder temperatures. With the brief period of snow and frosts that arrived at the end of January, came a multitude of garden birds to my feeders. I did invest in a small feeder to put Niger seed in, which very successfully attracted the goldfinches, and during the cold spell, the most I saw at any one time was six, and even had a redpoll visit once, early in the morning. I had been keeping an eye on the numbers of **birds visiting my feeders as, at the end of the month, I took part in the RSPB's Big Garden Bird-watch**, which requires recording the maximum numbers of different species seen at any one time over a one hour watch.

I was amazed at the numbers of blue tits feeding, and combined with those coming and going, I counted roughly about 35 at any one time during the cold spell. We had all the other normal birds visiting such as great tits and coal tits, house sparrows, dunnocks, nuthatches, collared doves, greenfinches and chaffinches, robins, blackbirds, siskins, a great spotted woodpecker and to my great joy, a song thrush. I was pleased to see this as I rarely see thrushes in the garden. It was pulling small snails out of the ivy growing up the wall near the feeders. One morning, as I returned home from dropping my girls at the bus stop, I glanced out of the window to see all the birds dramatically scatter as a Sparrowhawk flew in and landed on the baton that all my feeders hang from. It stayed perching for a few **minutes and long enough for me to get my binoculars out and have a really good look at it. It's** rufous cheek and breast colouring indicated it was a male, with a slate grey back and tail. It then flew off to hopefully surprise another group of garden birds.

What has struck me is how the numbers of garden birds has dramatically decreased once we went back to the milder weather, while the east of the country is currently affected at the moment by snow and freezing conditions. It is apparent that when the conditions are harsh, many birds will come to garden feeders but when this is over, they return back to their hedgerow habitats as food is readily available. I was also aware that we had very few blackbirds in the garden beneath the feeders, compared with harsh spells in previous years, and in an effort to provide a mix of food for many different species and especially the blackbirds, I put out raisins and porridge oats, which the blackbird seemed to totally ignore and spent all his time just driving the ground feeders away from anything that fell rather than eat what I had put out. The blue tits seemed to enjoy the crushed oats.

One bird I never see in our garden is starlings, despite the fact that a small group can often be seen perching on the top of the church through the winter. Starlings are considered to be dull, drab and common but have suffered a dramatic decline in the UK over the past two decades. During the winter, many millions of them arrive here from Scandinavia and can be seen in communal roost sites across the country, which if you are fortunate to see them in their flocks as they gather in groups to roost for the night, can provide some unforgettable sights. Where I work in Cornwall is near Davidstow airfield and Crowdy reservoir, and we get massive flocks flying over just before dusk, as they gather to roost. A few years ago it was estimated that the numbers there were about 2 million birds and I occasionally would go up to see them coming in at dusk to roost. There are some amazing clips **on the internet of these vast 'murmurations' of starlings at sites across Europe. If there is** nothing happening in the garden, have a look online at one of nature's finest winter spectacles! *Nick Dixon*

## Acorn Community Support.

ACORN DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

MINIBUS TRIPS TO SAINSBURYS FROM CHERITON

We run a service on alternate Wednesdays for Cheriton Bishop, Crockernwell and Tedburn, this month it will be 29<sup>th</sup> February, 14<sup>th</sup> March, 28<sup>th</sup> March and 11<sup>th</sup> **April to Sainsbury's** Supermarket, Alphington. Please phone Sylvia on 01647 24267. Help is provided in store and a wheelchair service is also available. The fare is £3 return

MEMORY CAFE AT STRAWBERRY HILL, DUNSFORD - Call Margaret on 01647 252622 if you would like to join our group or have more details. We usually meet on the last Thursday of each month. 10.30 to 12.30am, our next meeting will be Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> March.

### Youth Club

For all secondary school age children  
7-9pm, 10th Feb, 24th Feb & 3rd March  
In the Village Hall, Drewsteignton

### Pancake Races

4.30pm, Tuesday 21st February  
The Square,  
Drewsteignton

## **Drewsteignton Branch Royal British Legion Women's Section**

Coffee Morning Friday 17th February 10.30 am  
3 Glebe Cottage, Drewsteignton  
Bring and Buy Raffle

## News From The Church

The Church is looking towards the season of Lent. First of all comes Shrove Tuesday with our usual Pancake Races in the Square, Feb 21 at 4.30. Children of all ages welcome. On March 3, at 11am in the Church, there will be 'Saturday Sanctuary', a time of quiet contemplation led by our new Rector and ending with a shared lunch.

