

Beneath the Vale

Published on behalf of Upper Marshwood Vale
Parish Council

Marshwood was once a **Very Important Place**; in fact rated as the most important 'hundred' (a mediaeval measure like a district) in all Dorset. So it was not surprising that some homes here were once state-of-the-art.

In 1450 or so someone came up with new technology for indoor heating and cooking.

Up till then homes were mostly a single all-purpose room under a high roof to allow smoke from an open fire to rise clear and vent via the thatched roof.

Marshwood village was at that point down in the vale next to Marshwood Castle; not far up the hill a new house was built to use an original idea - a smoke hood. These were wooden beams and screens above the fire heath that held back the smoke from the fire within a bay before guiding the smoke up to the thatch to be disbursed as usual.]

We now know this house as Higher Sminhay farm, half way up the Mutton Street hill towards the present church and school.

When brick or stone chimneys were introduced, they did a much better job and were much safer so the wooden smoke hood was to become one of the byways of history. And it was this feature or at least the possibility of a rare smoke hood that interested Ella and Piers Denny.



A new, safer entrance to Higher Sminhay farm is planned

They wanted to downsize from their farmhouse near Honiton when their daughters left home. He had studied of mediaeval art at university, which led on to him training to be a stonemason. Now his skills were those needed to retain the best and oldest of our old palaces and towers, churches and castles, follies and farms. He describes his present line of work as being a conservator. So when Higher Sminhay farm came onto the market Piers spotted something of interest under the tired roof and within the ancient walls.

He recalls: "I asked Denis if I could remove a bit of plaster so I could point my camera into the rafters. This showed smoke blackened wood so that made it very interesting. And mediaeval."

It is possible that the smoke hood as it is conserved will soon upgrade the building as Grade 2*.

What he had found was just the start of the journey of discovery and even mystery.



Much is now clear; the basic house was built nearly 600 years ago as a large single room or hall. In the middle was a permanent fireplace with a largely earth floor, under thatched local reeds. The smoke hood - a full jointed cruck and full width smoke bay - was part of the original construction a feature that lasted until the 17th century when a chimney was added with 2 fireplaces and the single room was now divided and upper floor fitted in.

Another 200 years later and another reworking; the roof was supported while the old cob walls were removed and replaced with much thinner pointed stone walls.

Other changes added a stable at one end and a cider house at the other. Unfortunately the new walls were no longer as sturdy and the weight of the roof and upstairs forced the walls to slowly bow outwards almost to the point of serious collapse. Next the stable was covered with a corrugated iron roof and converted to a

kitchen and bathroom but all was not well elsewhere when Piers and Ella purchased a potential medieval delight

and a building with serious problems.

As well as the bowed walls now at a serious angle, the old thatched roof still hidden under the tin roof was at the point of collapse and a truss had failed. But dealing with this is the sort of thing Piers and his team do for a living.

Aided by archaeological consultants most of the history of the farm has been decoded from the structure, but there does remain a small area next to the chimney on the first floor where that floor is missing and opens onto a void with no obvious function. Now almost totally hidden from view, steel frames cunningly shaped to the walls and stainless steel plates have stopped the middle-age spread.



And where the ancient roof beams had failed in their function, a softwood 'over-roof' created by Henry Russell and Dave Burleigh now carries the

load of the new and spectacular thatch *and* supports the fragile medieval roof beams now conserved and safe once again.

For Piers, years of work in restoring old buildings which includes the White Tower, at the Tower of London, Hampton Court, Truro cathedral and Glastonbury

Abbey and many more, none of this surprised him and without discussing figures, he is still within budget.

Problems illustrate the dilemmas faced by the conservation-minded owners and officials. One window has been agreed: local oakwood frames, it appears in old photos, but the other windows included a 1950's metal-framed window. These can be replaced with wooden framed alternative so will not stick out like a sore thumb.

The Dennys wanted the wooden frames fitted with 'thin' double-glazing with Victorian ripple style glass. Even 'invisible' double-glazing is deemed inappropriate in restoration projects such as Higher Sminhay.

One surprising compromise is the use of a new 'tin roof' for the old stable/kitchen extension, now a

utility area. This is matched by the new roof of a restored stone barn and forms a link with the previous incarnation of the farm with its corrugated iron



roofing of the whole building. As this had been laid over thatch, Piers has been able to use local thatchers - and local materials - to create an

appropriate and handsome roof that fully restores the good looks of this small farm.

