

Summer  
2015

# Beneath the Vale

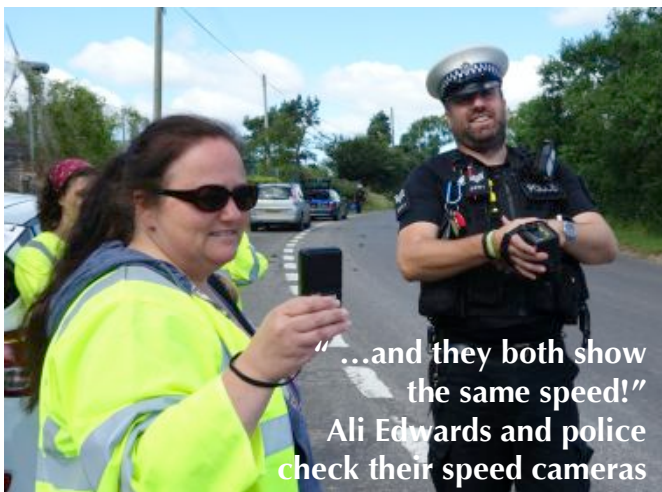
Published on behalf of Upper Marshwood Vale  
Parish Council

**W**hispers that, to coincide with our MP's visit to watch the Marshwood Speed Camera Group at work, a real Police speed check would be performed turned out to be entirely true. Oliver Letwin had agreed to see for himself the real position and to sample the amazing statistics that are being turned up by the team and these are backed by official figures from the police themselves.

Several drivers got themselves a mention, including one who argued the toss with the two unnamed police officers who had arrived from the Poole area in their unmarked car.

In the meantime Ali Edwards and her team of Emma (and Finn) Turner, Ann-Marie Chapman and the indefatigable District Councillor, Jacqui Sewell were busy checking the speeds of cars coming up the hill to the school.

Saturday, July 25<sup>th</sup> was tagged "the busiest day of the year" as holiday traffic mingled with local errands.



"...and they both show the same speed!"  
Ali Edwards and police check their speed cameras

With schools all over the country closed for the summer holidays thereby releasing happy youngsters to enjoy their long awaited break, the traffic matched the peak flows that school attendance normally brings.

So this was no freak event but typical of a normal weekday morning between 8 and 9.30 am

Oliver Letwin was not surprised. Fully equipped with the safety jacket that draws attention to the Group at work as along with the whole team they checked the speed of several motorists, all before the Police joined the team - after all he had studied the statistics:

"With these results it shows there is a real problem with this section of the road made worse at school times. They should convince, so we will be able to get some real action from the authorities." he said.

Your Vale News  
Issue 17

## ***Ali Edwards tells us what the Group is trying to achieve and how you can help***

Marshwood Speed Watch Group is actively trying to reduce speed through the village. Word is getting out that not only do we have an active SWG but the police are frequently here also doing speed checks, not only with the obvious police vehicle but also with the unmarked car.

Our aim isn't to get people into trouble as we can't fine or give points on licenses, we only want to slow traffic to make the road safer. There are a few drivers who fail to slow down even when they are aware we have their details, the fastest recorded speed from one of our sessions is in excess of 60mph, thankfully in this instance the police were also monitoring at another point in the village.

Having observed the traffic during Speed Watch sessions, I believe that our presence is slowing traffic. In particular, when the road is busier we see a lower percentage of offending motorists. This is due to the drivers being flashed by oncoming cars as a warning to slow down, which is what we want.

We have noticed the parents arriving at school actually seem to slow traffic, once the school day has begun there seems to be an increase in speed.

The road is much busier than council officials suggested in a recent Safe Route to School Appeal where an average of just 50 cars per hour through the village was put forward.

We are recording over 160 cars per hour, this included one session when the A35 was closed, it did increase the average a little but we have already set up the session and it does reflect a more accurate picture as the A35 is closed frequently.

During this session 246 cars passed through in an hour, not the busiest session we have recorded. Local residents who have come to talk to us during sessions have been very supportive of our aims and we have had many comments that we are making a difference, certainly the High Viz jackets seem to have an immediate slowing effect with the majority of drivers. If we have the manpower to be out there all the time it would be a very different road.



**Oliver Letwin with Jacqui Sewell, Ali Edwards  
& the SWG team, + two real policemen**

I have to acknowledge also that there are some who think that there is too much attention given to the efforts to calm Marshwood traffic. It is a fact that nobody has been killed or seriously hurt in the village as a result of an accident. The wide stretch of road from Bramblehay towards the school does perhaps not always feel as though 30mph is appropriate and it has been said that 40mph would be more sensible, dropping down to 20mph at the school because motorists are likely to forget speed limit due to width and rural feel on that stretch, speed up only to be caught at school by law enforcement.