The PCC received no letters about the space at the back of the church. After reviewing the issue it has decided to apply to the Diocese for permission to make the present space permanent.

Thanks go to all those who helped to make the space so attractive and user-friendly, including those who provided the curtain to screen the storage area.

*Christopher Southgate (Acting PCC Secretary)*

## Thank You.

We had a great turn out and a lovely evening for the Evensong, Tea and Film Showing - Catherine looked amazing in her school uniform, the film was so informative and the tea was wonderful, thanks to everyone who brought the food and made it such a memorable night and especially to Catherine for agreeing to share her time at Howell's school with us.

*Jennifer Mullins*

## Drewsteignton and Chagford Cub Scouts

The Cubs are celebrating St. George's day at Hittisleigh Church.

This year we will be camping in Drewsteignton again as it was so popular 3 years ago!

The Cubs are working on their Promise Challenge Badge.

*Akela*



On a very cold but beautiful early morning (3rd February) I was invited by Andy Dawson to privately access the roof of Castle Drogo. Views are quite panoramic across the moor from up there and shown here are some of them.

Suggestions and invitations are most welcome to give me more opportunities of photographing any location within the parish from a decent height.  
*Nigel Campbell*



## Dartmoor National Park

A new guide has been produced by the National Park Authority to help provide advice to those seeking to carry out development in Dartmoor National Park. Encouraging a high standard of design in new development is essential in protecting the special qualities of Dartmoor and the newly published Dartmoor National Park Design Guide is now available. The guide has been produced in partnership with Dartmoor National Park Authority by architects and planning consultants, Stride Treglown. The initial section of the document seeks to raise an appreciation of Dartmoor itself and what makes the area special. Subsequent sections provide advice on building design to help meet the challenges of climate change and design guidance on the most common types of development proposal. The final section offers ideas on best practice in the design and detailing of individual building elements such as doors and windows.

*Phil Markham, Head of Forward Planning, Dartmoor National Park Authority, said:*

The main purpose of the document is to provide advice for those seeking planning permission from the National Park Authority for their development proposals and it will be useful for applicants and their agents and architects. The design principles contained in the guide **will also be a factor in the Authority's consideration of planning applications. However, it is** also hoped that the guide will influence those who are carrying out smaller changes to their buildings that do not require planning permission by providing them with ideas and inspiration and encourage a greater interest in the built environment from all those who live and work in the national park and those who visit it.

The Authority is keen to see the guide reach as wide an audience as possible and it can be **viewed and freely downloaded from the National Park Authority's web site at**

[www.dartmoor.gov.uk/designguide](http://www.dartmoor.gov.uk/designguide) A limited number of paper copies are available for purchase from the National Park Authority at a cost of £5 plus postage and packing, while

**CD's can be obtained from the Authority free of charge. Reference copies are available at** public libraries in and around the National Park as well as at the National Park Authority headquarters at Parke, Bovey Tracey.

Notes for editors

The Design Guide will provide detailed guidance to carry forward the more general design and sustainable development policies of the adopted Core Strategy. The National Park Authority places great importance on encouraging a high standard of design in developments in the National Park and believes that this Supplementary Planning Document providing design guidance is a suitable way of helping to achieve this.

## Burns Night

A huge thank you to everyone who came and supported Burn's Night, but most especially to Paul and Fiona and their team at the Drewe Arms for their outstanding contribution. We raised £651 which will be divided between Drewsteington Playing Field, Village Hall and Chagford Swimming Pool.

By the way, I have been informed by The Drewe Arms that one of the special tartan napkins mysteriously disappeared!

No need for a Poirot style investigation though, as Fiona believes she knows the culprit!

