

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

Drewsteignton Parish Post

ISSUE NO 130

NEWS FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

FEBRUARY 2017

Devon County Highways are carrying out surveys in Crockernwell & Whiddon Down to monitor the speed of vehicles in the villages.

Once the surveys have been carried out and figures analysed the degree of enforcement will be decided on.

The Council are concerned at the amount of direction signs (finger posts) in the parish which are deteriorating or just plain falling over! Highways have said they will no longer replace them unless it is considered necessary. We are working alongside the parish lengthsmen to establish which ones need work and how that can be achieved. We feel they are required despite the increase in satellite navigation systems and their deterioration reflects poorly on the look of the parish, much the same as uncut grass verges.

We had been invited by Dartmoor National Park to comment on the planning application for a new school at Chagford. The plans were examined and a lengthy discussion took place. Six councillors voted for a neutral view and one to support the plans. Our decision has been sent to DNP. We are still awaiting updates from the DNP & from West Devon Borough Council on two separate planning irregularities in the parish.

We discussed the new parish website and felt it was being underused by businesses to advertise their presence and events within the parish. There are lots of events in neighbouring parishes on the site but very little from within. The website is free

and is there for your use so if you want to advertise, please contact the clerk who can update it with all your details.

The Parish Precept (or our share of your council tax) has to be decided on in the January meeting and again is a subject which calls for a significant amount of discussion before a decision is made. We are pleased to say the current parish precept of £13,825 will remain the same and there will be no increase in the year 2017/18. We feel that we have been prudent with our financial planning but still intend to undertake some new projects in the coming year. To some that figure might seem quite high, so can I just give you some examples of what we have to pay for. The clerk's salary is determined by local government and she obviously has expenses. We have been fortunate in the last year receiving a grant for a council computer so she no longer has to use her own. The maintenance of the public toilets and public car park in Drewsteignton costs in the region of £2,500 but since we have had the "honesty" boxes we do have a small income rather than having to pay the total amount from the precept. We are looking at an amount around £1,500 for the parish lengthsmen but again we are receiving a grant of £750 from the Town & Parish Council's funds towards this. Repairs of our property are becoming more expensive, this includes the bus shelters, notice boards and increasingly items which used to be paid for by highways such as the finger posts mentioned above.

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The Mystery Of the Cardboard Boxes!

To whom it may concern.

On Monday 30th of January, the recycling had been picked up, so I brought in my green box. I literally went to the shop for barely 5 mins, when I came back one large cardboard box and three smaller ones were left outside my door !!!

Just to let the person know who left them I have disposed of them on your behalf, so please in future get rid of your own rubbish - not leave it on my doorstep!!!
Many thanks, Jill Lock

Drewsteignton Gardener's Club

March 13 AGM and talk by Miranda Allhusen about the NGS

May 6 The Annual Plant Sale

Mark your calendar now so you don't miss out (and start planning what you can grow to sell!)

Whiddon Down Village Hall

The Village Hall needs new committee members to keep going. Over the last few years our numbers have reduced. We very much need some new blood for the hall to continue serving the community.

After many years of serving on our committee, Michael and Ann Hall are standing down as they are leaving Devon to move closer to family. We are very much going to miss them both.

Please come to an informal Open Evening on Wednesday 8th March from 7.30pm to have a chat and see what would be involved. Coming along doesn't mean you are committing to join.

Clare Rowe on 01647 231643 email: whiddondownvillagehall@hotmail.co.uk

Fingle Lecture Series

Come along to our free monthly talks to learn more about Fingle Wood's fascinating wild-life, history and restoration.

The next talk is Thursday 2nd March at 7pm in the Fingle Bridge Inn:

From Birmingham to Fingle via the world: the life and times of Harry Price.

After an adventurous and heroic life at sea (including a royal tour), Harry settled in Drewsteignton and helped to turn the tea-hut at the Fingle Bridge into the thriving place it is today. Bill Hardiman's talk will explore the fascinating life of Harry Price and his connection with Fingle Woods and Castle Drogo.

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We have a specific reserve of around £1000 in case we have to contribute to an election of councillors. If you would like a full and complete list of our finances (which of course is your money!) please contact the clerk who will be pleased to supply it.

