

DREWSTEIGNTON PARISH POST

Parish Post Issue No. 235

May 2026

News from the Parish Council

The Parish Council (PC) met on the 20th April 2026 at 7.30pm in the Long Room, Drewsteignton – unfortunately, the pub is closed on a Monday night!

Planning matters: 0089/26 National Trust, Castle Drogo, Drewsteignton, Exeter, Devon, EX6 6PB. Alterations to existing Lutyens toilet to enable toilet to function. Variation of planning permission 0443/23; supported. 0103/26 Whiddon Down Methodist Church Chapel Hill, Whiddon Down, Okehampton, Devon, EX20 2PX. Full planning permission for change of use from Class F1 (Place of Worship) to Class C3 Dwellinghouse including demolition of lean to outbuilding; supported.

Glebe & Trinity Cottages update: Corbel Conservation Ltd have issued letters, advising they will be taking over the site, to carry out the repair and reinstatement of the historic cottages. The work will be undertaken in stages over the next 18-months, beginning with making the buildings safe and clearing fire-damaged materials, followed by the restoration of the structure and interiors. Works will commence from the 5th May 2026. The PC has contacted the company to understand the traffic management plan, material storage and off-loading and mitigation efforts to minimise disruption to the village, residents, businesses, public transport and visitors.

The PC approved the purchase of a new Zip Wire, complete with an adult accessibility seat, for the playing field. This follows a successful grant campaign and the generosity of several parishioners to secure funding. Installation should be completed by mid-July.

Draft minutes will shortly be available on the parish website.

The next **Parish Council** and your **Annual Community Meeting** will be held on **Monday 18th May 2026 - 7.30pm, at Whiddon Down Village Hall**. All are welcome to come along, engage and participate in matters affecting the Parish. Please note that any changes to meeting dates or venue will be posted on the website. www.drewsteigntonparish.co.uk



West Devon
Borough Council

Crisis and Resilience Fund launching to support those in financial need

People facing sudden financial difficulties can now receive help from the Government's new Crisis and Resilience Fund. The new fund looks to deliver tailored assistance to those facing genuine financial crisis, while also helping people build longer-term financial resilience.

It aims to support low-income households who experience unexpected financial shocks, such as a sudden loss of income or an essential cost they cannot afford. The fund is also providing additional funding for households reliant on heating oil through the Crisis and Resilience Fund. This follows a significant increase in heating oil costs driven by global events.

The fund is made up of four key components:

- Crisis Payments – available via an application process and supported by wraparound services
- Housing Payments – replacing Discretionary Housing Payments
- Resilience Services – providing support to individuals and strengthening community and voluntary sector networks
- Targeted Local Support – enabling coordinated help through local partnerships

While there is no fixed definition of a “crisis,” examples may include:

- Disasters such as floods or fires, resulting in significant loss or damage
- Accidents, health emergencies, or mental health crises leading to unexpected costs
- Household relationship breakdown, including domestic abuse situations requiring urgent relocation and essential items
- Breakdown of essential household items such as boilers, medical equipment or white goods
- Loss or theft of money affecting the ability to meet living expenses
- Sudden loss or reduction of income, for example due to redundancy or changes in working hours

Applications and information on eligibility can be found online at: www.westdevon.gov.uk/crisis-resilience-fund and over the phone on 01822 813600.

HOLY TRINITY, DREWSTEIGNTON

News from Holy Trinity

Good news this month as the auction of the Church Rooms went very well indeed. I am happy to say that we have more than reached our target. Completion is on 7th May. We are so grateful to Shelley, Sue and Ian for all their help!

Somebody mentioned the ‘lack of work ethic nowadays’ to me and it got me thinking. From when I had a paper round aged 11, I have worked. It was like breathing – just something you did. When I got to 14, I graduated to childcare and throughout my teenage years, I minded people’s children and ran parties. For the princely sum of £1 or at most £2, I would come and organise all the games and keep the children entertained and happy for the duration of the party. All the parents had to do was the food! This was a really good earner for me and I once helped at a party for the Conservative Club, for which I was paid £3! My solidly socialist dad did not approve of that one.

