

Welcome to the May and June Edition I hope this signifies the start of summer! Read on to find out what has been happening in the village and surrounds. I have taken the liberty of including some of the annual reports submitted to the Parish Meeting held on the 23 March. You will also find information on events and fundraisers coming up during May and June.

WILLAND HISTORY GROUP

One hundred years ago the end of the First World War seemed as distant as ever. In the spring of 1918 the Germans launched a massive offensive on the Western Front that forced the British front line into retreat. When they renewed their offensive on 27 May, one Willand man, farmer's son Reg Rowe, found himself thrown into the action. His unit, 2nd Battalion, Devonshire Regiment, were surrounded at Bois Des Buttes, the commanding officer having chosen to fight it out. By the end of the action there was less than fifty men left standing out of a starting strength of 580 (the French later gave the battalion the distinguished honour of the Croix de Geurre).

When the battle at Bois Des Buttes began Reg Rowe was out of the line on a Machine Gun Course, but was soon rushed to the front to support his comrades. He later wrote: "When daylight came my pal and I were left with two Lewis guns and no 'ammo' so we dumped the guns and picked up two rifles and 'ammo' from dead Tommies – there were quite a few about. We were then forced to join a machine gun crew and had a first class go at the Bosche as he came across the river or canal; but Jerry was everywhere. My pal and I made a dash across country, and came to a French artillery unit. They were limbering up to get away. The officers were dining on roast chicken and red wine and very kindly gave us some and, what is more, a lift back country."

After the battle Reg wrote home to his mother to say, "I am taking the first opportunity of letting you know I am still in the land of the living ... no doubt you have seen an account in the papers about our battalion and division did splendidly against enormous odds ... I do not know when I shall be able to get this away, we shall be out to rest shortly as we shall have to be reorganised. Will you send on a towel, sponge for washing, shaving brush. Am sorry to say Fritz has taken all our small kit. Heaps of love to all. Am in good health. Reg. Hope Grandma is better."

Reg Rowe stayed with the re-formed 2nd Devons through 1918 as the war turned in favour of the Allies and the British Army pushed on towards Germany. In September the battalion suffered a mustard gas attack about which Reg commented, "I only suffered from total loss of speech for a day or so," and he did not require a visit to hospital. He also wrote home at this time describing how the war was going: "Well of late we have come out of acres of desolation into a beautiful country with pretty villages and towns intact. It has been a striking experience for all to see the delight and gratification of the civilians as we enter these places occupied for four years by the Germans.

They have had no easy time of it and have had practically everything of value commandeered. We have old Fritz well on the run now, having a little of our own back.” However, soon after this Reg’s war ended when he developed bronchial pneumonia after contracting the ‘Spanish’ flu, and he was invalided back to England in October 1918. **James Morrison, 01884 250057 (jamorrison235@gmail.com)**

MESSAGE FROM BOB EVANS

Personally I’m pleased to see that the building of the new Co-op store has at last commenced. Not only will this bring residents a little more choice but after several hard fought battles I managed to get it conditioned that a new zebra crossing facility will be provided in Southview Road. This must be in place prior to the shop’s initial opening. I consider it a valuable safety asset for many wishing to access the store by foot.

2 Sisters: as one of the largest employers in mid Devon let alone Willand having such a large facility can also raise unwanted issues and as such I have asked to re start liaison meetings with members of the management team on site. An initial meeting was organised but unfortunately bad weather forced the cancellation. I will be attending with the Chair of your Parish Council well before publication of this article to reignite vital and early dialogue. I would remind all residents that incidents of excessive odour can and should be reported. Either direct to 2 Sisters via their security gate house on 01884822539 or to the Environment agency incident line on 0800807060.

I have received requests from the Parish Council seeking additional dog warden time - given the number of dog owners that think it’s OK to leave their dog mess in the street, in the park or on any grass verge for somebody else to clean up, or of course a child to find! Unfortunately the council funds are somewhat stretched and although some specific areas will be targeted this really isn’t an issue I think people should be seeking tax payers money to clean up. Surely it’s up to individual dog owners to be responsible: it’s your dog, it’s your mess it’s your responsibility! If you see irresponsible owners and you know them, don’t think it is somebody else’s job, challenge them.

On street parking is becoming a bigger and bigger issue all across Mid Devon, with Willand being no exception. Discussions have taken place and some specific areas are being looked at but this really isn’t an easy one to resolve. What can be done and where it can be done are just the starters for 10 - finally it’s the practical side of how to police any scheme once introduced. No easy answers but it’s not being ignored, the Parish Council are in active dialogue with Local Councillors and initial thoughts are being explored with relevant MDDC officers. I hope to have more on this in due course.

Finally...

Many will have read about the tragic and unexpected death of Cllr Clarissa Slade. At 21 Clarissa was by far the youngest councillor at MDDC and when elected in 2015 was the youngest person to have been elected onto any

council in the UK at that time. I knew Clarissa as a bright and cheerful young lady who had a real passion for her role as a Local Councillor.

Clarissa's family are rightfully proud of her for far more than her role as a councillor or her work within her community. I hope that her remarkable achievement will inspire other young people to consider following her example, unlike the majority Clarissa didn't just talk, she did.

