

Drewsteignton Parish Post

ISSUE NO. 168

APRIL 2020

NEWS FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

As you can imagine things have been somewhat overshadowed due to the current health crisis we are in. Please do make sure you get your information about COVID -19 from a reliable source and don't believe everything you read on social media.

The following advice has been added to the Parish website.

Community Action Response - five things we can all do

1. Think of others, consider your actions & be kind: People in the Parish will face the challenges of COVID-19 in some way – from needing basic provisions to help if unwell.
2. Connect and reach out to your neighbours: as self-isolation increases, we need to find new ways to stay connected and check in on one another for our physical and mental wellbeing. Share phone numbers and stay in touch.
3. Make the most of local online groups: Keep up to date, share information and be a positive part of our local community.
4. Support vulnerable or isolated people: different groups in our communities are at increased risk. Social isolation and loneliness are key concerns for all ages. There are things you can do - volunteering for local support services or donating to food banks.
5. Share accurate information and advice: Support anyone who may be anxious about COVID-19. Signpost them to the correct advice from Public Health England and encourage people to follow the correct hygiene practices.

For those of you self-isolating or social distancing please do not accept help from total strangers, as unfortunately there have been a few reports of scams being perpetrated on some of our most vulnerable members of the parish.

For the latest information and advice:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public>

There are also regular updates on local radio and on Television.

During the meeting on 16 March, the Carpark repairs were discussed, and it was agreed to accept the quote from Devon Highways, Cllrs will provide an update at the next meeting. Talking of the next meeting, we are looking at the viability of holding an online meeting, as obviously due to the crisis we will not be holding one in the village hall. If this goes ahead, we will publish a link to enable the public to join us.

We still haven't been able to get a response from the National Trust regarding the WC's in Drewsteignton however, our Clerk will keep pursuing this.

The Clerk has been working on policies and procedures to bring us up to date and legal, several policies were discussed and have been approved.

The Annual meeting was discussed, and it was decided that this will be put on hold at the moment as we do not know if we will be able to go ahead. We will publish any updates as we have them on our website. www.drewsteigntonparish.co.uk

The Drewsteignton Parish Precept Increase was also discussed and after some investigation Cllrs agreed to note the following:

All Council Taxpayers will have recently received their Borough Council Tax Bill for 2020/21. The breakdown of the amounts to be collected advises that the Parish Council Precept has increased by 7.3% for a Band D property. Missing from the statement is that in 2019/20 the Parish Council received a Tax Support Grant of £537, to increase Parish Council funds from the precept of £13,288 to a total budget of £13,825.

With this understanding and after several years of not increasing the precept, the Parish Council approved an increase of 2%. With a precept of £14,102 the Parish Council committed to carry out repairs to the Drewsteignton Car Park and take on the lease of the toilet block. Post approval of the precept, we have now been informed that the Tax Support Grant will not be paid in 2020/21 and that the Tax Base has reduced by 4 properties (1%). If this information had been available in advance, the Parish Council would have sought to avoid this level of increase. Additionally, there is no mechanism to reduce the precept as the Council Tax Bills have been sent out.

Parishioners who are facing financial hardship should be aware that the Borough Council has a Council Tax Reduction scheme to help people on a low income. More information is available via the following link; <https://www.westdevon.gov.uk/article/6636/Low-Income-Council-Tax-Reduction>

I hope you are all able to keep safe and healthy during this time and if you do have any concerns that the Parish Council can help with please do get in touch.

Ysanne James, Drewsteignton Parish Council www.drewsteigntonparish.co.uk

In light of recent government advice ALL Parish Council meetings and the Annual Parish Meeting are cancelled until further notice.

CORONAVIRUS - SCAM ALERT

Fraudsters are preying on your fear and sending all sorts of scams related to COVID-19, Coronavirus. Every hour we're being notified of a new scam or ransomware attack using the Coronavirus situation.