Another comment has been expressed that Marshwood is targeted for financial gain by law enforcement teams. Money raised from fines during sessions can amount to considerable sums, if for example if 68 motorists are all fined at £100 that's over £6,800. Having received an email from one of the law enforcement officers who have been out to conduct sessions I have to say that the speed and lack of attention shown by some drivers is a concern for all those who have observed traffic behaviour. The majority of offending drivers are not local; during a session in March, 68 motorists were travelling at 36+, mph, only one motorist was local to the village, another 22 were from a 10 mile radius. Maybe we need some bolder reminders of the speed limit, as a driver I do look for streetlights as an



Indicator that 30 mph is the limit. Streetlights are not for Marshwood but maybe some road signs reminding motorists are essential.

Many times a vehicle has come into our view travelling at the speed limit of 30 with a trail of cars behind, acting as a pace setting vehicle they are clearly holding the ones behind back. Well done to all these drivers who remain firm on adhering to the speed limit even with the pressure to speed up from those riding their rear bumpers.

On one particular session at the school during the early afternoon when the children were expected to be crossing the road to use the field our group were rather shocked at the speeds recorded. 25 vehicles in an hour approached the school exceeding 36 mph. 13 of these exceeding 40 mph, one at 59mph, thankfully when he came towards the school the children were safely in the field and not crossing the road.

Up-to-date data collected from sessions is available if anyone would like to see it or if you feel you would like to join the group, new volunteers are always welcome.

*Recent information is shown on page 17*

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## Calling all Marshwood Vale residents!

*Joy McClellan writes*

The committee of Bettiscombe hall is looking for new members. At our recent AGM, to which all were invited, we were very disappointed that only one extra person attended.

The hall is necessary to our community and without a committee to keep it going and raise funds, it will not survive. This would be so sad as we have no other hall to use in Upper Marshwood Vale and therefore the functions you all enjoy coming to would not take place. It is fun to play your part and only involves a small amount of your time.

You are invited to attend a short meeting with refreshments on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> September at 8pm in the hall for an informal chat. If you are interested in joining our committee please phone `Henry Smith on 01308 868313 to let him know you will be coming.

Thanking you in anticipation.

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## Clarification

The editor and editorial team prepared the article on page 5 of the last issue in good faith and were accurate in that it reflected the experience of those from Marshwood who were at the meeting. It has been brought to our attention that the report implied that Thorncombe Parish Council acted in some way improperly.

But we did not mention the Parish Council in the article as alleged by some who did not attend the meeting, so we are entirely content to deny any such implications, however they have arisen, and to state unequivocally that this was never our intention.

Matthew Bowditch, who also chairs the editorial team, has written to the parties involved and offered his apologies for the misunderstanding.

In the words of our - and Thorncombe's - District Councillor, Jacqui Sewell: "We must put this misunderstanding behind us and move forward."

## **Council Finances**

The Council agreed its budget in January 2015. The Precept, which is the demand to West Dorset District Council for funds to maintain the Council was set at £8712. In addition to this the Council received a Government Grant of £233.

One of the principle tasks undertaken by the Council over the last few years, which has received very positive feedback, is the taking over of the lengthsman scheme for the four parishes.

Unfortunately, due to budget cuts Dorset County Council are no longer able to provide funds for this scheme, therefore the Council was forced with the choice of either ceasing this operation or paying for it. The Council has decided to continue with this for the next few years. The cost to each household, based on the D tax band, for running the council is £28.50 per year; 55p a week.

### **Budget 2015/16**

<b>Income</b>		<b>Expenditure</b>	
Government Grant	233	Lengthsman	4185
Advertising	480	Saleries, Office & training	3530
From Reserves	458	Insurance	280
Precept Demand	8712	Stationery	65
		Newsletter	100
		Audit	100
		Website	200
		Grants	70
		Room Hire	100
		Subscriptions	230
		Neighbourhood Plan	150
	<b>9883</b>		<b>9883</b>

Here is an extract from the Annual Accounts Statement for 2014/15.

Balance B/forward	1580	Staff Costs	3122
Precept	8500	Other Payments	7100
Other Receipts	5336	Total Expenditure	10222
Total	15416	Balance C/forward	5194

By careful good housekeeping we have increased our reserves to a level in line with national policy for Council accountancy.