She will be sadly missed by all who knew her and hopefully an inspiration to some that didn't. Bob Evans MDDC Lower Culm.

CAMEO

What was officially the first day of Spring turned out to be anything but Spring like with heavy snow which meant that our Speaker couldn't get to us, so the March meeting was cancelled. The same thing happened later in the month when for the first time in 17 years the Singles meeting was also cancelled. However, we were really lucky when we went to Bickleigh Castle and it was beautifully warm and sunny. We had an interesting tour of this 13th century castle which had a very chequered history with civil wars raging and threats from overseas. The Saxon Church was fascinating and has been re consecrated and can now be used for weddings and christenings. The Castle has moved with the times and is now a popular venue for weddings.

We went on to the Fisherman's Cott for a delicious lunch. We had our monthly Coffee Morning at the Old Well which was well-attended and we had another one at the Glasshouse Cafe attached to the Medical Centre in Cullompton.

It was lovely to be back in the Village Hall again for our meeting in April after all the weather problems and there was a good attendance, we were pleased to welcome Brian Coulson who gave us an excellent lesson in making and maintaining hanging baskets. This was followed by slides of his prizewinning baskets which were really colourful and following his talk you can expect to see our efforts around the Village this summer! The Sewing group members had completed the second tablecloth which had been donated by a former member who, along with her daughter, sadly died of cancer and Marjorie had stipulated that on completion they would be donated to a cancer charity. The cloth was beautiful and expertly embroidered by our members. This will be going to a cancer charity where we hope it will raise a lot of money in her memory.

Owing to the awful weather the Walking Group had been confined to their firesides but as soon as the weather improves and the ground dries up a bit, they will be out and about enjoying our lovely Devon countryside. On 3rd May we will be having our annual mystery trip with evening dinner and the coach leaves the Village Hall at 5.30. There will be a trip to Exeter Museum on 10th May. Suggestions were made for our 20th birthday celebrations in January 2019. The evening ended with a raffle and a "feely bag" game which Sonia had devised which left us scratching our heads. If you think you would like to come along to one of our meetings you would be very welcome and our next meeting

in the Village Hall is on 7th June at 7p.m. and the Speaker will be Ian White
"Your Captain Speaking " **Betty Penberthy**.

WILLAND PARISH COUNCIL CHAIR - COMMENT & REPORT

The Statutory Parish Meeting has been and gone and a big thank you to 'the few' who attended and to those who gave of their time to report on what had been and was being done by their respective organisations. The drinks and cakes were still good. We have tried something new over the past three years and the initial support from organisations was excellent at the start but it has now dropped off; understandably due to the lack of interest shown by the majority who live in the Parish. We will have to have a rethink on what we do next year.

I was in a local business premises recently and a conversation was going on as to what was happening with the Gables site. It was pointed out that the magazine contained articles about it and, more importantly, there was a questionnaire in the last issue to collect peoples views as to some aspects of its future use. "Oh, I never look at it I just put it in the bin" was the response. My response was restrained and to the point but not for general publication. Editor, contributors and volunteer deliverers please take heart as we receive a lot of feedback and so a lot do read it.

As I give thought what needs to be contained in this report I find that we are at a bit of an 'in between' stage as by the time you get the magazine things will have happened, or not happened, differently from what I knew to be the case at the time of writing.

We have agreed a new three-year contract for the Christmas lights so that should go ahead and they will be of a new design.

By the time you read this our new contractors should have cut all the grass verges that are the responsibility of Devon County Council. They should be done at least ten times through the year. In some areas only a margin against the road or pavement will be cut to allow the weeds and flowers to grow and attract the insects on the rest. These areas will then be cut right back in the last cut of the year. If you have any concerns or questions I am sure that the Clerk or one of the councillors will help. Please remember that a number of areas are still to be cut by MDDC. Our local contractor has started cutting the grass in the play areas leased by the Parish Council and had a nice surprise when he found that someone else had cut one area just before he got there. Guess Who? MDDC have approached us to start fresh discussions as to the future of Orchard Way Play area but they have cut the grass twice already this year and it looks much better.

On street parking is still an issue in some areas and with our MDDC Ward Councillors support we have put forward some suggestions where more car parking could be provided on grass verges with some work. There are issues to be resolved but it is early days.

People do read the magazine as my comments on dog mess proved. One reader demanded an apology from me for suggesting that if you walked a lot of dogs you were responsible for not clearing up their deposits. If you read it again you will see I just asked a question. Having said that it is not getting much better. One resident counted 16 separate piles on a walk around the village one day. Facebook contained some interesting exchanges with one or two surprising responses. Please be vigilant we are noting times and places and MDDC Enforcement Officers are about as evidenced by a call I had as to what they were doing at either end of Jaycroft one day. We have had a complaint about a dog not on a lead running around the cemetery, please have some respect and keep your dog on a lead as we do not want to ban dogs from the cemetery.

Planning

The Planning Committee has confirmed their refusal of the planning application to demolish the Esso Garage and build 30 houses there. The applicant has the right of appeal.