Below are some examples of the types of scams you should be on the lookout for:

* Emails that appear to be from organisations such as the Centres for Disease Control (CDC), or the World Health Organisation (WHO). The scammers have crafted emails that appear to come from these sources, but actually contain malicious phishing links or dangerous attachments.

Phishing is the term used for dishonest people pretending to be a reputable company so they can gain your personal information.

* Emails that ask for charity donations for studies, doctors, or victims that have been affected by the COVID-19 Coronavirus. Scammers often create fake charity emails after global phenomena occur, like natural disasters, or health scares like the COVID-19.

* Emails that claim to have a 'new' or 'updated' list of cases of Coronavirus in your area. These emails contain dangerous links and information designed to scare you into clicking on the link. Remember the following to protect yourself from scams like this:

* Never click on links or download attachments from an email you weren't expecting.

* If you receive a suspicious email that appears to come from an official organisation such as the WHO or CDC, go to their website directly online and follow links from there.

* If you want to make a charity donation, go to the charity website of your choice to enter your payment. Type the charity's web address in your browser instead of clicking on any links in emails, or other messages.

STOP, LOOK, AND THINK. Don't be fooled.

Drewsteignton Village Store & Post Office

Drewsteignton Post Office and Stores remains open and Cheryl and Stuart have kindly volunteered to be the central coordinating point for our community: if you are social distancing, self-isolating or can offer help with deliveries or support please get in touch with them either by phone and let them know what you need or what you can offer. Please note that they have traditional post office counter with a glass screen which minimises risks and communal items and surfaces are being continually sanitised.

Dear Friends

Please don't hesitate to call or email us if you need anything. Even if it isn't an item, we usually stock we will try our best to obtain whatever you need.

We are issuing this update via email and on our Facebook page and we will put paper copies out to be delivered but please check with any vulnerable people you know to make sure everyone in the village knows that help is available during this time.

As a community we can fight this. Let's keep the virus out of Drewsteignton by being sensible, following government advice and looking after each other.

Stuart & Cheryl shop@drewsteigntonvillagestore.co.uk **01647 281220**

From Sunday 22 March there will be a freezer in the church porch with frozen prepared meals clearly labelled, ranging from soups, curries, stews, vegetable portions, mashed potato, vegetarian bakes and even ice cream! Please help yourself.

There will be some envelopes on a table, if you are in a position to place a donation please do and post through the pub door (50% defib and 50% to the pub).

Meanwhile if you need anything please ring the Drewe on 01647 281409 and leave a message. **Gary**

Friends of Drewsteignton Church (FODC) - Wurlitza

Thank you to everyone who came to see Wurlitza at Drewsteignton Church. It was a wonderful event and the feedback we've had has been very good. The live music alone was great and the way they fitted the music to the films was inspired. As a result, we plan to have them visit again. We made a profit of £360, which made it even better. Obviously all planned FODC (Friends of Drewsteignton Church) events have been cancelled for the foreseeable future.

Keep well and safe and hopefully we can get through this fairly soon.

Alison Chapman

Drewsteignton Garden Club Plant sale sadly cancelled

STONE LANE GARDENS

Just 2 miles from Drewsteignton, the Gardens remain open every day from 10am till 6pm. Please follow the latest government health guidelines.

For details go to: www.stonelanegardens.com

Stone Lane Gardens TQ13 8JU

An RHS Partner Garden, Charitable Trust No.1141252

WHIDDON DOWN VILLAGE HALL

Due to the coronavirus, all activities in the hall have now ceased. It is with much regret that all fundraising events scheduled for the next few months have been postponed. However, I have been able to provisionally rebook the highly entertaining Pig racing evening for Saturday 5th September. Obviously, this will only take place if safe to do so. I have been informed that the village hall will be receiving £436.00 from Waitrose since participating in their community matters fundraiser in February. Thank you to everyone who helped make this happen.