Elsewhere lime plastering, by Ben Wood, the site manager who is leading a team of independent craftsmen on site, is bound with hemp and is being used on the walls and hand cut laths and lime plaster on ceilings, both offering improved insulation but in a traditional manner. Naturally these breathable materials have much reduced performance compared with modern materials but that is part of living in an old farmhouse.

Underfloor heating and a passive heat recovery system are allowed and should ensure a snug home.

Early in his career, Piers had worked on Bettiscombe Manor when the present owner acquired it so knew and appreciated our Vale. Although working all over the UK he has long been west-country based.

Indeed Ella and Piers see their new Marshwood home as far better suited to their family needs than their present home at Gilletts Farm in Devon and look forward to moving in, possible in October.

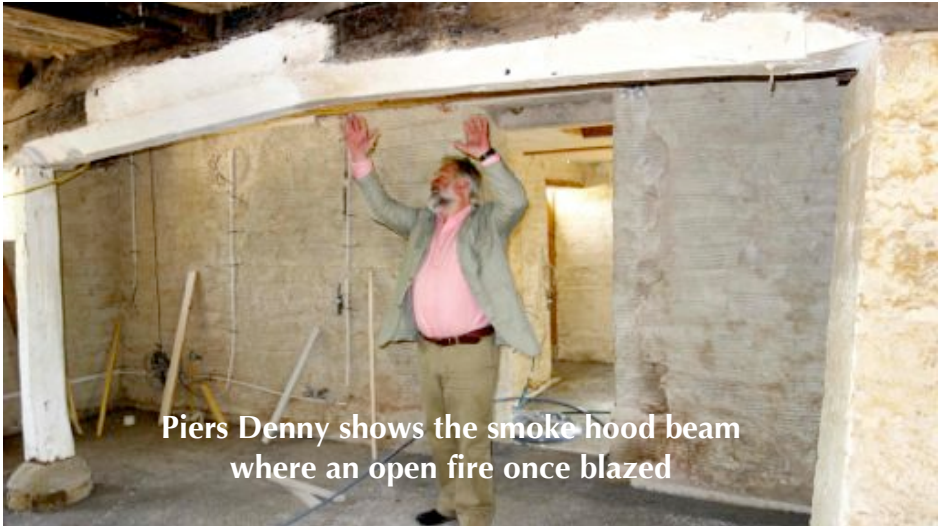
One daughter is looking forward to having a hidden ‘jib door’ entrance to her occasional bedroom, Piers will work from a barn already converted by his team and Ella is taking over the once - collapsed cider house. Now rebuilt in another yet original style, this will become her studio.

Clearly Piers is a conservator not developer, and in Higher Sminhay he has both professional interest and his home.



**Last part to be rebuilt:
Ella's Cider House**

Without a doubt, the attention to detail lavished on the farmhouse is impressive, historic details are retained and indeed featured, local materials are used, and as a result a history of the ancient farmhouse revealed.



**Piers Denny shows the smoke hood beam
where an open fire once blazed**

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Council News

Council Meetings

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------|--------------|---------------|
| Sep 19 th 2013 | 7.30 pm | Stoke Abbott | Church Hall |
| Dec 05 th 2013 | 7.30 pm | Shave Cross | Skittle Alley |
| Jan 16 th 2014 | 7.30 pm | Bettiscombe | Village Hall |
| March 20 th 2014 | 7.30 pm | Shave Cross | Skittle Alley |
| May 15 th 2014 | 7.30 pm | Bettiscombe | Village Hall |
| July 17 th 2014 | 7.30 pm | Stoke Abbott | Church Hall |
| Sep 18 th 2014 | 7.30 pm | Bettiscombe | Village Hall |
| Dec 4 th 2014 | 7.30 pm | Shave Cross | Skittle Alley |

Beneath the Vale News

4 New Videos

BTU productions shortly to be seen on the council website:
www.uppermarshwoodcouncil.org

Broadband Launch - what we are promised by BT as
DCC signs up to Superfast Dorset

Dorset Broadband Launch - a much shorter summary of that
launch

What Hastoe has done for Marshwood
- extended version of interview on p7

Designed for Marshwood - design features the new houses by
architect Matt Richardson

Superfast broadband upgrade contract signed; roll out to start in early 2014

Charles Somers who chairs our broadband team updates progress

Dorset County Council (DCC) signed a contract with BT in early July to provide a superfast broadband network upgrade across Dorset in areas not already covered commercially. Details are at <http://www.dorsetforyou.com/406894> which contains links to a press release, a video of the event prepared by the BTV team and also to a new coverage map indicating 'green' areas where superfast broadband (24Mbps) will be provided and 'yellow' areas where 'improved broadband' (2Mbps or more) will be provided: <http://mapping.dorsetforyou.com/superfast/availability/map>.