The application to build 125 houses off Meadow Park where only 42 are in the plan is still being considered by planning officers. It has thrown up an issue over numbers and capacity at our Primary School and developer contributions towards improvements. DCC Education are in a right muddle over the figures and the Planning Officer has been trying to sort it out and her positive efforts can be followed on the planning website. The Parish Council, with support from Bob Evans, one of our Ward Councillors, has been raising the issue with Ray Radford, our County Councillor and he is trying to pursue the matter with officers at County Hall. The best we have at the moment is that there has been an 'error' – so that's alright then. I am sure that in the forthcoming years if you are a parent in Willand, but you cannot get your five year old into Willand Primary School and have them bussed to Cullompton or elsewhere it will be a great comfort to you. Scaremongering – no we have the email exchanges.

Some will have noted that the site for the 28 houses next to Ash Close has started and stopped and the earth moving plant and fencing removed. Basically the Parish Council saw that they were not complying with the conditions and were parking on the pavement and the grass verge and so we raised it with the planning officer. She attended the site and found that a number of issues required to be resolved before development started had not been attended to and she advised that they should do no more until it was resolved. Perhaps our representations are being listened to by some.

The Parish Council has made representations to the latest consultation on the local plan which has been delayed again, mainly around the Junction 27 issue. It is hoped that some of you will have responded before the cut off date of 11 April 2018.

There are a lot of applications for various things being received at present so please make your views known.

The Parish Council have had exchanges and meeting with local police officers over crime and other issues in the village. Lack of resources is the problem but they also have to use what they have in targeted areas. Politics over practicalities some may say! Please keep reporting crime rather than give into the frustration of not getting an answer on the telephone. Email can be used. If we do not report crime or other issues they will tell us we are alright.

Many thanks to all those who contribute to the various organisations and events in the village or just do your bit by picking up litter or other things or keeping the area around your house tidy. Persuade a friend or neighbour to get involved as well but whatever you do please stay safe. **Barry G J Warren Chair Parish Council**

HOSPISCARE WILL FORTNIGHT

Protect the people you love & support your local hospice Mon 14th May – Fri 25th May 2018. Having a professionally written Will is the best way to ensure you can protect the ones you love and remember causes you care about. If you have recently married or divorced, become a parent or grandparent, lost a spouse or relative, retired or moved house, now is the time to get around to making or updating your Will – it is straightforward and Hospiscare's Will Fortnight is the ideal opportunity.

How Hospiscare Will Fortnight works. Local solicitors are supporting Hospiscare by giving up all of their usual fee for writing a standard Will so you can donate to Hospiscare instead. Bookings can be made direct with participating solicitors listed from the 23rd April. Places are limited so do make your appointment promptly. At the initial meeting, you explain what you would like in your Will. Your solicitor will help you express your wishes clearly and guide you through the process. In the unlikely event specialist advice is required, your solicitor will explain, giving a separate price for additional work. Once your Will is drafted the solicitor will share it with you and arrange for you to sign it. Local solicitors taking part are: Cullompton: **Dunn & Baker**, Michael Micklethwait, office 01884 33818 **Tiverton: Star Legal**, Richard Agnew Vos, office 01884 798493



The doors of Hemyock Parish Hall opened at 10am on Saturday 24th March for the first Blackdown Hills Repair Café and over the next couple of hours more than 50 items were brought in for repair. A team of 14 volunteer repairers were kept busy as vacuum cleaners, computers, radios, various items of furniture, toys and garden tools were restored to working order, bikes were fixed and clothing was mended. 85% of the items brought in were given a new lease of life!

The hall was buzzing as people from the village and surrounding parishes, together with local MP, Neil Parish, chatted with the volunteers and watched

while repairs were carried out, then went on to enjoy delicious refreshments prepared by Hemyock WI. Judging from the comments left on feedback forms, the atmosphere was "enthusiastic and very welcoming" with an "excellent variety of fixers with their many skills". As an important part of the Repair Cafe is the sharing of skills, it was encouraging to learn that one person found it "very helpful, will have a go at repairing myself".

With generous funding from Ray Radford's Locality Budget and MDDC Tap Fund, and support from Communities Action Group, Devon and some of the local Parish Councils, the plan is to expand the range of specialist skills in the coming months. So if you have a few hours to spare on a Saturday morning, once in a while, and would like to be part of this exciting new community project (we are one of over 100 Repair Cafes now in the UK), please get in touch. More electricians and computer buffs are always needed, and those with a flair for publicity and communications would also be most welcome on the team.

The next Repair Cafe is on Saturday 26th May, 10.00am to 12.00 noon (though other Parishes are already making noises about organising an event in their own area!). For further information, please contact trishacomrie@gmail.com (01823 602908) or visit our Facebook page *RepairCafeBlackdowns*.

NEWS FROM RAY RADFORD

As your County Councillor, I am aware that the flooding at Five Bridges has caused a lot of problems, this has been an ongoing difficult situation with problem arising with the adjacent land owner, enforcement and legal actions are taking place involving DCC and the Environment Agency. I am unable to go into any detail because there are financial implications, although it may not appear so, but please be assured that County have been pursuing this with their legal team and enforcement team. I know there are and have been planning issues, that belongs to MDDC, if there are any, please let me know, I hope to have a one to one with Dave Ashford, the Highway Neighbourhood Officer again later this month.

We ended the last year with an underspend of £2.6m. To start this new financial year we have already spread over 12,000 tons of salt, compared to last year when we spread 9,500 for the whole year, not a good start, but winter is behind us now.