John Vanderwolfe, FILCM,  
Responsible Financial Officer

## Getting Superfast

*As the month of October approaches so does our date for the first installations of superfast broadband in our area - or so Charles Somers has been told.*

*But what is it like to get this huge increase in speed?*

*Cornwall is well ahead of us and has already been converted as a result of early funding for remote communities. Tom Goskar writes a blog as part of his internet services and this describes what you might expect.*

When I first moved to Penzance in January 2012, BT Openreach's fibre rollout was already well underway in Cornwall. The Penzance exchange was due to be enabled that May, and in my mind I thought that a few months would be well worth the wait. Well, it turned out to be more than a few months!

In February 2012 I registered my number with Superfast Cornwall to be informed when fibre of one kind or another (Fibre to the Cabinet – FTTC, or Fibre to the Premises – FTTP) would be enabled on my line. By the end of August this year (2013) I decided to check my number again as I hadn't heard anything and there seemed to be a fair number of BT Openreach vans and roadworks in the area.

The line checker came back with a friendly message saying that my property was eligible for FTTP – one of the few that would receive ultra-fast broadband.

After carefully reinstating my jaw from its newly found location on the desk in front of me, I looked up BT's



packages to find out how much it would cost.

We currently pay £25/month (plus line rental) for a standard unmetered ADSL connection which on a good day peaked at 11.25Mbps down / 0.7Mbps up. BT offered a 160Mbps/20Mbps FTTP connection for £35 with free installation.

That's a lot of extra speed for not a huge sum of money – and when you work from home and are reliant on broadband any increase in speed, especially upload speed, can make a huge difference.



Naturally, I signed up and was given two dates for the installation. The first visit would be for the fibre to be run to our house on 20th September, then an engineer would install the remainder of the fibre into the house and to connect up the new fibre modem on 1st October. I'd waited this long, so thought that those dates were reasonable.

Then a few days later I received a call from BT Openreach saying that they have had to delay the installation, and I was given new dates for the visits. The external work would be completed on 4th October, and the engineer visit would be on the 15th.

A bit of calendar re-shuffling, but still OK. A tiny part of me wondered if it would even be possible, and the dates would march off into the distant future.

I was wrong.

On 2th September at about 9am, there was a knock on the door. "Hello, I'm here to install your fibre broadband".

The "external" appointment, I was told, meant that it was optional for me to be at home. But be warned – that's not always true. In the case of our house, we have a locked rear courtyard which we needed to let the Openreach engineer into. It can also be helpful if you are in to help the installer know where you would like the fibre to enter your property

They also tend to respond favourably to offers of tea.

An armoured cable needs to be run from either the pole (in my case) or underground to your property, terminating in a small box called a Consumer Splice Point (CSP) over or near the point where the fibre enters a hole in your wall/window casement.



Bear in mind that the steel-reinforced outer cable cannot be bent along a right angle – there must be smooth curves for it to turn a corner, and so this may affect where the cable is installed.

Once the armoured cable and CSP are in place, then the fibre itself is "fusion spliced" at the fibre terminator on the pole/duct/cabinet (delete as appropriate) and "blown" with compressed air down the cable. As I typed this, that's just what they did. The BT Openreach engineers who undertook the installation were great – professional and courteous.

The second BT Openreach engineer was due to visit sometime between 8am and 1pm. Since I am up early most days, I made sure that the room where the equipment was to be installed (two boxes attached to the wall) was clear, and furniture moved out of the way. The engineer called at about 8.15am to say that he was 15 minutes away – really great to get advance notice. To cut a long story short, he had to drill a hole through an extremely thick (90cm) solid granite wall, which he managed very well considering how difficult a task that is.

The engineer fitted the equipment to the wall where I wanted it and ran the fibre cable through the hole and outside to the Consumer Splice Point (CSP).

Next, some of this spare fibre was carefully cut using a splice tool to ensure a clean, flat cut. It was then cleaned with alcohol. The other end of the cable going into the house was prepared in the same way.

The engineer opened a flight case revealing the impressively named “Fusion Splicer” which uses a short burst of electricity to fuse the glass fibres together.

It uses a digital microscope as to help align the fibres perfectly. As soon as the fibre was spliced, the connection light on the VDSL modem lit up, and technically, it was online.



The engineer carefully wound the excess cable back into the CSP, and the job was done. We connected up the BT HomeHub 3 and checked the connection via ethernet, which worked perfectly.

A quick speed test came in at 96Mbps down, and about 8Mbps up. The engineer assured me that this would increase as the connection stabilised. He finished late morning and for the rest of the day the connection speed resolutely dropped to about 50Mbps/9Mbps wired straight in.

However, this morning the speed was a different picture. Success! And a lot faster than the advertised 160Mbps service that I’m paying for.

