

Crockernwell, Drewsteignton, Sandy Park, Venton, Whiddon Down

# Drewsteignton Parish Post

ISSUE NO. 169

MAY 2020

## NEWS FROM THE PARISH COUNCIL

I hope that this finds you all well in this strange new world we are living in today. I am constantly reminded how lucky we are to live in such a caring community, without any prompting the community has swung into action, looking after the vulnerable and neighbours alike, everyone seems to have gone that extra mile, not only for friends and family, but also for people new to the parish. I am so proud and thankful for all of you. The Parish Council has been helping behind the scenes, providing information and support where needed, if there is anything you think we can help with please do not hesitate to get in touch.

As you know our normal meeting this month was cancelled, however we have managed to have an informal meeting to test out Zoom so that we can hold a 'virtual' meeting in the coming months, despite some of us being technologically challenged I am happy to say it worked well. During this meeting we were updated on the carpark repairs, which should be underway soon. For further updates and other matters please join our next Parish meeting on **Monday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2020 at 7.30pm via [www.Zoom.us](http://www.Zoom.us)** using the following:

Meeting ID: **850-7697-8747**

Meeting Password: **052020**

If you haven't used Zoom before, it is free to download to your laptop, PC or via the App store for your smart phone. Once you have downloaded it, they send you a handy little tutorial to help you get started.

We will ask you to turn your mic off during the meeting unless you are invited to speak, this will help keep the background noise to the minimum and enable everyone to hear what is being said. You are welcome to keep your camera on or off, whatever your preference. If you want anything put on the agenda, please send it to the Clerk by 6<sup>th</sup> May at the latest for it to be included in this month's discussion.

I hope, despite the lockdown you have been able to get out and enjoy this incredible weather we are having, as lucky as we are to live in such a beautiful place and doing the daily exercise has been a pleasure.

Every Thursday we go out and clap for the NHS and all the key workers, it has been brilliant to see so many out on their doorstep. Talking of doorsteps, with so many events cancelled I wonder if people would be up for a doorstep picnic (weather permitting) on 8<sup>th</sup> May to celebrate VE day? We could all dress up in 40's style clothing and put bunting up to celebrate. I am suggesting a teatime, say 5:30pm start, to allow as many as possible to join in. If you do, please post your pictures on the Parish Facebook page, it would be lovely to see!

**Ysanne James**

### Drewsteignton Village Store and Post Office

Cheryl, Stuart, Flora & Judy would like to thank everyone who has been so supportive during this difficult time. We have been really touched by the appreciation of many local people. We are extremely grateful to the band of volunteers who have offered to deliver groceries to those who are stuck at home and advised not to go out at all.

Please do encourage those who really should stay at home to do so to keep them safe. We continue to offer no contact shopping, just give us a call or email us with your order and we can prepare this and hand it over on the table outside when you arrive.

We are trying our best to keep good stock levels but there are challenges in certain areas. The wholesalers are just not receiving supply of many goods but we have found a few innovative ways to ease this problem. Teign Valley Bakery are supplying us with four (we understand that we are the only shop for miles that has continually had a supply of flour). We have increased our range on fruit and vegetables, and we are very lucky that we have always used a local egg supplier as the wholesalers are struggling to keep up with demand for this basic essential.

Please continue to support your local shop, we won't be getting the usual income from visitors at the moment, so your custom is vital to the survival of the business.

Here are comparisons between shopping local and travelling to Exeter's supermarkets.

	Shopping local	Exeter Supermarket
Delivery slots available	YES	Full for weeks
Click and collect available	YES	Full for weeks
Stock of hard to find items	YES	NO
Real social distancing in store	YES	NO
Supporting local economy	YES	NO
Post office services	YES	NO
A friendly face ready for a chat	ALWAYS	???

Thank you all for helping us achieve our social distancing request of one person in the shop at a time. We know this is difficult in a small community where the shop has always been the place to catch up with friends but we are seeing many conversations (at a distance of course) in the square while people wait. This is what community really is about and we would love this to continue once the lockdown has ended.