You will know that the budget has now been set. you might also like to know the main issues of the finances of DCC, are, the Nett Revenue Budget is £511m, within that the Adult services get an increase of 6.1%, Children Service 5.5%, Communities PH and Environment minus 2.3% and Highways and Waste minus 2.7%. Interesting to know, Police have increased by 6.81%, Fire 2.99%, DCC 4.99%, this includes 2% for Adult Care, MDDC 2.99% and the average increase for Parishes Councils is 7.7%. The Locality budget is retained at £10k, with an additional Investing in Devon Budget (IID) of £10k and the TAP fund is still in place at just over £10k, but these budgets are spread over 9

Parishes. Please let me know if any club/organisation would like to make an application for funds.

I always keep on about waste, we put on average 4.94kg in the black bag every week, down from 5.94kg in 2012, a reduction of 20%. As for recycling, Devon County is one of the best performers in recycling, behind Oxford and Surrey, we recycle 55.7% of our waste. We could do better, because County carried a test on 200 households in each District and it was found that 41% of what we put in our black bags could still be recycled, if that were possible, it would save County £6.7m in disposal cost and another £1m in being able to sell our recyclables, which would go towards keeping our Council Tax under control, particularly when every £5m saved represents about 1% reduction on our Council Tax. It costs £120 per ton to dispose of our waste, although none of it goes to landfill now, it is diverted to the incinerator in Exeter, we still have to pay a gate fee.

Thought you might like to know about Devon Norse, this is a Company jointly owned by Norse Commercial Services and DCC. This arrangement provides many benefits to the Authority including, access to new markets, building strong local communities, support for local charities, arts civic projects and community initiatives, as well as an income share agreement. In 2016/17 the business delivered a profit to DCC of £226k.

Below is a few headline factors;

Devon Norse directly employ 1080 people, around 91% which live in Devon. For every £1 of expenditure on suppliers, 67p is spent in the South West region, including 57p with businesses in Devon County Council £695k was spent on other businesses in Devon, These businesses supported further 31 jobs.

Devon Norse spends a total of £7.8m on wages and salaries. For every £1 on wages paid, 88p is spent in the South West area and 66p in Devon.

Each month the business provides over 200,000 meals to Schools. It also operates many initiatives within partner Schools to encourage physical activity and promote healthy eating.

The business contributes Gross Value Added of £15.5m in Devon and £16.7m in the South West Region.

You know where I am, just contact me if you feel I can help in any way.

Ray Radford Devon County Councillor Willand & Uffculme Division

WILLAND LOCAL HERO!

We have made several trips recently which have included overnight stays in Glasgow and Bristol. Some of our family are also located at the other end of the A361 to North Devon. So we often use that road.

Like most of you, we have come to notice more and more litter everywhere on these journeys. One of the many reasons it is nice for us to get home to Willand is the absence of the rubbish-strewn grass verges that offend the eye elsewhere.

So we would like to say a big THANK-YOU to John, who does such a wonderful job keeping our village free of litter. He can be seen out in all weathers picking up rubbish dropped by the thoughtless.

He is a reminder that our public places should be much better valued and maintained, and exemplifies the notion of civic pride so obviously missing elsewhere.

THANK-YOU again John, we really appreciate your efforts. **Sheila and John Eschle**

WILLAND VILLAGE HALL

The installation of our new doors has now been completed and we have had LED tubes fitted in the main hall to improve the lighting. We hope to have the main hall and toilets decorated in June. In the coming months, we will be looking at further improvements to the hall, particularly in the annexe, which is in need of some TLC.

John Holmes, our caretaker for a number of years, has retired from the Village Hall, but can still be seen around the village keeping it tidy for the Parish Council. We hope he enjoys his retirement and is able to enjoy his allotment more. Our new caretaker, Andrea Glover, has started work with us and is proving very capable and hardworking. We hope she will be with us for many years.

We have a relatively new class in the Village Hall on Tuesday mornings at 10.30. It is a seated exercise class, for those who are unable to do regular exercise classes standing or lying down. For more details, please check the online calendar. If you click on any of the events, contact details will come up for you to see. There are several other keep fit classes of various sorts – Zumba, Pilates, Martial Arts, Karate and gymnastics for younger ones.

Our AGM is on Monday, 21st May at 7.00 p.m. in the annexe at the Village Hall. All residents of Willand and users of the village hall can attend. If your organisation wishes to put forward a named person as a trustee, or if you would like to become one yourself, please let me know. We only meet 6 times a year. Website: www.willandmatters.org.uk/venues for our diary and community page. **Carol Allan Village Hall Treasurer**

VILLAGE HALL DIARY

MAY				
Saturday	5 th	Willand Crafty Market	W.V.H.	11.00 am
Friday	18 th	Willand Theatrical Society AGM	W.V.H.	7.00 pm
Monday	21 st	Village Hall AGM	W.V.H.	7.00 pm
Saturday	26 th	Garden Club Plant Sale	W.V.H.	10.00 am
Saturday	5 th	Willand Crafty Market	W.V.H.	11.00 am
Friday	18 th	Willand Theatrical Society AGM	W.V.H.	7.00 pm
Monday	21 st	Village Hall AGM	W.V.H.	7.00 pm