Since those heady teenage years, teaching has been my life’s paid work and – by and large – I have loved it and still do. But now I have a different fulltime job, working at least the allotted 40-hour week as Church Warden and this time it is not paid! Working as a volunteer is so very different. For a start, I, like so many other volunteers, was not trained for this role. Therefore, I lack some of the skills required and have to acquire these ‘on-the-job’.

Paid work is an exchange; we do our very best, we deliver our labour, and we receive a well-earned, hopefully deserved, wage. By contrast, volunteer work is a gift. We make a present of our labour. And, as with any gift, this involves giving a part of ourselves. This is why the stakes are so much higher all round.

Community endeavours that exist through groups of volunteers can so easily go wrong. At their best, they are supportive networks where our deepening knowledge of each other’s skills and weaknesses is shared in a loving environment. At their worst, they can cross that thin, invisible, but critical line and become cultures of blame and insult. That very fine line is the difference between going away to pray about or ponder our differences of approach or our lack of expertise or muttering and sniping about each other behind our backs. The difference is immense. So many community

projects flounder because of rifts in the very community that the project is designed to serve.

Because we are none of us trained for the jobs, we now find ourselves doing, mistakes are common, and we operate a little in the dark. So, it is easy to criticise and be criticised. But by the same token we are gifting a part of ourselves each day in our work; thus, we are all too easily hurt. Engendering a culture of support and shared vulnerability rather than a culture of blame and insult is so hard but so very important. The failure to do so is likely to spell the failure of our joint endeavours, so the risks are super high.

I wake up each day with a heartfelt prayer of thanksgiving that at Holy Trinity, on the PCC and FODC we are managing to tread this thin line together with love.

Our May Services are below:

3rd May – Family Service 5pm – Calling all parents to join us for a playful short service and high tea afterwards. Children join in it all and you all go home fed and happy! What's not to like?

10th May – Family Communion 11:15 – Children (and dogs) welcome.

17th May – Reflective Service 6pm a quiet thought-provoking reflection on a Christian subject with music and prayer. A really good start for your week.

24th May – Morning Worship 11:15am An informal service of hymns, prayers and reflections. Come and be inspired.

31st May – Our patronal festival with Holy Communion 11:15. Everyone welcome, including children and dogs. A celebratory service with Pimms to follow!

Ruth Merttens –Church Warden ruth@merttens.co.uk or 07781334669



 **National Trust** News from the Moor

Hi everyone

Somehow, we have whizzed through the first 4 months of the year. Easter may not have been a scorcher, but the weather was generally kind and there were loads of families taking part in the trails at Castle Drogo and Lydford Gorge.

Thank you to everyone who came up to Drogo over the past 2 months to see the fascinating art exhibition, 'A Woman's Place', which was on display throughout the castle. It has been wonderful to hear people talking about those lesser-known stories and giving some fabulous women a moment in the spotlight. The exhibition will be finishing at the end of April. Thank you to the group of artists 'Herding Cats' for kindly sharing their work with us.

We have a new exhibition now live in the Night Nursery on the top floor of the castle. This space is full of some of the stored collection items which aren't normally on display. I must confess that my favourite section is the 'Killer Collection' display, which is all the items that contain poisons. Thank goodness for today's health and safety that these items are no longer made like that!

Out in the countryside, our Ranger team sees all of the signs of spring. The bird song is building, nests are being built and lambs are in the fields. Thank you to all our dog owners for keeping paws on the path to help our birds, butterflies and livestock.

Finally, I am delighted to be able to let you know that work to rebuild Glebe Cottages in the square is due to start at the beginning of May. As I write, we have just confirmed a community meeting, once again kindly hosted by the Drewe, on Thursday 30 April. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to share the date via the April edition of this newsletter beforehand, but I hope the fabulous Drewsteignton network of the church, pub and parish council will have been able to reach as many of you as possible. We will keep the new noticeboard on the site hoarding updated with key information and set another meeting very soon.

Best wishes all,

Paula

Volunteering & Community Manager, Dartmoor.

Tel: 07826 945107 email: paula.clarke@nationaltrust.org.uk



MED THEATRE
Inspired by Dartmoor

Step into the landscape of Dartmoor for a unique poetry walk led by MED Theatre co-directors Abby and Helen, departing from Dartmeet at 10am on Saturday 2nd May.