As expected the map shows that a large part of our UMV area would not get superfast; hence our application to DEFRA for additional funds.

As reported in the summer issue of BTV, DCC backed a joint UMV-Char Valley area funds application to DEFRA which was submitted in June (July).

A big 'thank you' to all those who submitted letters of support and registered interest on DCC's web-site in support of our DEFRA bid.

The feedback we have from DCC is positive and they expect to hear back from DEFRA within end September as to the next steps towards integrating additional works in our area into DCC's recently-signed contract with BT.

The new superfast broadband coverage map makes it clear however that a large part of Char Valley, and also some parts of UMV parishes, will be covered anyway under the main contract; the DEFRA-funded area will thus be adjusted to match the 'yellow' areas of the map.

We should also know, hopefully by end-year, when exactly we might expect works to begin for a superfast broadband upgrade in our area. The overall period of implementation of the BT contract will be from early 2014 until mid-2016: the broadband story is a good one but it is also rather a long one!

What Hastoe has done for Marshwood

When the idea of affordable homes for our community was first given serious thought and was featured in the Parish Plan, one vital question was posed: how to pay for these homes. Would a council step forward with a large chequebook, perhaps a wealthy benefactor, or maybe a clever financial manoeuvre could stump up the sums needed. No doubt private finance was available - if the investment was sustained by sales of a few of the permitted houses into a highly profitable free market.

But that option does not fit with many of the planning constraints of council officials who are happy with homes for the needy but resist, on our behalf, the suburbanisation of rural communities. At least one such plan was proposed for Marshwood even though it was clear to all involved that local planning regulations would never allow these homes to be built if based on that kind of finance.

Where rules and regulations exist there is often guidance as to how such schemes can be handled and soon the steering committee led by West Dorset District Councillor Mike Robinson became aware of an alternative approach: the housing association. These organisations, often formed from the privatisation of council houses are enterprises with social and environmental ideals and many are run as not-for-profit

organisations. Magna is one such company which still has homes in our area but it was soon discovered that Hastoe Housing Association was the best game in town - and they favoured our steering committee's approach for finance, and the way the project had good community support.



Hastoe's Dorchester Office

In effect Hastoe finances and has built an agreed number of homes on an nominated site as would any developer; they buy the land, get planning consent and appoint a builder to construct these homes. Now our own steering committee has become a Community Land Trust (CLT) they too are involved in the chain as freeholders of the site and houses, leasing it to Hastoe to look after - rent out, do repairs - on behalf of our CLT.

One individual appears in two roles in this saga: when serious discussions started Rob Asprey was West Dorset District Councillor's housing liaison person, and attended several meetings in that official post but his background had been in housing associations and

after changes at Hastoe, Rob reappeared wearing the tie of Regional Head of Development for the Hastoe Group - and continued his support our project. Your editor visited Hastoe offices in Dorchester.



"What were aiming to do in Marshwood are homes for local people that can be afforded by people on local wages. The scheme itself will provide seven homes of varying sizes to meet the needs of a variety of different households. We've got a requirement in the village for a variety of house types, for one, two and three bedroom accommodation and these can be for single people, couples, retired people and young families."

Rob emphasises the co-operation between us and them.

"The scheme's proposals are driven by the identified local housing needs in the area and we have been working very closely with the local community and the Community Land Trust to make sure the scheme we have designed closely meets the needs of the local people.

What's important with this particular project is that it forms part of the Government's community-led development programme where they are seeking the active involvement of the community in development proposals. In this particular case it is the Community Land Trust that has been formed and they are leading these proposals."

It was not as simple as that; as well as Hastoes' own funds, money in the form of a government grant for affordable homes is distributed and supervised by the little known Homes and Communities Authority so their approval was needed. After a potential glitch caused by an individual objector, the community reaction was well received and the grant approved.

"The actual purchase of the land and the cost of construction is funded in two ways: one is through the private finance that Hastoe raises in the form of mortgages, the remainder is by central Government in the form of a grant which makes up the difference between what we can borrow and what we need to complete the construction. We're looking at about 40% of cost being provided in the form of grant.

"We've got a very good working relationship, I would probably say excellent working relationship with the HCA. We're certainly their leading providers of rural housing in the country and we have an excellent track record of delivering our programme."