REGULAR EVENTS AT WILLAND VILLAGE HALL		
Pilates	Mondays	10:00 am
Purelesque Knitting Group	Mondays	2:00 pm
Cull. & Dist. Flower Club	1 st Monday	2:00 pm
Beavers (Term Time)	Mondays	5:30 pm
Cub Scouts (Term Time)	Mondays	7:00 pm
Kettle Bell Pump	Mondays	7:00 pm
Pilates	Tuesday	9:00 am
Seated Exercise Class	Tuesday	10.30am
Flower Arranging	Tuesday	1:15 pm
Gymnastics Club	Tuesday	4:00 pm
Pilates	Tuesday	7.30pm
Tiny Tots (Term Time)	Wednesday	9:30 am
Flower Arranging	Wednesday	1:15 pm
Indoor Bowls Club	Wednesday	7:00 pm
Garden Club	2 nd Wednesday	7:30 pm
Pilates	Thursday	8:15 am
CAMEO	1 st Thursday	7.00 pm
Karate	Thursday	5:30 pm
Folk Dance Club	2 nd & 4 th Thursday	7:30 pm
Parish Council Meetings	2 nd & 4 th Thursday	7:00 pm
Zumba	Fridays	9.30am
WITS	Fridays	7:00 pm
Cowgirl Twisters	3 rd Saturday	7:30 pm
Folk Dance	2 nd Saturday	7:00 pm
Rugby Tots	Sundays	9:30 am
Martial Arts	Sundays	6:30 pm

Thank you to the one person who has donated some carrier bags to enable to the dry delivery of this issue of the magazine.

WILLAND GARDEN CLUB

At our first meeting this year on 14th March, it was surprising anyone came as the weather had been so bad that the road from Cullompton was flooded, as was the top of Gables Road. However, we had a very interesting talk about Kitchen Remedies from Helen Kearney, who has a degree in herbal medicine. She and her husband have a smallholding near Holcombe Rogus, where they grow all their own herbs and make their own herbal preparations. We have a quiz next month and, in May, we will be hearing about Exmoor, the land of combes.

Our Plant Sale is on Saturday, 26th May, at the Village Hall, so please come along and buy some plants to brighten up your gardens. Hopefully, any threats of snow will have gone by then.

We will be visiting the Bishop's Palace Gardens in June for our regular club outing. We heard all about it last year and were very impressed by the talk, so booked a visit immediately.

For more details about the Garden Club, please do not hesitate to contact me on **01884 33828** or email me on **cbarwa@mail.com**. **Carol Allan Garden Club Secretary**

BLACKDOWNS COMMUNITY BUS

Calling all clubs, groups, schools and organisations in the Blackdowns! Our new 13/14 seater bus was at last delivered on Monday 26th March after being delayed by snow! One of our aims is to help those who need cheap transport due to age, isolation or any sort of disability, but we need your support to do this. The new bus is for the use of the whole of the Blackdowns area. The bus is available for hire by any group or individual for any activity, such as transporting a football team, school trip, garden club outing, theatre trip, transporting wedding guests etc. etc. We are working on our pricing policy, which initially will be £75 a day (£50 a half day) plus fuel. In order to cover our costs we need to hire out the bus at least 40 times a year at that amount. Please spread the word and book your trips now! **Phone our mobile number 07762 813967 or email blackdownbus@gmail.com.**

So Willand is on the up! Literally rising by 2cm a year, for more information see report on Devon Live.

ST MARY'S WILLAND

We have had a busy few weeks with Easter and our annual meeting. It was lovely to have a packed church on Easter Sunday as we celebrated the promise of new life for those who trust in the Lord Jesus' death and resurrection. We have also had our annual church meeting where Sandy Hancock and Rod Sparkes were confirmed as our Church Wardens for the coming year.

Thank you to those who have contributed to our Church Building Fund. I am pleased to say we have had a fantastic initial response raising around £22 000

so far! (see full report below). We still have some large grant applications in the pipeline, but if you would like to help please do pop into church or the hall to pick up a leaflet to find out more or contact me directly. Our next fundraising event will be our “Nashville Night” - an evening of country music with bangers and beans on Sat 12th May. Tickets are on sale from **Lesley Smith for £10 (tel: 839436)**

In the coming weeks we continue with our normal programme: our popular Messy Church for families on 3rd Friday of the month; our Lunch Club for seniors on 3rd Wednesday; our parent and toddler group “Rockers” each Monday morning to name just a few! Please do join us for one of our church services either in church each week -10.15am on 1st Sunday or 11am on other Sundays or 9.30am for our more informal service in the church hall on 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th Sundays of the month with children’s groups and crèche.

ST. MARY’S RESTORATION APPEAL – THE FIRST STEPS

Jonathan Rhind’s 2016 Quinquennial Report was centred on the potential risk to the south wall of the church that stemmed from the collapse of the Victorian drainage system and from the roots of the Cypress tree in front of the east window. Repairs were also required to the tracery and parts of the roof structure. Towards the end of last year we were provided with the estimated costings of these Q1 items, those requiring action within two years, which amounted to £108,400, including VAT of £18,000. The PCC elected to tackle this on two fronts; local fund-raising events, coupled with the production of a leaflet to appeal to our congregation for donations, and a series of applications to trusts and grant making bodies for funds to cover the cost, which was way beyond the capability of this village parish to raise on its own.