Our next meeting is at **Drewsteignton Village Hall on Monday 20th February 2017 at 7.30pm**

You are always very welcome to come and observe our work, it is generally 1 and ½ to 2 hours but rarely longer!



MED Theatre
Inspired by Dartmoor

The Howling – a new community play by MED Theatre

The Howling is a contemporary take on 'The Hound of the Baskervilles'.

The play explores issues around re-wilding, and the Dartmoor myths and history that inspired Arthur Conan Doyle and his co-creator Bertram Fletcher Robinson. At its root lies the enigmatic figure of Richard Cabell, who was Lord of Brook Manor near Buckfastleigh in the aftermath of the English Civil War, and after his death acquired a dubious reputation as a vampire. When an American claiming descent from Richard Cabell comes to a Dartmoor community with his English wife in search of his roots, he encounters more than he bargained for.

Friday 10th March: Manaton Parish Hall

Saturday 11th March: Manaton Parish Hall

Tuesday 14th March: Southpark Community Centre, Buckfast

Thursday 16th March: Nicholls Hall, Lydford

Friday 17th March: Moretonhampstead Parish Hall

Saturday 18th March: Moretonhampstead Parish Hall

All performances begin at 7:30pm

Tickets £8 / £5 children under 16

Booking recommended

March Events at Okehampton Library

It's World Book Day - Thursday 2nd March!

10:30-11:30 'Supertato' Story & Craft Activity - for children under 5 and their carers

One lucky attendee will win £15 of book tokens

Name the Book Character Quiz: 1st – 31st March Pick up a copy of our fun quiz for children

One correct entry drawn on 31st March will win £15 of book tokens

Writes of Passage - A display of 50 books that will change your life and keep you reading, chosen by young people and adults. Anyone aged 13-21 years old who borrows a book from our display in March has a chance to **win £25 of book tokens**

Easter Chocolate Draw - Friends of Okehampton Library draw tickets on sale 50p each – draw to take place 15th April

Supporting Devon's Rural Entrepreneurs



Devon Communities Together (DCT) has been awarded £50,000 from The Prince's Countryside Fund to support the next generation of rural entrepreneurs in Devon. A series of free networking events and one-to-one advice and mentoring activities will be provided to support start-ups with key business skills such as finance and marketing. As part of the project, DCT is developing an online enterprise hub to support this learning.

They are also working with the School for Social Entrepreneurs in Dartington, who will deliver a programme of in-depth training to further support and encourage business development and long-term growth.

DCT CEO Elaine Cook commented: "This is an exciting project for DCT and we are delighted to have secured this generous grant from The Prince's Countryside Fund which will enable rural businesses and entrepreneurs across Devon to access additional business advice, training and support, and to help assist our farming community with business also commented: "Devon follows the UK trend for diversification activity."

The project manager, Mike Felstead, small business size, with over 70% of companies in the county employing less than 4 people. Start-ups typically fall into this size category, so it's vitally important they are supported and nurtured. The project is running until July 2018, so this is a terrific opportunity for rural entrepreneurs to get free, hands-on support for a good time span. This should certainly help them to get through the difficult first stages of launch and initial growth."

Clare Crookenden, grants manager, The Prince's Countryside Fund said, "Providing new businesses and farming families in Devon with local, expert advice will provide a valuable boost to their new enterprises and we hope set them in good stead for a viable and sustainable future contributing to the local economy and generating local jobs for local people."

The project is underway - if you know someone in the rural community looking for business support, get in touch via the new project website, devonhub.org.uk.

Additional Information:

The project will deliver a comprehensive package of support and training across four rural areas of Devon: Torridge; Teignbridge; Mid and West Devon. But all rural entrepreneurs across the county are welcome to attend.

More about the Prince's Countryside Fund

Established by HRH The Prince of Wales in 2010, The Prince's Countryside Fund exists to improve the prospects of family farm businesses and the quality of rural life.

More about DCT

We are an independent charity with over 50 years' experience of community development work.