So now Hastoe can continue their work, their plans are before WDDC planners and a hearing in the next month is on the cards.

"We work very closely with local authorities and all of the other parties involved with the development process. Rural housing is a particularly difficult form of affordable housing to deliver purely because of the extra problems you face in developing in the rural environment. It is our main area of work and we are very experienced in overcoming any problems that are put in our way.

"The planning application has been submitted and registered, we are hoping that we will have a decision on that application towards the end of September. In preparing that application we have worked very closely with the planning officers of the District Council to ensure that what we have submitted stands a very good chance of being approved - but we never like to count our chickens!

"We hope that members of the local community will attend that meeting as well - and speak in favour of the development!"

Certainly members of the CLT have offered their ideas and indeed sought the opinions from a much wider public.

Some of these ideas have been incorporated in the planning application now on the Dorset For You website under application 1/D/13/000886.

This application was debated in public by the parish council who recommended acceptance by the District Council who normally have the final decision.

In his summing up, Rob gives credit to many other parties involved but is clearly impressed with what the work that our CLT has done.



**Testing the ground:
Hastoe's expert at work**

"We're the people that are tasked with delivering the scheme, but of course there are a lot of people that actually input into the process. We can't do it on our own and we have to work very, very closely with the local community to actually produce a scheme that is going to be supported. It is very important that these schemes go forward with the support of the local community.

"Hastoe has traditionally worked very closely with the communities but the fact that there is a CLT involved does actually help us to get the community behind the project. We are not aware of any logical objections to the scheme from a planning point of view, and we would hope that that there won't be any major objections to it and a lot of that is down to the consultation work that CLT has done aside from Hastoes usual consultation process."

So, on behalf of us all, thanks Rob and thanks Hastoe.

Think smart: we need our lengthsman

We are rightly proud of our lengthsman.

When the idea of each parish having their own maintenance service, odd-job person or road mender was mooted it was backed by our county council who funded the scheme. Each parish could operate such a scheme by taking on a person as employee or sub contractor to do the work that we wanted doing, paid for by funding from County.

At the time a good few parish councils saw the scheme as loading responsibilities onto the parish or had other intellectual or social objections to the concept. At the same time there were many County officials who saw the scheme as reducing their control of matters traditionally in their portfolio, a drain on their budgets and as dangerous localism. But sense prevailed and lengthsman started work around the county.

Upper Marshwood Vale espoused the idea, Councillor Bob Wyatt enthusiastically started to manage the day to day running of the scheme and Steve Lee was taken on to do the work.

Their first objective was to sort out the drains in the Vale, discovering upwards of 80, many having vanished and were useless. Time, vegetation and road changes had obscured these, usually blocking water flow and often causing flooding. Discovering such problems, working out the purpose of each drain, reopening access and

unblocking the drainpipes in an coherent and organised manner took time, but has undoubtedly made a difference to winter travel within the Vale

Whilst our scheme has been an unparalleled success, other communities were less well served as some officials reinterpreted their scheme's objectives and interfered with the work by imposing their own wishes. Indeed only two lengthsman schemes are regarded countywide as successful, with Marshwood Vale lanes in their best fettle for many years. Other local parishes have now joined in this success by contracting the same services from our Steve for their own patches.

But the nay-sayers in and out of the County Council that have long opposed the concept of lengthsman have hit back at very success of Marshwood. As too many of these unloved schemes are at best mediocre, the lengthsman in general has become a target for cuts. Whilst council funds were under less pressure our demonstrable success could be justified, but now that cuts to all council spending have been imposed, all lengthsman budgets have been halved for next year and cut completely for the following year.

How this has been achieved against the specific wishes of the community and their representatives is widely seen as the tail wagging the dog; indeed BTV is aware of severe qualms within the new executive as



**Smart thinking from Dorset County Council:
One man and this velocity patcher can fix these in minutes**

to both the less than open or democratic way that cuts have been made and the effect that these cuts will have.

Again BTV is aware that our lengthsman was extremely popular with Dorset's roads department as his efforts were unencumbered by red tape or power politics so could and would act swiftly, effectively and cheaply. One unnamed official estimated that to do Steve's work would cost up to 10 times as much for the Council to do. So the determination of some officials to kill the lengthsman and save £10,000 will cost the council £100,000. And just when those at the very top are seeking to spend the much-reduced resources more smartly.

But of course the £100,000 will not actually be spent on Marshwood Vale.