I am pleased to report our success, though we still have a long way to go. The PCC was able to transfer £4,447 from its Fabric Fund and set itself the aim of raising at least 10% (£10,840) in addition, a target that we have already achieved (£11,125). We also have been blessed with donations from the Sir John and Lady Amory Trust, the Viscount Amory Trust, the Willand Moor Plot Trust and the Devon Historic Churches Trust totalling a further £6,000. This brings our total funding to £21,572. Our next target is to reach 30% of the net cost, when we will be eligible to apply for a grant from the Ecclesiastical Insurance Company’s Allchurches Trust.

Planning permission for Grade 1 Listed buildings has to be made to the Diocesan Advisory Council (DAC), which is being considered now and tender documents, based on this submission are about to be dispatched. We are also preparing our submission to Viridor Credits for a grant from the Landfill Tax, for which our application has just passed their Stage 1 process. Stage 2 cannot be completed until copies of three tenders can be included. Hopefully we can meet their deadline of 30 April for a decision in July. We are also pleased that our campaign is receiving written letters of support from our elected Parish, District and County Council representatives.

On behalf of the PCC I can only express our gratitude to everyone who has contributed, however large or small, for their generosity in our fight to save this focal point of our village life for future generations. **Simon Talbot Rector**



Hello, I am Callum, I am 12.

I live in Culmstock and go to Uffculme School.

My younger sister has **Juvenile Arthritis**. I am fundraising to help find a cure, because ...

LIFE SHOULDN'T HURT

Please donate at: www.justgiving.com/callumscoast2coast To raise vital funds for **Arthritis Research UK** to continue their research into finding a cure, I am cycling the Devon Coast to Coast from Ilfracombe Pier to Plymouth Hoe in May. Please donate if you can.



Registered Charity 207711

SAMPFORD PEVERELL HISTORIC VEHICLE SHOW

The show this year will be on Sunday 12th August at Uplowman Village Hall. Once again the charity will be the **Devon Freewheelers also known as the Blood Bikes**. This is an important and well deserving charity which transports blood and transplant organs to the various hospitals in the county. As always any type of vehicle welcome, no age restrictions, craft/trade stands too! For more information and application forms or if you would like to help out please contact **Lindy Astbury (Secretary) on 01884 830527 or lindyastbury@gmail.com**

WILLAND ROVERS FOOTBALL CLUB

At the heart of the community offering much more than just football: Did you know that we have fortnightly bingo, a ladies skittles team, 2 men's skittles team a darts team and this year a new addition in the Charity football team Bravehearts FC who now play at Willand, all these events are supported by Willand residents.

Bravehearts FC were formed when a friend of theirs Daniel Coffey was tragically killed in Iraq whilst serving with the British forces. In order that the families of those affected by this loss are not forgotten a charity was set up with a view to help those families in the time of their greatest need. A group of friends decided to form a football team to help with fund raising. That team has gone from strength to strength and now play at Willand. Last year Santa's run around the village help raised in excess of £500 towards the charity.

Willand Rovers FC - in order that a club can run effectively and provide football matches within a social, community environment, a great deal of work is put in behind the scenes by every member of the Committee, all of whom are volunteers, so that everyone coming to Willand will be able to have an enjoyable experience. On the field the team ably lead by local lad Russell Jee are in a strong position for promotion to the South West Southern league for the first time in our history, it would be a remarkable journey for the likes of Mike Mitchell, Tony Williams, Peter Ward, Reg Vile all Willand boys and all of whom have been at the club some 50+ years. The club is indebted to local firms like Stan Robinson, Pencarrie, Hickery Inn and others who all offer support in one way or another.

Off the field the club house has been refurbished and can be counted as a venue second to none, with an ability to host a sit down meal for 100 or a party for 150. Please feel free to make an enquiry if you are looking for a venue.

WILLAND TENNIS CLUB

The new season started on 1st April for this year. New members are very welcome with a special introductory subscription of only £50 for the first year. Club Nights are on Mondays and Thursdays from 6pm. Juniors are also

very welcome from age 5 years to 18 years. Junior sessions are held on Tuesday nights from April until end of November.

We have 2 Mens Teams in the Exeter and District Tennis League in Division 2 and Division 3, also we have introduced a new Ladies Team in the same League for the first time for many years. We also run one mixed Team in the East Devon League.

The courts are available to the public, so if you are not able to join the tennis club please come and use the courts and pay Mrs. Morrison at Driftwood, Gables Road opposite the courts.

We are looking forward to a very good season this year, so come and join us!

Contact Rachael Stephenson on 07846 993232

e-mail rachelstephenson2011@hotmail.co.uk

LOCAL VETS URGE DOG OWNERS TO CHECK THAT THEIR PET'S VACCINATION IS UP TO DATE

Following a recent case of Parvovirus, the vets at The Vale Veterinary Group are raising awareness of the importance of pet vaccination for dogs. In an attempt to prevent further cases of the disease, all owners are being asked to check their vaccination records; If they believe that their dogs may not be currently covered they should contact their veterinary practice.