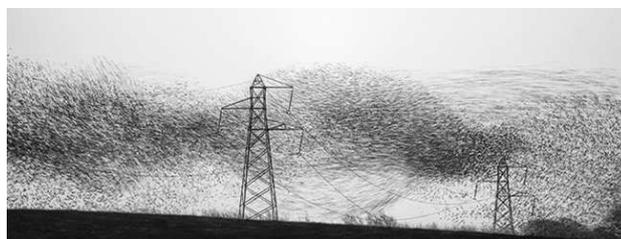
Bird Notes

My recollection of the weather over the past month is of dull, wet and windy days, with occasional periods of extreme rain and winds, interspersed with some good dry and sunny days, but overall quite mild. I have noticed the first signs of the year advancing towards Spring with early daffodils showing and snowdrops coming into flower. The day lengths are creeping up and on the good days, the bird song is more noticeable and sounds delightfully optimistic.

Over the last weekend in January, I took part in the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch, a not too taxing watch over one hour during the weekend of recording the various bird species to visit my garden, or more precisely, my bird table and surrounds. I didn't actually sit and watch over a 60-minute period, but spent a number of occasions watching out of the windows for about 5 minutes at a time. I recorded all the normal and regular visitors to my garden, including blue tits, great tits and coal tits, robin, dunnock, house sparrow, greenfinch, chaffinch, goldfinch, siskin, blackbird, nuthatch, great spotted woodpecker, collared dove and woodpigeon. I was really delighted and surprised to spot a pair of long tailed tits feeding on a suet block I have in a squirrel proof feeder. I only rarely see these in my garden, but since the RSPB birdwatch, I have seen four coming to the suet block.

Where I work in Cornwall, I often see huge flocks of starlings flying overhead just before dusk as they fly to their regular winter roost at Davidstowe woods, near Crowdy reservoir on Bodmin moor. These starling flocks are really massive, comprising many hundreds of thousands of birds that have migrated from Scandinavia and the north to overwinter here in the much milder conditions. The flocks are often very low as they fly over and the sound of thousands of starlings wings beating always causes me to stop what I am doing and watch them as they travel over the valley. Last week, we had a beautiful clear evening as the sun was going down, and as I watched the starlings fly towards Davidstowe, I saw the unmistakable sight of a very distant 'murmuration', in the vicinity of the roost site. A murmuration is the name for a flock of starlings, but is more commonly used to describe the amazing swirling activity of massive flocks of starlings just prior to going in to roost in trees or reedbeds. I think the pulsating mass of thousands of starlings swooping in multiple directions is one of the most fantastic wildlife spectacles there is in our country. The way these large flocks change direction while morphing into different shapes in the sky always reminds me of a swarm of bees, but on a much larger scale. I have seen many of these murmurations, and each and every one has been utterly spellbinding to watch. I measured the distance on an O.S. map from my position to Davidstowe woods and found out the huge flock that I watched undertaking its pulsating acrobatics was three miles away, and I could see it clearly. I hope to get up to Davidstowe woods to try and see the starlings coming in at close hand. Just prior to writing this, I did a Google search for 'starling murmurations' and found some stunning film clips from across Europe, and some phenomenal photos of these impressive gatherings. Check out 'starling murmurations' on Google for some amazing still images and live footage.

Nick





**citizens
advice**

**Torrige, North,
Mid & West Devon**

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Torrige, North, Mid and West Devon Citizens Advice require volunteer telephone/web chat advisers in their Okehampton and Tavistock offices. You will need:

- * Good computer skills
- * Excellent listening skills and an ability to deal with a variety of clients
- * Available at least 1 day a week

EXPENSES AND FULL TRAINING PROVIDED

Interested? Please telephone 01237 426070

or email:- trainingofficer@ruraldevoncab.org.uk

Registered Charity Number 1068496

Company Number 3520698



Cheriton Bishop Lunch Club – Lunches are held on the first Thursday of each month if you would like to come along and meet new people please phone; Jean Martin 01647 24586 or ring the Acorn Office on the number below for more details.

Minibus trips to Sainsbury's from Cheriton – Dates are Wednesday 22nd February and 8th March 2017. Help is provided in store and a wheelchair service is also available. We will also help carry your shopping too!