We have two Bank Holidays in May (Friday 8<sup>th</sup> & Monday 25<sup>th</sup>). We will be closed on both of these days, if you order a regular newspaper this be in the green box. We will adjust the days of any regular bread and milk orders these weeks

Once again thank you, Drewsteignton wouldn't have a shop and Post Office without you.

**Cheryl and Stuart Payne**

### CRAFT FAYRE

Hi everyone and hope that you are still able to keep safe and sane and be thankful that we are so very lucky to live in this beautiful place!

A date for your diary.... a long time in advance I know... but our ever-popular Christmas Craft Fayre will be held on 28th and 29th November.

If you have taken up a craft of some kind through this 'quiet' period and would like to have a stall, please do get in touch.

Or...if you have turned your time into some much needed decluttering and have items too good to go out in the bin and you think could be of use to others then please contact me and I may be able to put you in touch with someone I know that could make use of them.

I am having a go at making a few scrub sets from green sheets and if anyone would like to borrow the pattern or donate green or blue polycotton sheets to me that would be great. Also scrub bags are in short supply. The ones needed are made like the old school gym bags with drawstring tops and need to be washable at a high temperature. If you fancy making some and need advice or have any bright, pretty or plain material that can be used then let me know.

Also 3/4-inch elastic for masks is in short supply.

I would prefer contact by email at [j.hocking05@btinternet.com](mailto:j.hocking05@btinternet.com) or call me on 01647 281605.

Thank you and keep safe - **Jane Hocking**

### STONE LANE GARDENS THEFT OF GARDENS SIGNS

The police were informed of the theft of signs from the lanes leading from both Drewsteigton and Whiddon Down, and on the A382 main road, pointing towards Stone Lane Gardens last month. The trustees of the Gardens received a report that a dark transit van was seen in the vicinity around the time that the signs went missing. If anyone has any information which may lead to a prosecution and the recovery of the signs, or sees any other suspicious activity concerning Stone Lane Gardens property, please contact the police immediately on 101.

**Anna Imrie**

[www.stonelanegardens.com](http://www.stonelanegardens.com)

### Free online training from Learn Devon

Learn Devon, who provide our adult community learning courses, has launched a new range of free support to people who may have been made redundant or are seeking work, and people who just want to improve their digital skills. That could include volunteers supporting the pandemic response, and people who are self-isolating, and businesses generally.

The training will include online courses and tutor-led learning to enable people to look after their mental health. Enrolment is now open, and the free online training will start on Friday 1 May.

To find out more, please visit the Learn Devon website (<https://www.learndevon.co.uk>) or phone 0345 155 1014.

### Urgent appeal for community equipment

If you've got any community equipment you no longer need, please can you return it? We urgently need commodes, walking frames, shower stools, and raised toilet seats, as increased demand during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak means these items are in danger of being in short supply.

**Please contact Millbrook Care on 0330 124 4491 to arrange a free contactless collection.**

**Peter Brennan**

## WHIDDON DOWN VILLAGE HALL

Hello everyone. The village hall has been closed now for over a month. The lockdown meant that we had to postpone two major fundraisers, our pig race extravaganza and our chicken and chocolate Easter bingo. It is unfortunate that at this difficult time we also discovered a large crack in the wall of the main hall. This has been caused in part by the months of rain we experienced over the winter period which has undermined the pointing on the exterior of the building. So fixing this is now our main priority as soon as it is possible to proceed, whilst the hall is not in use. Thankfully, we have enough funds to pay for the work, which will be several thousand pounds, but this will in essence, break the bank. But we will not be discouraged by this little blip!

We are looking forward to when this present madness is over to bring much fun and entertainment back to our community, as well as replenish our coffers!!! With that thought in mind, if all is favourable, Pig racing will return to Whiddon Down on Saturday 5th September. Watch out for details. It is also our intention to hold an early Autumn prize bingo, date to be confirmed.