*Jennifer Mullins*



## News from the Castle

**I don't know about you but I am still trying to achieve that fine balancing act** between tightening my belt, to offset those inevitable Christmas expenses, and loosening it to make room for the post-Christmas expansion of my waistline!

Whilst I cannot help you to achieve the second of these targets here are a couple of ideas that might help save a bit of cash, over the next couple of months.

**Firstly, 'Rivers that Rock' is a free downloadable 'Tracker Pack' which will shortly be available** from the Castle Drogo website ([www.nationaltrust.org.uk/castle-drogo](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/castle-drogo)). This pack contains 10 fun-packed and interesting activities for families to participate in, across Dartmoor, and the River Teign is the perfect starting point! Look out for it on the website from Saturday 11th February, just in time for the half-term.

The second thing to look out for is Active Dartmoor Week, which is being organised by the Dartmoor Partnership, to celebrate the forthcoming Olympic Games. During the week you will be able to participate in a range of challenging activities all across Dartmoor. This event is being launched at Castle Drogo on 31<sup>st</sup> March and there will be activities and attractions throughout the day which, according to the Dartmoor website, will range from dancing to horse riding and a local sausage challenge! In order to encourage as many as possible to come along to this opening event entry to the grounds will be free on launch day (please note that the free entry offer does not include the castle). All proceeds from the day will be divided between Dartmoor Search & Rescue and the Save Castle Drogo appeal. **The last event of Active Dartmoor Week will be a 'Cyclosporitive' and we are delighted that the venue for this is another of the Trust's Dartmoor properties** – Parke which, for those of you who are unfamiliar with it, is in Bovey Tracey, on the Haytor road.

This event, which is being run by British Cycling, will include a 60 mile sportive, a 30 mile sportive (for women only) and a 20 mile family sportive.

If you would like any further information about these events, or any of the other events being held during Active Dartmoor Week, you can find out more at [www.dartmoor.co.uk/what-to-do/active-dartmoor-week](http://www.dartmoor.co.uk/what-to-do/active-dartmoor-week). Alternatively, contact Keith Green on 01837 52200 or send an e-mail to [keith@discoverdartmoor.com](mailto:keith@discoverdartmoor.com).

**That's it from me for another month. I hope that February is good to you and that the snow keeps at bay!**

*Andy Dawson*

Telephone: 01647 434117

Email: [andy.dawson@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:andy.dawson@nationaltrust.org.uk)

## Drewsteignton Gardeners' Club

Our January meeting was very well attended, when Paul Bartlett gave us a talk about Stone Lane Gardens bringing along samples of Birch bark. If you have not visited this local garden you have missed one of our local treasures.

On February 15<sup>th</sup> we have our annual Question and Answer meeting, when we

are lucky enough to have Barry Starling and John Rippin on the panel. Do come along with all your gardening queries, remember our meetings start at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. Non members most welcome for a £1.00!



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

## ***Catchment,***

MED Theatre's new community play for 2012, explores how water catchments effect lives on Dartmoor. Mythology, puppetry, music and physical theatre bring this stylised play to life. For more information or to book tickets contact MED Theatre on 01647 441356 or [info@medtheatre.co.uk](mailto:info@medtheatre.co.uk)

Friday 9<sup>th</sup> March Manaton Parish Hall (Preview)

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> March Manaton Parish Hall

Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> March Belstone Village Hall

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> March West Exe College, Exeter

Friday 16<sup>th</sup> March Moretonhampstead Parish Hall

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> March Moretonhampstead Parish Hall

All performances start at 7.30pm.

Tickets: £7 adults, £3.50 children, £6 concessions

(Preview £5 adults, £3 children)

## QUIZ

In aid of Okehampton Maternity Unit

To be held at

The Tors

Belstone

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February

7.30pm for 8pm start

Teams of 4 £8

To book please ring 01837 840689

## Watch the Six Nations Rugby.

All England games, on a 9ft H.D. Screen  
at The Drewe Arms, Drewsteignton

Scotland vs England 4th Feb

Italy vs England 11th Feb

England vs Wales 25th Feb

France vs England 11th Mar

England vs Ireland 17th Mar

Drewsteignton

Parish Post

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