The fare is just £4 return.

Teign Valley Memory Café - This month it will be 23rd February and 9th March 2017. Meetings are held 10.30 – 12.30 at Strawberry Hill, Dunsford on the B3212 – look out for the sign.

Coffee Morning at Teign Valley Community Hall – The Bowden Room, Teign Valley Community Hall 10.30 - 12. Please drop in for a coffee and a slice of homemade cake and meet up with friends, everyone welcome. This month it will be Tuesday 21st, and 7th March 2017. Please ring the number below if you would like a lift.

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

Who should you contact - Should you need transport to an appointment, a prescription delivered please phone Sylvia Tripp on 01647 24267. Please leave a message on her answering machine if she is not at home and she will call you back. If you have not heard back within 24 hours please call Jean Martin on 01647 24586 or Jackie in the Acorn office 01647 252701 – answering machine available 24 hours.

Acorn Office Telephone number 01647 252701 for further information.

Visit our website at www.acorncommunitysupport.co.uk

News from the Castle



Hi everyone

It is a hive of activity up at Drogo. There has been a bit of work in our visitor centre where we have relocated the door to the shop and given the café a fresh coat of paint. We have also been doing the annual deep clean of the Castle with floors being polished, objects dusted and new displays in the rooms. The garden team has been busy too, mulching the borders and doing vast amounts of pruning. On top of all this 'normal' work, the building project has been moving along nicely too. The new scaffolding is now complete and we are waiting for a spell of kind weather to put the roof sheeting on.

Just in case this wasn't enough to be getting on with, I have some very exciting news to share with you all. I am sure that many of you know that, in the 1920s, a hydro-electric power scheme was created next to the River Teign to provide electricity for Julius Drewe and his household at Castle Drogo. The scheme later fell into disrepair but, as it is Grade II listed and located within a Site of Special Scientific Interest, there has long been a desire to get it working again. I am delighted to let you know that we have, after many years of careful planning and submitting various permission requests, got everything lined up to make this dream happen.

Work will begin in February and will be completed by the end of September 2017. There will be a few open days down at the turbine house for those interested and a regular newsletter on progress. Please let me know if you would like to be added to a mailing list to hear the latest news.

2017 is shaping up to be a very exciting year! Thanks everyone and see you soon.

Paula

Community Engagement Officer, Castle Drogo

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

Spring Embroidery Fair

To be held at Cheriton Bishop Village Hall (EX6 6JA)

On Saturday 8th and Sunday 9th April

10.00 am – 4.00 pm

Exhibition of hand & machine embroidery

And mixed media textiles

With demonstrations of techniques

Trade stalls with fabrics, threads and books

Home-made lunches and refreshments available through each day.

Free admission – prize draw

Contact Details: Felicity Dudbridge on 01392 811647,

email: felicitydudbridge@gmail.com



Acorn Community Support - Job Vacancy

Acorn Community Support are looking to recruit an Office Manager to work 17.5 hours per week (flexible hours) based at Christow Surgery. The pay scale is in the range of £8,645 to £10,237 per annum (£9.50 - 11.25 per hour).

The role requires excellent organisation and communication skills to facilitate the coordination of Acorn's Services. The role is broad, varied and interesting and requires a dynamic, confident individual who is self-motivated and prepared to work on his/her own initiative. Training will be provided and the successful applicant will work alongside the Community Care Manager (who works out in the community) and report to the Board of Trustees.

Computer Literacy is required and skills are required in Excel, Word and Email and training will be provided on updating the website and managing the volunteer programme, Opti-mise.

For further details and to request an application form please contact the Acorn Chair of Trustees, Jo Clunie on joclunie@btinternet.com or telephone 01392 491047.

The Parish Post

The Post is designed to keep everyone in touch with life in the Parish. We'd love to hear about your forthcoming events, hair-raising experiences, fundraising efforts, funny stories, memories, recipes.

Your thoughts, opinions, comments, views and concerns are important too.

Please tell us. You don't have to be a great writer, just email or phone John Shiell or Pauline Rowe, details below.

If you don't tell us we can't print it

John and Pauline

Drewsteignton Parish Post

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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
1st March - Thank You