Bean counters will prevail and the work will not be done and the money will be saved. What is the real cost of

our vale being flooded once again? And again next year, and again....

Ensnconced in their warm and dry offices those officials who so disliked lengthsman localism have won the day, the council will take full responsibility for the vale; such a pity that funds won't allow this responsibility to be excercised, but that's not their fault.

Yet people are becoming aware of this conundrum, both those who will suffer drowned cars needing new engines and those who truly understand that councils are there to serve the wider community and not that the community should serve the council. As the impact of this pointless and ill-considered cut is becoming assessed, we are working out how to fight back.

Upper Marshwood Vale Parish Council and hence our community is well served by others besides Steve Lee and Bob Wyatt, and ideas as to how

we can sustain at least a minimal lengthsman service from our own limited budgets without increasing our precept through the roof are well underway. Your council is determined to sustain our good work to date; after all with the drains cleared, it will take time for branches to block them once more so we have valuable time to take action - unless we get a serious weather change of course.



**Flooding after DCC works.
But they didn't clear the
drain first!**

Other ideas are also being considered: localism, sponsorship, self-help, community funding.... please add your own ideas!

Although self-help is not seen as the answer for Upper Marshwood Vale, other parishes differ. BTV is aware of one coastal village that will take up this option but this has many more residents of all ages, far fewer lanes or roads, and chalky terrain with

fewer streams or winterbournes. Their approach is being backed by the County Council with training and help.

Originally each parish chose to join in the lengthsman scheme or to step aside, now each parish now has a chance to do there own thing. Marshwood with its tendencies to flood, miles of lanes, hills, fields & springs and few residents has very different needs than even neighbouring communities.

Steve and Bob's local knowledge of our problem places and weak spots is not available to outsiders from Dorchester and is knowledge that has to be preserved and used.

But what has been discovered by digging into this subject is that we in the Vale share both with others in a similar communities **and** senior County Council officials, a concern about the effects of the lengthsman scheme closure, **and** a determination to think smarter and spend more effectively.

So what is needed now is to come up with a new scheme to provide the lengthsman services for the Vale and perhaps more broadly, which is either partially funded or locally resourced and can show how County Council investment will be less costly than the alternatives.

Smart thinkers: why not apply to join in a working party or even a think tank perhaps?

If interested, contact the editor or one of the editorial team, see p22

Hester Pinney part 2



Hester's London: a recreated street scene

Hester's family were concerned about her 'low' London life. Her puritan father, Rev. John Pinney, was appalled at her lifestyle, in particular her living in taverns and the cheapest of lodgings as she was reluctant to spend money on herself and never bought a house in London.

Soon after, her brother Nathaniel wrote to her:

"a good name is better than pretious oyntment and I must farther tell you that reputacion where God hath accompanied it with tollerable gifts and Beauty hath commanded a greater and better fortune than money It Selfe, although that will not be wanting to you neither"

From this we can gather that her racy life style had been noted and that even a brother was aware of his sister's beauty. Yet it seems that the obvious rumours of her unusual relationship with her (business) partner, failed to dent her good name.

At last when both Hester and George Both were in their 60's his wife died Hester so they finally came

to live together in his Piccadilly town house in 1724. Their relationship was openly recognised by other family members at last, but Booth died just two years later, leaving Hester the Manor of Monken Hadley (then a wealthy parish north of London) to Hester in his will.

Booth gave credit to other male Pinneys; he claimed that Hester had come into a:

"Fortune by a providence through the interest and diligence of her brother" and "com by an Estate so Easily".

But this conventional view undoubtedly suited Hester's public perception. She used middlemen and professional lawyers to chase up defaulting debts. She called herself Booth's 'secretary' and was paid for it, although this was more of his representative than would nowadays be understood by that role; his executive PA perhaps.

By adopting the role of power behind the throne, no doubt this low profile allowed her to get on with business without interference.

At the same time the closeness of their relationship was indicated by Hester being made sole executrix of his will. Her love for the Earl of Warrington - when his brother died, George inherited from his father - was in spite of his marriage to Mary and a daughter. After his wife died Hester moved in with him but he died two years later.

Their liaison would have started at a time when public comment was highly restricted by libel laws. By the period when unfettered and often scurrilous comment by Samuel Johnson, William Hogarth and others flourished in pamphlets or news-sheets, they were an established item, their loving relationship mitigated by Hester's frugal lifestyle and opponents frightened perhaps, by her fierce reputation for litigation.