Vet Alan Benson explains "Parvovirus is usually spread by environmental contamination with dog faeces. There does not need to be direct dog to dog contact and it can be brought into the household on shoes. Unprotected dogs, especially the young, develop severe vomiting and bloody diarrhoea, and in most cases, despite the best veterinary care, the dog cannot be saved." Alan continues, "The distress to the dog and their owners is obvious. Unfortunately there are still a large number of dogs which have never been vaccinated or whose vaccinations have lapsed, making them vulnerable to infection. We believe that preventive care including regular vaccinations and health checks are the best way an owner can actively help their pet's long-term health". **Vale Veterinary Practise.**

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL MID DEVON GROUP

As most of you already know, our main focus is writing letters to prisoners of conscience, although in the case of Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe, she merely went on holiday. Anyway, rather than focus on some of the bad things which have happened, we thought you might like to hear some good news!

After 7 years in prison, on February 14th 2018, one of our prisoners, Eskinder Nega, was released from prison in Ethiopia. Eskinder was unconditionally released as part of a government pardon of 746 prisoners. *He has been one of Amnesty International Mid Devon's prisoners of conscience for several years.* Eskinder Nega's wife, Serkalem, was previously jailed for speaking out against the government and gave birth to the couple's son, Nafkot, while in prison.

Eskinder is a world-renowned journalist. He fell foul of the Ethiopian authorities for writing articles which criticised the government, campaigned for an end to torture, and called for freedom of expression to be respected. For this 'crime' he was sentenced to 18 years in prison on July 13th 2012. It was the eighth time he had been imprisoned. Ethiopia is one of Africa's most oppressive regimes when it comes to imprisoning journalists. It has the largest number of exiled journalists in the world. However, it receives a large amount of UK aid because it is seen as a bulwark against Islamist extremism in neighbouring Somalia.

Eskinder was placed in the notorious Kaliti Prison in Addis Ababa where conditions are so crowded that prisoners have to sleep on their sides – packed like slaves in a slaveship. Political prisoners like Eskinder were treated worse than common criminals and there was a fear of speaking out as political prisoners are known to 'disappear'. John Kerry ex-US Secretary of State made a speech in 2014 in which he referred to "the awesomely courageous acts of individuals fighting for human rights around the world," one of whom was Eskinder Nega.

There were other organisations lobbying for Eskinder's release but Amnesty International has been one of the most vociferous! Amnesty activists have lobbied governments of Ethiopia and Britain, signed petitions, demonstrated outside the Ethiopian Embassy and written countless cards and letters to Eskinder and officials. The hard work has paid off. Finally Eskinder Nega is FREE! Amnesty International Mid Devon Group is so proud to have been part of the process of ensuring Eskinder was never forgotten while he languished in prison.

Our group continues to meet every first Thursday of the month at Halberton Methodist Church, from 7.30pm to 9pm. 2018 promises to be another busy year and if any of you want join us, you would be very welcome. Please ring Heather on 01884 821291 or Sheila on 01884 839282. Sheila Eschle

WILLAND COMMUNITY COMPOSTING SCHEME

OPENING TIMES

WEDNESDAY AND SUNDAY

10.00AM – 12.00 noon

COMPOST SALES

SIEVED £1.50 a BAG

UNSIEVED £1.00 PER BARROW

When closed bags of sieved are left outside the gate please place money in the tube and replace the lid.

If there are no bags left or not enough **text COMPOST** to

07514 033305

Someone will contact you.

Please return any empty bags

Come along and see us and we can advise on what pruning's and cuttings we take.

ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

We have had a good year with good growing weather. All the plots are now allocated and there is a short waiting list. This year some of the plots have been sub divided to make them more manageable sizes. This is proving successful in keeping the allotment area tidy. We have added some more water butts this year and despite the inconvenience and disruption they should prove useful.

This year again a local farmer has supplied the allotments with dung, free (40 tonnes or so) which has been very popular with our members for improving the quality of the soil and increased the output of the plots. We opened the allotments for the National Gardens Scheme weekend and received many favourable comments and helped the village gardens raise money for charity. We have also been involved with local young people organisations and the local school to give them an insight of where food comes from (doesn't come from supermarket wrapped in plastic). Looking forward to another season when the weather improves. **Sylvia Statham Hon Sec Willand Allotments Association.**

COLDHARBOUR MILL EVENTS

STEAM DAY

May 7th and May 28th 10.30 – 4.00

STEAM EXPERIENCE

**Spend a day with our steam team
May 7th and May 28th 10.30 – 4.00**

LEARN TO WEAVE

May 18th 10.30- 4.00

DRAWING THE LINE – A CREATIVE APPROACH

May 23rd 10.30 – 4.00

SPINNING WORKSHOP

May 30th 10.30 -4.00

For more information Telephone 01884
840960 or Email
Info@coldharbourmill.org.uk

Blackdown Hills Repair Café

**Hemyock Village Hall
Saturday 26 May 2018
10am to 12 noon**

Bring along items that need repair,
electricals, bicycles, textiles,
furniture, ceramics and garden
tools.

Volunteers will be on hand to help
with repairs. A selection of repair
materials will be available or
please do bring your own.