But a word of warning – as soon as you start to use wifi, watch the speeds drop away. There are so many factors that can affect your connection.

Wifi and internal cabling aside, the FTTP connection was a complete success. The time I had to wait between the first and second appointments was rather long, but I



suppose we're only in the early days of the fibre rollout, and more engineers will need to be trained up.

All-in-all, my installation took about 10 hours to complete over the two days. I'd advise you to be in for the first visit, no matter what BT say!

The connection is now phenomenally fast, and it's one of those rare moments when you find yourself saying that the wait was worth it.

I just uploaded an 11MB photo to Flickr in just a few seconds – this would have taken 3-4 minutes just two days ago. My network attached storage (NAS) is suddenly a lot more capable, allowing me to log in remotely to retrieve files without an agonising wait. Not to mention HD streaming. All at the same time if we want to.

If you're thinking about ordering fibre broadband, don't hesitate. Not long until I can remove the copper wires altogether!

*Through Charles' contacts it seems that most of us will get a FTTP connection. This means a direct link via fibre to your home or premises, ie the fastest, reliable and most future proof of all connections.*

*We had expected the cheaper FTTC - Fibre To The Cabinet or FTTrN - Fibre To The remote Node (= pole-mounted) with the last link via the existing copper cables but Marshwood seems destined to get the improved connection and putting us on parity with Tom In Cornwall. His contact confirms the start date of October and that several ISPs but not all will handle superfast hereabouts.*



## Dorchester democracy

*What happens to your vote.*

**I**t is usual practice for candidates for the district council to invite up to 4 observers to join them at the count and to see that the democratic will is observed. Your editor and a member of our editorial team, Ali Edwards were asked by Jacqui Sewell, prospective candidate for Broadwindsor to join in and watch the count; a truly fascinating experience to find just out how this occurs.

First of all we were in a large room with a rectangle of tables facing outward to leave 3-4 metres space for candidates and observers. Within the hallowed ground were the council's teams of (mostly) women and men who sat at the tables facing outwards. 4 collation tables carried a laptop onto which the results would appear. Other staff waited ready to pass the voting slips, collect summary sheets and act to keep things happening smoothly.

Matt Prosser who is returning officer led the team that supervised the whole event. As the sound levels creep up, occasionally he used the public address system to call for quiet, pointing out that this was a working environment.

Already each voter's individual choice for MP and district councillor had been placed in the familiar ballot box, sealed for transit to the parliamentary declaration

Each ballot box was emptied, turned upside down to show they were empty - and the count proceeded.

What happened next was dependent on how many candidates stood for each area: a single candidate meant that the slips were separated, marked off with paper

clips in tens, collated in hundreds and marked with pre-printed and colour slips. It is these blocks of votes that are easy to total onto summary sheets. This is what can be seen in the background of TV coverage where the layout of tables in what often looks like an aircraft hanger, but is probably in reality a sports centre.

For larger wards with two or more councillors to be elected, special sheets with a sticky strip are used. Each voting slip is placed on the sheet and fixed down, The next slip is placed next to the first with its row of crosses seen and the candidates' details obscured and so-on until ten slips are affixed.

It is the work of a moment to pass across the completed sheets to another whose job is to count the number of crosses against each candidate's position and to enter these figures on a summary sheet.

Possibly not be the most efficient system but it works and checks any errors. It is hard to see how any non-computer system could improve on this and it certainly generates a paper trail, enabling mistakes to be isolated and quickly corrected.

Those with suspicious minds could envisage how such mistakes could occur, but unless these are random, it would need a large-scale event involving several

counters for these to remain hidden.

It does allow the observer and the ever-present media to see the piles of counted votes building up, useful when an upset is taking place.

Allowing open access to the observers and media permits full scrutiny - and generates a real buzz. This is how the media can make informed guesses as to the results often before the count has been completed.

Candidates, clearly identified by all hues of rosette wandered around, often greeting opposing candidates and then whispering the story behind their opponents latest scandal to their observers. Unlike parish councils, the party emblems are on display as groups coalesced and split, bringing a new level of meaning to 'party atmosphere'.

Officials moved quietly about their business. It is possible to guess the size of votes as they mount up but it is far harder to be sure which candidate's pile is which. As the counting tables cleared, tension became obvious and we moved to where the announcement was to be made.

Results had become clear to officials so bearing a note of the numbers of votes cast,

Matt Prosser called the prospective councillors outside to a lobby where he could discuss the results and, if accepted by the candidates, to announce the election.

In front of a large Dorset presentation logo, Matt quietly addressed the candidates giving them the results, usually confirming the candidates' true suspicions.