I hope this finds everyone healthy, happy and well. Please continue to stay safe, stay at home and continue to support our local businesses who are working so hard for us all. Best wishes

**Jenny**



### An update from Acorn

[www.acorncommunitysupport.co.uk](http://www.acorncommunitysupport.co.uk)

We are pleased to confirm that over the last month, Acorn has, with our amazing group of volunteers, managed to restructure and adapt to the most unusual environment in which we find ourselves. Our clients are all being supported through a telephone befriending service and many of our volunteers are acting as shopping buddies for clients that are having to isolate. In addition, we have been working in collaboration with the Surgery to distribute medications to those who are over 70 years of age or having to isolate due to medical conditions. All the people who fall into these two categories have now been contacted.

This has been an amazing turnaround for Acorn and, as Trustees, we would like to thank our existing volunteers who have been so adaptable and willing but also to thank the numerous new community volunteers who have contacted us with offers of help. It reinforces our view that we live in an amazing community where there is much compassion for others.

We would also like to welcome our new Office Manager, Catherine Snatt, who has started working for us in somewhat challenging conditions! Catherine has been amazing in rolling up her sleeves and getting stuck into whatever needs to be done so we are very grateful to her!

If you need our support then please do not hesitate to contact Acorn on 01647 252701 or email [office@acorncommunitysupport.co.uk](mailto:office@acorncommunitysupport.co.uk) In the meantime, please all stay safe and well!

The Trustees of Acorn would like to thank all the amazing volunteers who have rallied round and done so much in the past few weeks.

**Catherine Snatt - Office Manager**

## Earth Day

So, here we are in the middle of a world pandemic. It feels so surreal and you are likely all feeling scared for loved ones, family and neighbours' wellbeing. Many are sensible and distancing and hopefully trying not to feel the fear. I was always convinced that a social and economic break down was pending. If I dare approach the subject to anyone in conversation, I would receive this response: NOT IN MY LIFETIME!

But I didn't expect it the form of a pandemic. If the climate chaos and the occurrence of the Sixth Mass extinction wasn't enough for humans to make urgent changes needed, this threat to our mortality has.

I am grateful for the use of my garden and am working hard on no-dig beds. All the seeds have germinated, and it is immensely satisfying working for life. It might sound simplistic but what else do humans really need?

The hedges in our country lanes are buzzing with bees rather than cars. I used to curse the tourists for the intrusion. It's a great feeling to know that nature has sprung back and animals can live without the fear of being hunted by we humans. I am grateful that I can walk in nature every day when I feel I have achieved enough gardening.

Having the time to become creative and use one imagination can reveal hidden depths. I fill my day with gardening, cooking, writing poetry and growing in every way.

Over the past two months our lives have dramatically changed, and we will all be steering a different path. The virus has disrupted our normalities and scuttled our schedules.

Next week would have been my trip to Portugal (by boat) to visit my friend, Off Grid Ingrid! who lives off the grid, in the forest, and she is as self-sufficient as possible for a lone woman. My long-term plan was to stay and help create, not a utopia or a dream, but learning basic skills for survival with less impact on planet resources. Another reason for my trip was that I felt that we here are living insular lives and some cannot realise the importance of community cohesion. (Although, someone with a sense of caring and community has put his talents to use, feeding others and in our village) So, my friend and I understand that no visit will be possible. We are lucky to connect electronically every day, sharing our poems, music, silly dances and permaculture tips. I remember writing a piece called 'My vision for community' which was published in our Parish Post about eighteen years back. Mostly people thought me somewhat crazy, but now is the time and caring and sharing and hopefully becoming more resilient.

Over the last fifty years we have become reliant on the multi-nationals to feed us. We take so much for granted. Look what's happening in the supermarkets - people panic-buying. Supermarkets have given us choice, selling out-of-season vegetables and fruit at high prices with food miles, which as we know is a big factor in contributing to climate change. Might be cheap but in the long run but not a sustainable source of food.

If we, who can, start to supply a lot of our own food, it will take some of the strain out of the system. I feel for others not so lucky that are forced to queue at the supermarkets and the food banks. Now neighbours are becoming reliant on each other and so much kindness is being shown and hopefully this will long continue.

I am grateful for my lovely neighbours who have shopped for me and expressed that I should, 'just ask if I need anything'.