Joined by other MED performers, this immersive experience will bring to life Dartmoor Elements — a powerful collection of poems by Mark Beeson, founder of MED Theatre, who died prematurely in 2022.

During this gentle walk, encounter leaping salmon, shimmering rivers, and swooping swallows, as nature and language weave together in a celebration of Dartmoor's wild beauty.

Tickets: £20 (includes a copy of the book to keep) | £15.50 (walk only) £7 Child (suitable for age 7+). Duration ~ 2hrs

For more information and to book your place:

<https://dartmoortorsfestival.co.uk/dartmoor-elements.../>

This is part of the Dartmoor Tors festival organised by Sophie Pierce and Alex Murdin. NB Refunds will be available if the weather necessitates cancellation!



Chagford Singers

A Community Choir in the Heart of Dartmoor

Reminder: Chagford Singers and guests present:

The Shakespeare Connection

This concert promises to be something for everyone with a varied programme that will explore the musical landscape, which formed the backdrop to William Shakespeare's writing and also give a taste of the way his words have inspired composers through the centuries. The date is **Saturday 16th May at 7.30pm, at Jubilee Hall, Chagford, TQ13 8DP** and tickets, priced at £15 (inclusive of programme and interval drink) can be obtained from Sally's Newsagents, Chagford, or online at ticketsource.co.uk/chagfordsingers



WHIDDON DOWN VILLAGE HALL

Happy May from the Village Hall Committee . We survived the winter months, which were kind , with a rather limited and costly heating system. Good news , we have at long last ,found a local firm that can replace the whole system in the near future. Thankfully we have the funds to do this at the moment, although I will be looking at a possibility of getting a grant towards the cost . Apologies in advance for any inconvenience.

The **Hall AGM is on Tuesday 12th May 2026 @ 7.30 pm**. All welcome. On this occasion we will be losing at least one of our longstanding committee members. This will leave a huge gap in our small group. We desperately need new ideas and enthusiasm to take the hall forward for another year.

If you think you can offer something new and dynamic, please join us . All existing officers are prepared to be re-elected again this year so there's no pressure to "do a job"!! Thank you in anticipation. Jenny Turner, Chair

07708634426 or email jennyturner21@gmail.com

or **Village Hall:** 07928966744

whiddondownvillagehall79@gmail.com



MORECARE - Providing transport to get you to your medical and other healthcare appointments.

Morecare volunteers can provide transport services to and from medical facilities, collect prescriptions and help with other needs, where possible, to those registered at Chagford Health Centre or living in Chagford and the surrounding area. Instead of set charges, donations are suggested for our services. If you need health-care related transport, please contact Morecare by phone or text on 07914 853 726 or email via our website www.morecarechagford.co.uk

Parish Post Copy Deadline

Our next issue is the June 2026 edition, so please send your events and articles by: **Sunday 24th May**



Friends of Drewsteignton Church

COMMUNITY MEETING AND AGM

7.30PM ON MONDAY 1ST JUNE 2026 IN THE CHURCH

FODC is a sub-committee of the PCC but is non-religious. The thing that unites us is the love of the beautiful building that has stood in the middle of the village for hundreds of years and our wish to ensure that it remains available for use by the whole community for generations to come.

Please do join us at our Community Meeting/AGM to hear what we've been up to and help us work out plans for the year ahead. It's been a busy year, what with getting the green light for solar panels, the sale of the Church Rooms and the latest project – creating an exciting Children's Area at the back of the church – as well, of course, as the Tim Edey concert and another wonderful visit from Wulitza. We have a thriving committee and we'd obviously love you to join us but there's absolutely no pressure, so please don't be put off if you just want to come and hear more about what is happening. Drinks and snacks will be available, should you require any more incentive! See you there. **J Loram**

Annual Community Meeting – Monday 18th May 2026

Drewsteignton Parish Council warmly invites everyone to this year's **Annual Community Meeting**, taking place on **Monday 18th May 2026 at 7.30pm**, in **Whiddon Down Village Hall**.

This is your chance to hear what has been happening across the parish over the past year, celebrate the achievements of our many community groups, and look ahead to the opportunities and challenges of the year to come.