Dr Pam Sharpe

Her modern day supporter, Dr Pam Sharpe claims that the Pinney family fortune derived from Hester's

entrepreneurial activities rather than the money from brother Azariah's interests West Indies in Nevis. In terms of cash flow this may well have been true.

Whatever was intended at the time of Azariah's exile, Nevis was in practice a long-term investment in a new market that was to peak a long way into the future at the start of the 19th century.

Some Nevis trading did take place early on but, without any family involvement in the UK import side, profits were good but limited. In the meantime, Hester's dynamism filled gaps such as Nathaniel's involvement in the African trade that, with others such as the East India Company, were hyped into the disaster of the South Sea Bubble.

However exalted her associates, however strong her portfolio of investments, Hester always saw Bettiscombe as her true home and with the death of her parents and later her brothers she became the financial matriarch of the Pinneys.

Finally when Nathaniel died 1724, Hester was her own mistress and no longer dependent on family support of her ventures. She even took on the remnants of Nathaniel's East India and South Sea stock and helped his wife Naomi and son Azariah with family business.

Dr Sharpe claims that:
"In 1726 most of the correspondence concerned Naomi and her son, Azariah's desire to buy the farm and manor at Bettiscombe, where they were tenants.

"This successful move was largely financed by Hester, rather than any

money left by Nathaniel, who had lost most of his fortune in the South Sea Bubble.

"The new house built at Bettiscombe by Azariah Junior, was still owned by the Pinney family until the 1980s."

Buying Bettiscombe Manor may have been discussed or a life-lease may have been purchased, but the freehold of Bettiscombe was not owned by the Pinneys until 1934 when Michael Pinney, with his new fortune was able to buy the manor and, almost immediately, sell on to many of the local farms to the tenant farmers.

Also the 'new house' was built by Nathaniel in 1699, not by Azariah, his younger son who was born 9 years later. Perhaps their discussions related to repairs and extension to Nathaniel's house, which happened after a fire in 1733 although at that time Azariah was only 25.

Of much greater importance locally was Hester's help in a bid for the Pilsdon estate that the family considered buying. With her help they raised £8,000 to bid unsuccessfully for this manor which is the neighbour manor to Bettiscombe.

Hester is seen by many academics and writers today as a pioneer of women's rights and hence a feminist; such a viewpoint is too narrow. Dr Sharpe: "She was a working tradeswoman cultivated by an aristocrat: perhaps it was only in such a mercurial position that she managed to divorce her sexual from

her business reputation in such an way."

Again Dr Sharpe gets to the point: "Was it Hester's nonconformist network, rooted in the West Country and with long-standing ties across generations that fostered trust between lender and borrower? Or was it more important to have access to Booth and his network, giving Hester the legal backing to pursue any and every missing loan?"

Tough, then - but caring, Hester Pinney never married in spite of many proposals of marriage noted in family correspondence.

In spite of her acknowledged intimate relationship with George Booth there are no details of any children although this omission could reflect the mores and habits of the age when such inconveniences could be sent away, rather than any pre-feminist tendencies. In the case of Hester Pinney, her family upbringing and caring nature would have made this most unlikely.

She was born at Broadwindsor on 3rd July 1658 and died in 1739. Despite her wealth, Hester never had a permanent home of her own – instead she had at least 34 different addresses during the 58 years that she lived in London and usually lodged in taverns, with professional people or customers.

She owned very few clothes and rarely needed more than one trunk to move her belongings, although her accounts suggest that she was fond of a tittle. She was renowned for her reliability, persistence, hard work and plain – occasionally rude – manner of speaking.

Letter to the editor

Dear Editor,

I feel the need to share my story with you and readers, I can't sleep and there are issues around the affordable housing project I feel need sorting. It saddens me to know that a single individual is hell-bent on poisoning the community about the project.

It was a bleak morning last year when through my letterbox popped an invite to a meeting at Marshwood Church with a picture of some possible homes for village people who needed a house of their own.

A godsend - especially for my own daughter, who was born 10 weeks early, suffered a lack of oxygen leaving her deaf and with mental health issues.

After a failed relationship sent her home pregnant some 2 years ago, she has turned out to be a fantastic mother, very loving and totally devoted to her own daughter.

Marshwood is what she knows and is safe and happy here and I know there are 16 more local families each as deserving of a home here.

Having been a part of the CLT for over a year I can hand on heart say I can't believe any wrong doing by others involved.

Mr Dickenson is one of the nicest people I have met; very community spirited and focused on the good he can do as a land owner. Mr Robinson a sound man who has the very best interests of the community at heart.