**Julia Whatley**



## News from the Castle

We are really thankful that our local community is really an exemplar of following guidance and we do look forward to when we can start to welcome everyone back into the garden and the castle... but for now, it is nice to see it unwrapped.

We do have members of the team doing regular checks, looking after our grazing ponies and so if they have any inspirational photos, I'll ask them to share them as we won't have a regular update for the Parish Post this month. I will make sure that either myself or Paula when she is back shares any updated information with you as we have it, but things are still very uncertain/changeable in terms of any plans to reopen for now. Best place for getting info will be the website which we will keep updated with emergency messages and changes.

Best wishes & stay well

**Heather Kay**

General Manager, Dartmoor Portfolio

## Bird Notes

We are living in strange times but it is heartening to see the natural world continues on as normal. The past four weeks of lockdown have not been easy for anyone and I am not going to mention it again, other than to say how wonderful it is to see and hear the support for the NHS and frontline workers ring out from the village on Thursday evenings at 8pm. Secondly, the weather over the past month has been glorious with mainly blue skies and sunshine most days, with an evening's rain on the 5 and some on the 17.

Almost everyone I see in passing, mentions the wonderful bird song to be heard currently. It has been very noticeable over the past few weeks with chiffchaffs calling constantly and blackcaps singing their scratchy song from the hedgerows. Robins, blackbirds, dunnocks and wrens are all singing in my garden. The landscape is greening up now as trees and shrubs begin to put on leaf and we will then lose sight of many of the songbirds in the hedgerows and woods. I have been looking at the Devon Birds website quite a bit, mainly to see what new migrants have arrived, and red kites have been seen all over the county. I have yet to see one in Devon this year, but I did see one in Cornwall at work in February and heard that one was seen over Rectory woods in mid-April.

I saw my first swallow on 8 April, perching on a wire in Cheriton Bishop, but heard of sightings around Drewsteignton from the 6th. I first saw house martins over the village on the 11th but very few after that until I saw 6 on the 19th over the square. As we approach month-end, numbers are increasing in both swallows and martins around the village.

According to the Devon Birds website, cuckoos were first heard in the county on 12 April but I have yet to hear one locally or hear that anyone else has heard one. The first swift seen in Devon was on the 19<sup>th</sup> which does seem early as I normally record them in the village from the 1<sup>st</sup> of May. A friend reported swifts over his house in Exeter on the 23 and I have been keeping a watch for the first swift over Drewsteignton so I can then open up my nest boxes. Despite the good weather and reports of sightings all over the county, it wasn't until 19.40 on 26th April that I saw my first two swifts over the village having been scanning the skies on every occasion. They are back, the world is still turning, and I hope by time this issue is with you, we will have good weather and the familiar sound of swifts over the village again.

With a little more time on my hands, I have been looking for new and interesting webcams featuring different birds of prey. I have found sites with cameras on osprey nests in Scotland, and also in Poole harbour, both of which are great. The Poole harbour birds are part of an introduction programme so it would be wonderful for these fish-eating raptors to breed in the south of England for the first time since they were shot to extinction in the 1800's.

Another really interesting website can be found by searching for 'Eagle wanderings' and features the four white-tailed sea eagles that were released on the Isle of Wight last year, another reintroduction scheme by the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation to re-establish a lost population. These are the largest birds in Britain and due to their size are referred to as 'flying barn doors', perhaps not surprising as they have a 2.4m wingspan! These are second year birds and they all have satellite trackers fitted. They do not breed until they are four years old so they are beginning to explore the country. Their travels are all logged and documented on the website so you can see where they have been, and it is fascinating. Two went up to north Yorkshire of which one has now returned to the Island, and another undertook a flight in mid-April and was recorded on the Exe estuary on the 15<sup>th</sup> of April. I was hoping the eagle on the Exe was going to continue west as that would have been remarkable to spot one locally or from my garden. The most recent update on that eagles wanderings shows it roosted overnight by the Exe then flew to Sidmouth, headed north to Honiton, passed near Taunton, Cheddar, Warminster, Salisbury, back across the New Forest to the Isle of Wight over a four day period. Two friends of mine saw another of these tagged birds flying over Gloucestershire in different places on the same day and both were amazed as to how big they were compared to the buzzards that were mobbing them at the time. I have been scanning the skies on my dog walks recently as there are also immature European eagles moving around the country at the moment and could be seen anywhere.