We especially encourage **local clubs, societies & volunteer groups** to come along and share their 2025 successes, new initiative, a milestone reached, or simply the quiet, steady work that keeps parish life thriving. Groups are also welcome to outline their plans for the forthcoming year so we can continue to support the brilliant work happening in our villages.

The Annual Community Meeting is **open to all**. It's an informal, friendly gathering where you can listen, ask questions, raise ideas, and take part in discussions about matters that affect the parish. Your voice genuinely helps shape local priorities. So please do join us - come along, engage, and be part of our shared community.

A Great British Menu Triumph

The Parish is bursting with pride as we celebrate the remarkable success of Ciaran Brennan, who represented the South West in this year's **Great British Menu** and delivered a show-stopping dessert that achieved the near-mythical score of 40 out of 40 in finals week. To earn a perfect score on one of the UK's most demanding culinary stages is an extraordinary achievement - a testament not only to Ciaran's skill and creativity, but also to the dedication, graft, and passion that have shaped his journey in the kitchen. His banquet dessert didn't just impress; it dazzled, earning unanimous praise from the judges and securing its place at the prestigious final banquet.



It's been a joy to watch someone with local roots showcase the very best of South West produce, imagination, and flair. Ciaran's success shines a spotlight on the talent within our region and offers a wonderful reminder of what can be achieved with commitment and hard work.

On behalf of the Parish, we offer Ciaran our warmest congratulations. His achievement has brought excitement, pride, and a touch of culinary magic to us all. Here's to his continued success and to many more perfect scores ahead. **Ed.**



Current Opening Hours:

Monday - Thursday open 11am– 5pm (food available 11am – 3pm)

Friday open 11am - 9pm (food available 11am – 3pm & 6pm – 8pm)

Saturday open 11am – 9pm (food available 11am – 8pm)

Sunday open 11am– 5.30pm with food available 11am – 4.30pm

Many thanks for your continued support,

The FBI Team. Tel: 01647 281287 or email info@finglebridgeinn.co.uk



Stone Lane Gardens: Spring Awakening

Good news for local visitors We're replacing the Friends Scheme with something simpler. Pay £1 extra to Gift Aid your entrance fee, and as a thank you, you'll get free, unlimited entry to the garden for the rest of the year. That covers the sculpture show (opening on 30 May), the full summer season, and an opportunity to see the stunning autumn colours. You can also visit the tearoom as many times as you want to. With a recent visitor commenting that 'it was the best cream tea he's ever had', you'll definitely want a repeat visit or two.

Talking of which, the tearoom is now open for the season, serving (amazing) cream teas, homemade soup and cake at reasonable prices. There is both indoor seating and outside tables looking out across Dartmoor, and both are well worth settling into for a while.

New life in the poly-tunnel We grow as many plants as we can from seed and cuttings, both for the garden and the wider estate. The poly-tunnel is full right now, with volunteers busy pricking out seedlings and potting on. Any surplus will be available to buy later in the season.

Stone Lane is a charity run largely by volunteers — if you'd like to get involved this season, we'd be glad to hear from you.

Craft workshops – hurry only a few places left:

Mono printing — Tuesday 19 May, 1–3pm. Working with leaves, textures and hand-cut shapes, led by Simon Ripley of Double Elephant Print Workshop.

Spoon carving — Saturday 13 June, 9.30am–4.30pm. Terry Spreyer takes you through the basics of wood carving using wood from the garden. You'll leave with a finished spoon.

Tickets for both workshops are on the website.

Gardens open Thursday–Monday, 10am–6pm. Tea Room 11am–4pm. Adults £8, students and children free.

Stone Lane Gardens, Chagford, TQ13 8JU — stonelanegardens.com | What3Words: keys.trombone.crab

TEIGNTON BAZAAR

Buy and sell things indoor market Drewsteignton

10am - 1 pm SATURDAY 9th MAY

in the **LONG ROOM**
at the **Drewe Arms**

Why we Should Join No Mow May

Imagine your lawn buzzing with life—bees humming, butterflies fluttering, and wildflowers blooming. That's what **No Mow May** is all about. By simply letting the grass grow for one month, we can make a big difference for nature.