Of course I want this project to succeed not just for my daughter's sake but for all the others we as the CLT have encouraged to get on the housing register.

It is an amazing opportunity to help the next generation gain independence.

Regards, Ali Edwards

CURRY NIGHT AT BETTISCOMBE VILLAGE HALL

Friday 11 October from 7.30 pm

Why bother to cook at home tonight.

**Come and join us for a choice of Curries,
mild to medium hot, with accompaniments.**

Including Tea or Coffee

£8 Adults, £4 Children.

Bring your own drinks

Table Quiz - Raffle

Numbers are limited so please book your table with

Shelia Johnson on 01297 489590

Editorial



An unusual crop has been noticed around our Vale. Growing rapidly to a height of up to 6 feet, these display strange markings on their colourful, rectangular blooms. Not seen hereabouts for several years, one common feature attracting wild-life interest is the 'For Sale' legend.

Yes the estate agent signs are in blossom all of a sudden.

It may well be that the national economy has eased enough for those who wanted to move in previous years now can see their opportunity to move on. Certainly headlines claiming a rise of 3% in as many months, do not encourage taking the long view and sitting tight. It may be that for some village life has not fulfilled its pleasant promises and neighbourly niceties.

And the sale of one of our oldest homes is motivated by other reasons as our first article makes clear.

But it is the sale of a farm - and there have been several that underline the difficulty of farmers in a society that takes more notice of alien regulations imposed by eurocrats more interested in the needs of peasant farmers of kindred nationality.

Farming and especially milking herds may well be a dying trade, the daily milk lorries an obsolescent anachronism for Dorset.

Extreme weather, zealous over-regulation, supermarkets, point a finger and blame someone else. But perhaps it is us who exacerbate the problem by buying cheap milk or dairy products often from half a world away.



One long-term resident commented sadly that Bettiscombe and Marshwood may well be listening to something that we will miss badly in the future: the gentle lowing of cows as they meander in in to be milked.

Beneath the Vale: Infrequently Asked Questions

Who asked you to waste our rates money on an occasional local magazine; the news is old when we get it and covers things I don't want to hear about?

In the Parish Plan, parish council communication was badly rated by 82% of residents, yet the expensive magazine efforts of West Dorset District Council and Dorset County Council were disliked almost as much. The Plan's recommendation, later endorsed by the whole council, was to create a newsletter. Some councillors wanted a very simple newsheet photo copied and hand distributed on an ad hoc basis; others wanted to use the internet to distribute as happens elsewhere.

As one who had contributed to the PP on communications, your editor suddenly found himself on the council and offering his no-longer professional services to the community at large. Experienced in producing community news periodicals, I asked to have a small but representative editorial board rather than working with the full council on each issue.

On this basis we got consent for a well-presented, 3-monthly printed and internet distributed newsletter that properly reflected our Vale and our community.

Sometimes the news is a bit heavy for such a small community; can't we be entertained as well as informed?

Whilst we do not seek to report controversy, we will not shy away from any news that is important to the

community and we welcome contributions. We also try to balance news from the very different communities within in the four parishes

Colour printing is far more expensive than printing in black and white; why should we afford it?

Now we are attracting paying advertisers - thanks guys - we are paying more for some colour printing. So the overall cost to the council of printing remains very similar - and we all get a smarter-looking product.

Yes printing BTV is the largest single expense; yes we did get alternative quotes; yes we routinely lean on Harry at Creeds to get more colour, more pages and a nicer paper; yes he routinely supports us by giving us a better deal, and yes it gives us much pleasure to support a Vale enterprise such as Creeds in return.



The very printer used by Creeds for Beneath the Vale

We hope to add more advertisers and make a small charge to reduce the net cost of BTV, but your announcements will remain free to residents.

Why do you post my copy of Beneath the Vale - I live in the village so it would be far cheaper to put them at the shop or to push it through my letterbox?

When both the Parish Plan and the survey that preceded it were put together it was distributed by hand. Each member of the PP team took a few copies to their neighbours, others filled in the gaps but it was time consuming and expensive to us in fuel costs. We who were involved sought a better way.

For those on the internet the answer was clear - email copies out, and post only to who do not have computers. Indeed when we started Beneath the Vale it was expected that more and more residents would accept e-mailed versions - in colour throughout and instantly delivered, so the print run would decrease to only those more elderly who don't do emails.

Why don't you email Beneath the Vale to me?