Donations for Repairs Welcome
**Tea coffee and cake will be
on sale.**

**THE CUT OFF DATE FOR ENTRIES INTO THE NEXT MAGAZINE IS
WEDNESDAY 13TH JUNE**

WILLAND SCHOOL MARCH 2018 –Report to Parish Meeting

Thank you for inviting the school to contribute once again at the Parish Meeting. As predicted last year the school continues to grow. The number on roll has now reached its highest figure at 406.

Despite the increased numbers, the school is now experiencing huge pressure on our budget due to changes to National Insurance contributions, nationally agreed pay increases for non-teaching staff and other factors beyond our control such as the apprenticeship levy which were shared with us after we have set our budgets. There has been no additional funding to pay for these external factors and our budgets have had to absorb the costs. In real terms this has meant that we have now been put into a position where we cannot replace teaching assistants who leave, professional training has had to be reduced and the curriculum enrichment activities and resources reduced.

At present we still await funds to build the studio room on the old school garden/swimming pool area so that is on hold as there is no money from our budget to fund this.

It is more important than ever that we keep pressure up on our MPs about the unfair way that Devon schools are funded and make sure they are doing everything they can to influence the outcome of the Fairer Funding campaign which at present would mean our school would be given £140,000 less than a Cornish school!

Nevertheless the focus of our hardworking team still remains to maintain our high standards whilst providing a broad and balanced curriculum for our children. The school continues to enrich this curriculum through a wide variety of focussed weeks and additional events. We have just enjoyed our Science Day when the children took part in lots of scientific investigations, RSPB Birdwatch, Green Week and Y6 visit to Parliament. Our Sing Musicals Arts week has had to be postponed due to the snow and illness until later in the year.

We continue to value the wonderful support and good liaison of both our community and the Parish Council. Thank you very much indeed.

WILLAND THEATRICAL SOCIETY – Report to Parish Meeting

We got together as a group in July 2013 and today we have a very friendly, happy Group (well most of the time). We have performed a Pantomime in the February of every year since then, and all of them have been very successful.

We have performed “Murder Mysteries” in the summer at the Village hall, around other villages and places, to promote our group and to raise funds for the society. We have also performed plays in the summer, but unfortunately, these do not seem so popular. However we will persevere.

Last year we had a car treasure hunt, which everyone enjoyed.

We do need new members, you don't have to act or make a fool of yourselves, we need people who are unseen, who do the scenery, props, costumes and most importantly make tea!

We do donate 25% of our profit of the Pantomime to a local cause or charity. We have donated to the Village Hall, Pre school, Community Centre and this year it was to St. Mary's Church for the restoration fund. We would like to thank everyone that has supported us. **Jeanette Simmons**

CULLOMPTON SWIMMING POOL CAMPAIGN

We are pleased to say that we have landed in our new shop! (Quite literally!) We feel spoilt with the great new space that we have, meaning we are better equipped to serve our Community great items at great prices! If you haven't managed to visit us yet, please do! You will find us at 27 Fore Street, Cullompton, not too far from our old Shop and right next door to the Co-Op!

Ways for you to help?

Do you have a spare couple of hours a week? Would like to make new friends, have a giggle and serve your Community? Well, if you answered yes to any of those questions, please pop into the shop and speak to the Staff and find out more. We would love to see you, and grateful for any help you can offer us!

We are constantly looking to collect the following items. So, if you feel that you don't have time to spare to help man the shop, the next best thing you could do for us and your Community is provide, some of the following items:-

Bric-a-Brac, Books, Linen, Electrical items (in working order only please!) Clothes, Curtains, Towels, Toys and Soft/ Cuddly toys. If you have an item that you would like to get rid of, or not sure if we would like it, either ask the staff in advance or pop us a message on our Facebook page!

Bingo events!

On the 2nd Monday of every month, we hold a Bingo at The Halfway House Pub in Willand. Why not come and join us for the night? Whatever your tipples, bring your "dabber" grab your G and T from the bar, and get ready for eyes down at 7.30! The more people who come, the bigger the cash prizes! So grab your girlfriends, Mum's, Dad's, Granny's, Neighbours....(I think you get the gist?) and take a seat ready to hear "two little ducks" "number 22"!!! Our next Monday Bingo is 14th May, then the 11th June! There is a prize draw as well!!

If you are busy and unable to make the Willand Bingo, we also hold one on the first Friday of every month in Cullompton. So pop along to the Town Hall, again, eyes down promptly for 7.30! Refreshments available and children are welcome to join in. Our next few dates for Bingo in Cullompton are 4th May, 1st June, 6th July and 3rd August. Come any try your lucky.....!!! There is also a prize draw. Many thanks for supporting us "**The Team at Cullompton Swimming Pool Campaign**".



**Come and enjoy an evening of
country music**

Wine and Beer bar available

Contact Lesley Smith for tickets (01884) 839436

Sponsored by The Butchery and Bakehouse

VOICEWORX 10TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Kentisbeare Village Hall

Saturday 12th May from 6.45 to 10.30pm

Wear a hat!

Past and present members and their families and friends are invited

Singing and Dancing to live music by FRAMED

Bring your own drinks, food provided by current members

£10 tickets from Voiceworx members or www.ticketsource.co.uk/voiceworx or

Kentisbeare shop

Children under 18 free

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