During May, many pollinators like bees and butterflies emerge and start looking for food. But neatly trimmed lawns offer almost nothing for them to eat. When we skip mowing for just a few weeks, wildflowers like dandelions and clover have a chance to grow—and they become an important food source for these vital insects.

Pollinators are crucial for our ecosystems and our food supply, yet their populations are declining because of habitat loss and pesticides. **No Mow May is a simple, free way to give them a boost—right in our backyards.**

Plus, it saves us time, fuel, and effort. And who wouldn't want a little break from lawn chores?

One month, one lawn—big impact!

(information gathered from the BBC, RSPB, and Greenpeace)



DREWE ARMS COMMUNITY PUB

The Drewe is fast becoming a go-to venue for a wide range of music - Live in the Long Room. The month of May, sees the return of guitarist Sam Grassie, with his musical partner Robin Adam's, on Friday 22nd. We're excited to kick off the first in a series of original music showcases on Saturday 9th May featuring local singer songwriter Joe Middleton and Drewsteignton's own Henry Hassell's new band Firstborn. There's lots more in the pipeline, including the rescheduled Sparko gig in October. Check our website for details. www.drewearms.org/me

Live Music Fundraiser for People with Epilepsy



Johnny & the Chic Sisters

Friday 15th May 2026

Doors Open 7pm, Live Music from 7:45pm & Tickets £15

DREWE ARMS
PRESENTS
Live in the Long Room
New original music by
FIRSTBORN
Joe Middleton
Saturday 9th May
from 7.30 pm
Donations on the door by cash or card
70% goes to the artists

DREWE ARMS
PRESENTS
Live in the Long Room
SAM GRASSIE & ROBIN ADAMS
Friday 22nd May 8-10pm
Tickets available from: tickettailor.com/events/thedrewearms/2150320
£12.50

For all music and "large" events', Michael Scott is kindly allowing his field at Netherton Cross to be used as an overspill car park. As always, please park considerately and safely. **G Read.**

Bird Notes - Swift Season Approaches

Bird Notes – the Swift season approaches

I was hoping to be ahead of the game this month, and to suggest that by the time this issue of the Parish Post got to you, we may be seeing Swifts over the village, as last year's arrival date was on the 1st of May. However, in life not everything goes to plan, and I saw my first Swift of the year here on the 23rd of April, which I posted on the 'Devon Birds' Sightings website. There had been reports of Swifts seen in south Devon a few days before, but this was my earliest record since I started monitoring annual arrival dates in Drewsteignton in 2001.

My sighting was of a single Swift high over the village at 11.30 which headed north but while working in my garden later at 6.15pm, there were two flying together over Churchgate, but I was unable to see if they entered the nestboxes on the front of our row. I was informed that a Swift was seen over Upperton on the same day at 5.15pm and flew straight into a long-established nest under the thatched eaves.

Last year, we recorded 30 nests occupied with 63 chicks reared from the 47 nest boxes installed in the village, plus there were at least six known natural cavities used under thatched eaves. We now also have a further 48 available nest chambers installed in late 2024 in the church bell tower behind the louvres, which was investigated by Swifts last year. I will be turning on the Swift caller in the Church soon to alert potential breeders that there are now nest chambers available.

And so, in a snippet from the poem 'Swifts' by Ted Hughes, "They've made it again, which means the Globe's still working, the Creation's still waking refreshed, our summer's still all to come".

Nick Dixon



We welcome everyone aged 10-28 to our very active club with a meeting & social each month. Check out our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/cheritonandtedburnyfc/> or follow us on Instagram.



“May is the month of expectation, the month of wishes, the month of hope.” Emily Brontë.

We had a great response to our Spring Raffle and would like to thank all who donated such stupendous prizes. We would also like to thank all the shops and outlets who sold tickets for us and finally we would like to thank those of you who purchased tickets. All funds generated by fundraising go back into Acorn to help support its clients.

Activities From Cheriton Bishop

- Lunch Clubs, at The Kings Arms - Tedburn St Mary Tuesday 5th May 2026 - contact Jean Martin on 01647 24586 to book (a couple of days in advance please). 2nd June 2026 will be the next one.
- Shopping at Sainsburys Alphington – Wednesday 13th and 27th May 2026. The bus will collect you from home and return you safely back with your shopping.
- Outings –12th May 2026 – Sidmouth

For those in any Area of Acorn's domain!