We were surprised that more and more asked for the printed versions as well as getting electronic versions. It seems that the printed versions gets a family read and that readers like to peruse the different stories. So our print run has actually increased and a few copies get sent on to relatives and those residents of Marshwood or Stoke Abbott who have moved away.

But we will add your name to our email distribution even if, as most do, you want the printed versions as well. Or, as the internet clogs up, some find the email or pdf version is too much to

take and we will remove you from the list if you ask us. But one way or another we try to reach everyone who lives in the Upper Marshwood Vale, that is our brief.

Stamps are so expensive these days, do we really have to post it

We have to reach those who do not use a computer so copies are put in envelopes and labelled by the team; then they are handed to a heavy postal user for franking. They get a better cost per copy at discounted rates so we also get the benefit. No other distribution that we have discovered is as economical; others have offered but cannot match these savings and deliver all our copies. A few extra copies are left at the pubs and the shop.

Other than the high value items of printing, envelopes, labels and posting there are no costs. Not computer consumables not even mileage. This also allows excellent value for advertisers seeking to reach the whole of Upper Marshwood Vale.

Copies of all issues are to be found on the council website for fans, families and friends of Upper Marshwood Vale worldwide.

Also the BTV team are producing video coverage of local events and situations; these can also be seen on the council website.

Don't forget to let us know any changes of address or house owner. Our database was compiled over 2½ years ago so help us get up to date.

The Silly Page

Alternative definitions

1. Coffee (n.), a person who is coughed upon.
2. Flabbergasted (adj.), appalled over how much weight you have gained.
3. Abdicate (v.), to give up all hope of ever having a flat stomach.
4. Esplanade (v.), to attempt an explanation while drunk.
5. Willy-nilly (adj.), impotent.
6. Negligent (adj.), describes a condition in which you absentmindedly answer the door in your nightie.
7. Lymph (v.), to walk with a lisp.
8. Gargoyle (n.), an olive-flavoured mouthwash.
9. Flatulence (n.) the emergency vehicle that picks you up after you are run over by a steamroller.
10. Balderdash (n.), a rapidly receding hairline.
11. Thesaurus (n.), A dinosaur that studies words.
12. Blonde jokes (n.) Jokes short enough for men to understand.
13. Oyster (n.), a person who sprinkles his conversation with Yiddish words.
14. Circumvent (n.), the opening in the front of boxer shorts.
15. Infantry (n.), A small, immature tree.
16. Counterfeiters: (n.) Workers who install kitchen cabinets.
17. Cauterize, v. Made eye contact with her.
18. Hangover, (n.), The wrath of grapes.
19. Oxymoron (n.), Someone who is as dumb as an ox.
20. Paradox: (n.), Two physicians.

An Arab was walking through the Sahara desert, desperate for water, then he saw something, far off in the distance.

Hoping to find water, he walked towards the image, only to find a little old Jewish man sitting at a card table with a bunch of neckties laid out on it.

The Arab asked, "Please, I'm dying of thirst, can I have some water?"

The man replied "I don't have any water, but why don't you buy a tie?

Here's one that goes nicely with your robes."

The Arab shouted, "I don't want a tie, you idiot, I need water!"

"OK, so don't buy a tie. But to show you what a nice guy I am, I'll tell you that over that hill there, about 5 miles, is a nice restaurant my brother runs.

Walk that way, they'll give you all the water you want."

The Arab thanked him and walked away towards the hill and eventually disappeared.

Three hours later the Arab came crawling back to where the man was sitting behind his card table. He said "I told you, about 5 miles over that hill.

Couldn't you find it?"

The Arab rasped "I found it all right. They wouldn't let me in without a tie."

Marshwood Community Land Trust

To comply with our Standing Orders, the CLT is obliged to hold an open Annual General Meeting within six months of end of our year which is 31st March. This meeting has now been arranged for 23rd September 2013

An open Annual General Meeting of the Marshwood CLT will be held at Blackdown Village Hall on Monday 23rd September 2013 at 7.30pm to which all are welcome to attend.

The business to be conducted will include the following;

To receive the statement of account for the year, elect the Directors to serve for the next 12 months, receive an update on our planning application for the Affordable Houses and take any questions.

This should only be a short meeting to comply with our rules and a report and the accounts will appear in the next issue of BTV and will also be posted on the CLT web site: www.marshwoodclt.org.uk

CLT Secretary. Emma Turner E-mail emt74@live.co.uk

Your Community Land Trust website: <http://marshwoodclt.org.uk>

Facebook page:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Marshwood-CLT/234577716655748>

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