I have also been watching the Exeter peregrines webcam, which I mentioned in my article last month. It is proving to be a very strange year as last year's laying of their first egg on the 31<sup>st</sup> March was late, and this year their first was laid on the 8<sup>th</sup> April at 7.39 in the evening, a second came 74 hours later when normally they lay on about 55 to 60 hour intervals. No more eggs followed so it looked like that was it for the year and they started incubating, albeit occasionally leaving the eggs uncovered for two hours at a time. A week later, they then laid a third egg. Following this egg, incubation began properly and if any of these eggs hatch, it should be around the middle of May.

Nick

### **Bible read - through**

Every year we read through a whole gospel in an afternoon. It's always been quite a profound experience for those who have read as well as those who have listened. This year it's going to be by 'Zoom' from 4pm on Sunday May 3 to around 6.15. No wine or cake, alas (provide your own!)

You are very welcome to 'stay' for part or the whole. To hear the **Gospel of Mark** in a new translation that brings out the original Greek, and some of the roughness and surprise of the original, contact Chris Southgate [c.c.b.southgate@ex.ac.uk](mailto:c.c.b.southgate@ex.ac.uk). He will forward you a Zoom invitation and explain Zoom if you haven't used it before. All most welcome!!

**From the Editor:** To all of you who step outside on a Thursday evening to clap, hoot, beat your drums, your pots and pans - a round of applause. To those who: shop for their neighbours; collect needed items; are someone to talk to; supply a freezer of meals, place books, supply the beautiful wooden crosses and hearts in the church porch; safely visit the isolated whether doing work for them, caring or friend; go a little further than they strictly need, **'THANK YOU'**

### DEAR EDITOR

Due partly to the upheaval of moving, partly lockdown and partly remissness on our part, we missed the April edition of the Parish Post.

Very belated, but nevertheless heartfelt thanks to the dozens of friends in and around Drewsteignton who sent us cards wishing us well in our new home, and to the many who offered us help and support with the move. Especial thanks to Tim Cox and Sam who stepped into the breach on removal day and saved our, and the remover's, bacon. We have settled in and been made very welcome in our new village and will certainly not be bored over the months of lockdown as we tackle a lovely, but long neglected, half acre of garden and a charming but tired cottage.

All being well, we will be back for the annual Big Quiz at Fingle in November and again at Christmas so we will look forward to seeing lots of you then. We loved our 38 and 28 years respectively in Drewsteignton and have so many happy memories which will be with us forever.

Our gratitude goes to all those who over so many years gave us the pleasure of knowing them.

Our very best wishes and hopes for you all in these difficult times.

**Tony & Angela Thomas**

### WITH THANKS

The rogue section of holly tree has been removed from the no-man's-land outside Jean Partridge's home. Thank you to the kind soul who did this.

**The Drewsteignton  
ParishPost**

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

### ContactDetails:

For Editorial Contributions	Shelley Mansfield	<a href="mailto:shelley.mansfield@me.com">shelley.mansfield@me.com</a> Tel: 01647 281582
Village Hall Bookings Drewsteignton	Alison Chapman	<a href="mailto:callum.chapman@btinternet.com">callum.chapman@btinternet.com</a> Tel: 01647 281197
Parish Council Business Drewsteignton	Alice Turner	<a href="mailto:clerk.drewsteigntonPC@outlook.com">clerk.drewsteigntonPC@outlook.com</a> Tel: 01837 83484
Village Hall Bookings Whiddon Down	Alex Nott	<a href="mailto:whiddondownvillagehall@hotmail.co.uk">whiddondownvillagehall@hotmail.co.uk</a> Tel: 01647 231331

**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 27<sup>th</sup> May - Thank-you, Ed