- Tea @ the Hub – Fortnightly on a Friday 2-4pm at the Young Farmers Head Office Building in Cheriton Bishop. Join us for Tea, Talk, Coffee, Cake and a mingle, making new, and catching up with old, friends. Friday 8th and 22nd May 2026 No need to book just turn up.
- Memory Lane Café –14th and 28th May 2026. If you know of someone who you feel may benefit from this targeted club, then please call as below.
- Rainbow Club – Carers Support Group. 15th May 2026. Do you care for a partner or a close family member? Then perhaps a monthly get together with other Carers in a similar position might be just what you need. Free informal/confidential chat with a cup of tea. Please call the office number below to learn more.

If you would like to book a seat on the minibus for any of our trips, lunches or coffee mornings, then please contact Mandy or Fran at the Office on 01647 252701.

News from The Drewe

At last, the sun is starting to shine and trade is beginning to pick up. However, our financial position remains precarious. With core costs rising, and staff changes pending, our immediate focus is on keeping the pub open. This is going to be tough and may require some temporary tweaks to our opening hours and food offer. A critical factor in the success will also be how we engage and involve our amazing community.

Firstly, your custom is what keeps the pub going. Popping in for a pint or some food really does make a difference. We have also been greatly assisted recently by some generous donations and loans so if you too may be able to help, please contact us.

Secondly, many of you will know the brilliant few who volunteer and supplement the pub team. Their value cannot be overstated and now more than ever. There are administrative jobs to do. We are also planning training for more people on the basics of the bar and how to operate the till, and there are always jobs to do in the kitchen. So, if you can spare some ad-hoc or more regular time each week, again please contact us.






So far, the Steering Group have been very hands-on with managing the pub. After three years this has taken its toll. It is with considerable sadness that we have to tell you that Ian Pickford and Peter Clements are stepping down from our team. As we're sure you all know, Ian has been a highly valued member of the team since inception and his boundless energy and commitment to get things done will be missed terribly. Thankfully, he will generously be maintaining some of the important administrative activities while we recruit to our own and the pub team. Peter was key to driving our successful share offer campaign and has provided invaluable input to our marketing. We all thank them enormously for all their contributions.

Looking ahead, we plan to reconfigure the operating model and create an 'arm's length' arrangement between the steering group and the pub operation. We are advertising for somebody - or possibly a couple - who can develop and grow our community business. Finding the right people is likely to take time, so your help in putting the word out would be appreciated - it really is an exciting opportunity for the right person(s).

So now, more than ever, we really need and appreciate your support. Please visit the pub. Please consider spending some time manning the bar or working in the kitchen. Please think about joining us in the Steering Group. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Liz, Gary, Tim, Glyn, Jane and Toby

Recycling & Waste Collection Dates

			 		
27th April	Monday	✓	✓	✓	
5th May	Tuesday	✓	✓		✓
11th May	Monday	✓	✓	✓	
18th May	Monday	✓	✓		✓
26th May	Tuesday	✓	✓	✓	

Check Bin Day! <https://westdevon.fccenvironment.co.uk/mycollections>

Useful Contact Information

Doctors Surgeries

Cheriton Bishop	01647 24272	Out of Hours	111
Chagford Health Centre	01647 433320	Emergency	999

Drewsteignton Parish Clerk & RFO: Lou Butler 07764683412

Clerk.drewsteigntonPC@outlook.com

Borough Councillor: Cllr Steve Guthrie,

cllr.steve.guthrie@westdevon.gov.uk

Devon County Councillor: Cllr Sue Davies sue.davies@devon.gov.uk

Member of Parliament: Mel Stride MP, mel.stride.mp@parliament.uk

Acorn Community Support: 01647 252701

Whiddon Down Village Hall: 07928966744

DPC Rural Crime & Community Alerts WhatsApp

Community Group – scan the QR code to join



Parish Post Editor Cllr.Brennan.Drewsteignton@outlook.com

The Parish Post reserves the right to edit contributions and wishes to state that views expressed are not necessarily those of the Parish Council.

Contributions for the next edition by the 24th May 2026.

Thank you. Ed.