It is unfortunate that a large proportion of our existing bank balance will have to be used for essential repairs, caused by the wet weather to the main building. At a time when we have no income it is very important that anyone using our carpark contributes generously in the box provided. For this reason, as previously mentioned, we will not be introducing limited parking until activities are fully resumed in the hall.

Here's hoping that our community stays fit and healthy during these worrying times and I'll see you on the other side.

Jenny Turner

www.acorncommunitysupport.co.uk

Due to the Covid-19 virus Acorn has suspended all clubs and minibus trips. Whilst our priority is the physical well-being of our clients, we equally value their psychological well-being.

We have therefore instigated a telephone befriending service (available to anyone) and a service to drop shopping into our clients who are restricted to their homes.

If you would like support from Acorn or are able to offer your services as a volunteer to Acorn, please call 01647 252701 or email office@acorncommunitysupport.co.uk

Many thanks

Jo Clunie

Chair of Trustees

Okehampton District Community Transport Group #67

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Okehampton-District-Community-Transport-Group/165867586926940>

Sue Wonnacott Co-Ordinator Okehampton District Community Transport Group



News from the Castle

Hi everyone

I hope that you are all keeping safe and well. As you can imagine, we are keeping a very close eye on guidance coming through from government regarding Coronavirus. As of today, Tuesday 17 March, the following statement has been issued by the National Trust: *Coronavirus update*

The safety and wellbeing of our staff, volunteers and visitors is our priority.

Following the Prime Minister's advice on Monday 16 March the National Trust's Director General Hilary McGrady said the National Trust's pay-for-entry sites including houses, cafes, restaurants and shops, would close by this Friday 20 March. (cont.)

We'll work, where possible, to keep as many of the Trust's gardens and parklands open, free of charge, alongside coast and countryside, to encourage the nation to enjoy open space if at all possible, while observing social distancing measures.

Hilary McGrady said: 'The National Trust was founded 125 years ago for the benefit of the entire nation. We want to honour our mission – to enable people and nature to thrive. Over the coming weeks we will do all that we can to keep on providing public benefit through caring for places and giving people access wherever possible.'

'While we will close our indoor areas to help fight the spread of coronavirus, we recognise that people are likely to need access to open space.'

This means that Castle Drogo, Finch's Foundry and Lydford Gorge will be closed. This includes shops and cafes. Please visit the main National Trust website for updates or please do contact me directly. Thank you all for your continued support and kind messages as we all support each other through this difficult time.

Take care of yourself, and each other. Best wishes,

Paula

Community Engagement Officer, Castle Drogo

01647 434130, paula.clarke@nationaltrust.org.uk

Defibrillator Training @The Drewe Arms

A big thank you to Gary for providing the recent defibrillator training, which was very informative, practical and gave confidence to the few that attended. The poor attendance was a missed opportunity given that when someone is having a Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA), every single second really does count. CPR on its own will not save the life of a SCA victim. When used in the first 3-5 minutes the victim's chance of surviving a SCA increases from <5% to as much as 70%; recent experience in the village has proved this fact. Defibrillators are designed to be used by virtually anyone with little or no training or experience however, can you answer the following questions?

Why do you need a pen and paper when calling 999?

Do you know the exact location of the nearest defibrillator?

Would you know if someone is in Sudden Cardiac Arrest?

Can you hurt someone by using a Defibrillator on them?

Can you hurt yourself using a defibrillator?

How did you do? Answers below

Are you happy with your knowledge level? Want to learn more? Look out for the next training date.

Locations:

Cheriton Bishop - Phone Box, Drewsteignton - Post Office, Whiddon Down - Post Inn

Defib questions – the answers:

A pen and paper are required to write down the code that the Ambulance Service will provide to activate the defibrillator. If you are conducting CPR do not stop. Send someone else to get the defibrillator.

Symptoms of a SCA - Sudden collapse, lack of a pulse, no breathing or unconsciousness.

Using the defibrillator will not hurt the patient or yourself. The defibrillator monitors the victim's heart rate and decides whether or not to shock. There is almost no way you can injure an unresponsive victim through using a defibrillator and the cost of not using a defibrillator through fear of injuring a victim is high.

Bird Notes

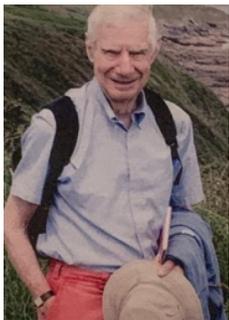
This was a (sort of) spur of the moment decision to write a short article for the Parish Post but based on a few different factors. Firstly, the multitude of really nice comments I received over the past few months from people who noticed I was no longer going to be writing my regular articles. I would like to say thank you to all of them. Secondly, after what seems a long, wet, cold winter, we are now experiencing longer days and I am really enjoying the seasonal changes, noticing local wildlife and spring migrants. Thirdly, and most significantly, over the last month we have seen the most unbelievable, radical changes in our day-to-day lives as we try to reduce the spread of the coronavirus.

While taking advice on self-isolating and social distancing, we are encouraged to exercise at home and in the garden but also to go for a daily walk, locally and to avoid busy places and people. We are so lucky to live where we do with clean air, glorious countryside and many great walks with wonderful views from local footpaths in the parish.

The season and our landscape is gradually greening as leaves appear and spring migrants arrive. I saw my first sand martins on 17th March while up in Oxford taking flies from the surface of a still-flooded field at Port Meadow. They arrive before the house martins and swallows so it will not be long before these iconic spring birds reappear in our parish. On that same day I also heard my first chiffchaff, now hearing them every day here and we will hear their familiar 'chiff-chaff-chiff-chaff' from the hedgerows and woods for the next few months. The village's rooks are busy nest-building and I noticed a blackbird with a beak full of worms heading into my garden hedge and seen a variety of butterflies over the last few days including brimstones, red admirals, peacocks and holly blues.

From early march, my attention is drawn to my computer screen and logging on to peregrine web cams as they are turned back on at many urban nest sites. It is fascinating to observe the close-up behaviour in the nest that precedes egg-laying and trying to determine which peregrines will show the first egg of the season. Last year it was Bath (7th March - exceptionally early), followed by Woking (on the 11th) then Norwich (15th) so armchair peregrine watchers were keen to determine this year's outcome. The Bath peregrines again laid first with their initial egg (on the 13 March), then Merton (14th) and Woking (also the 14th but later in the evening). Last year's first egg at St. Michaels in Exeter was on the 31st, which was very late. We have had some changes since then as the adult male, who we believe had been present since 2005, disappeared in August leaving the female at the church on her own. New males have been seen on a few occasions but none stayed until about a month ago when it looked like she had a new partner as he was present daily. I have yet to hear whether they have bonded or mated, and he has not been seen in the nest box so far, but there is still time. I am keeping my fingers crossed and checking the webcam at morning and evening. Check out peregrines incubating their eggs and rearing young across the country via webcams over the next two months - search for 'Exeter peregrines' or any of their sites including Bath, Merton, Woking, Bournemouth, Leicester, Brighton, Chichester, Sheffield, Nottingham, Winchester, Taunton and Derby. Slightly more positive environmental news recently: it is reported that due to the lack of tourists in Venice, the canals are now clear and fish can be seen. The closing down of industrial activity and air travel has led to a massive reduction in global air pollution and my brother, who lives in east London, told me that he is able to see hundreds of stars in the night sky as the capital's air clears.

Nick

Philip Evans

On Friday 6th March Holy Trinity was packed as we gathered to celebrate the life of Philip Evans. Philip has been a much loved and valued member of our church family in Drewsteignton for many years. We have all benefited from his wisdom and his knowledge of scripture and from his calm and measured advice as a long-serving member of the PCC.

Philip's early life was spent in Rugby. He was one of three brothers and, despite the difficulties and disruptions associated with the war, they enjoyed a happy childhood with a lot of larking around and a shared enjoyment of music. At 13 he won a scholarship to Rugby School where he excelled academically and as an athlete. During his two years of national service, Philip learned Russian and was stationed at a listening post on the Kiel Canal.

He then took up his place at Oriel College, Oxford to study history and, as well as his academic studies, he found time to pursue his sporting interests gaining a blue in athletics. It was while he was at Oxford that he met Elaine.

After graduating he began his career in insurance and he and Elaine were married in May 1958. The following year Philip's work took them to East Africa where they lived first in Nairobi and then in Arusha in northern Tanzania. This was no ordinary desk job... everyday working life included driving hundreds of miles through the bush in search of a missing lorry to bust a bogus insurance claim, chasing elephants from the office compound during the filming of the John Wayne film, *Hatari*, and an unexpected night on the beach in Dar-es-Salaam after he was ejected from a hotel at gun point – although this might have had something to do with the bacon and eggs he and his boss were caught cooking in the hotel kitchen at midnight.

There were family adventures too, including a 3000-mile drive from Arusha to Cape Town – Philip, Elaine and their two young sons travelling in a VW camper van, driving mostly on dirt roads with lots of potholes. The trip was punctuated by break downs and lost windscreens and made rather more challenging by Philip's lack of mechanical knowledge, but they finally made it to the South African coast singing "We're all going on a Summer Holiday".

The family returned to the UK in 1967, but Philip's work continued to take him abroad as he oversaw the development of the insurance business in the West Indies.

When Philip retired, he was able to devote much more time to his love of gardening and plants and to his particular passion for rhododendrons and camellias. He was fascinated by the expeditions of the early plant hunters and followed in their footsteps, travelling far and wide to see many of these plants growing in their natural habitat in Bhutan and China and other parts of Asia.

Philip nurtured his plants with great care and the gardens which he has developed at West Netherton in Drewsteignton and at Halgabron Mill in Cornwall stand as a lasting memorial to him, as does the community orchard planted around the car park in Drewsteignton.

Philip has contributed much to the life of the community of Drewsteignton and to our church family at Holy Trinity. He and Elaine have been faithful members of the congregation for many years and Philip has served on our PCC where his wisdom has been of great value. He has also served as a Lay Worship Leader leading some of our services and sharing his knowledge.

A man of deep spirituality and with a generous heart, he has been much loved and will be much missed. RIP. **Rev. Dr. Harriet Every**

From the Editor – In difficult times the greatest we have to offer is to give our service to others before we give to ourselves. The local communities are clearly doing so and I applaud you all. Be generous, be wise, be safe.

Dear Editor

I was pleased to see the piece in the March Parish Post from Hugh Clench about taking grandchildren to see the flycatchers that use the nest boxes near Clifford Bridge, and particularly glad that they saw some (as well as the white squirrel - that I haven't seen). I'm the monitor for the 30 boxes, and last season we ringed 48 flycatcher nestlings, as well as such of their parents as hadn't been ringed previously - a good year. The flycatchers which use the boxes are in fact pied not spotted. There are spotted ones in the woods, but they don't choose to use the boxes. We also find blue tits (of course) and last year a dormouse took over one box! – Photos available on request.

Cheers, **Rosemary Payne**

WITH THANKS

Thank you to everyone who sent cards, flowers and get-well messages after my recent heart operation. All very much appreciated and I'm now on the long haul to recovery. Best wishes to you all, **Beryl Scott**

'Thank-you' to all those who have offered their help over the last few days. There has been such a lovely community feeling, **Jean Partridge**

REQUESTS

Would the person who dumped half a holly tree in the no-man's-land between the village and Towns Field a week ago, kindly remove it? **Jean Partridge**

The Drewsteignton Parish Post

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

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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 end of 27th April - Thank-you, **Ed**