A quick huddle and it is all over. Then came the public announcement. He started his speech in a traditional manner "As returning officer I declare...."

The successful candidate(s) made a speech, usually thanking the team, before they are removed from their supporters for official photos and other formalities.

Back in the hall, the name of the council being elected is replaced on the counting tables by an alphabetically inferior name, the workers cease their chat as more slips are produced, and it all starts again.

## **Cream Teas at Marshwood**

**Everyone is invited to come to a Cream Tea  
in Marshwood Church on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> August, 2.30-5.00pm**

Hopefully we shall be basking in sunshine overlooking the  
Marshwood Vale.

Otherwise we shall be dreaming of the view and enjoying cream teas  
in the church.

**Charge for 2 scones with clotted cream and home-made  
strawberry jam**

**- £4.00 in aid of Marshwood Church.**

## Oliver's election

*Outranking local councillors, the election of a Member of Parliament is by far the most important event for local democracy; Oliver Letwin recalls how it happens:*



In the case of polling stations the votes are all in ballot boxes, in the case of postal votes they are all gathered by the district council and are brought to the place where the counting goes on - St Osmond's Middle school - and there it's a case of opening boxes and taking out the white coloured votes.

An awful lot of individuals who do the counting start at 10 o'clock at night when the polls close - by about 11 with the boxes arriving, they have to sort the slips out very carefully into separate piles for the MP and for councillors both of which were voted for and placed in the same ballot box.

With all the pile of all the votes for all the candidates trying to become MPs - that whole process took until about 1.30-2 in the morning. Then long rows of people, all of them employees of the the district council started separating the votes and put them into bundles with blue paper

attached for Conservatives and yellow for the Lib-Dems and so on.

They have a consistent size for each bundle marked with the candidates' colour.

In the middle of the room there are a series of tables and the bundles are placed into standard sized boxes so gradually, as these boxes expand, you can see how many votes have been counted for each candidate. It was different this time as I was further ahead on this occasion than all the previous times put together.

So normally this was a fairly nail-biting experience as I might be a few hundred votes ahead and then somebody else would get a few hundred votes to get ahead, so right to the end one was on tenterhooks. This time I had a rather larger majority, so it was pretty obvious from a fairly early stage that this was the way it was going to go so it was less exciting than might be an overall majority it has been in the past - which I welcomed.

But of course there was a much more exciting thing, a much more important thing going on at the same time all over the country. At the same moment, in other places, other Tory MPs were also being elected and news of this was filtering through from TV and my Blackberry phone via a communications

network so that it became clear that it was going to be a much more interesting election than the exit poll had suggested and that there might be an overall majority which nobody had predicted.

So it was very interesting and exciting time from my point-of-view, since I was not just concerned about being elected but question of if I would form part of the next government.

It is inevitable that in the end, someone will work out a way that does not involve pieces of paper and people counting things for a very long time, but obviously the length of time it takes is secondary to the question of making sure that it is fair and transparent and everybody can see it is fair.

The great advantage of the paper system is that although it is laborious, each party can send representatives into the room, you can see it right there in front of your eyes, people are peering over to see if anything has been put in the wrong pile.

It's never happened in West Dorset, but there have been cases elsewhere of someone secreting a box of papers for one candidate under a chair. That kind of thing gets spotted: it's a very good system for ensuring all is fair above board.

## Stephen Lee

### Landscape Gardening

1, Vale View, Salwayash,  
Bridport, DT6 5JB

Hi,

My team and I do most kinds of gardening from clearing overgrown acres to fixing fences, planning patios and paddocks to looking after your lawns and maintaining your landscape.

Oh yes! We are also the parish lengthsman so we fend off floods by clearing ditches, placing storage bins and looking after public places for your parish council.

So if you have a garden problem, why not give us a call.

**Stephen Lee**

**07971 116660**

**stephenlee93@hotmail.co**

## Progress on the affordable homes?

*David Hitchcock updates us on Marshwood's Community Land Trust*

I have just read the words that I reported in the Spring edition of "Beneath the Vale" and what else could one do but smile. The heading was "Homes almost ready" and we are no further forward now than we

were at the end of April.

I am confident that given a fair wind the properties would have been completed by the end of May and

people would be living in them by now, but who could have foreseen that Brookvale would end up in administration. We were told that the finish date would be 30<sup>th</sup> April so on the 1<sup>st</sup> May I went around each house and made a note of all that I could see still needed to be completed. Over that Bank Holiday weekend I listed the items and emailed it to Brookvale on the morning of the 5<sup>th</sup> May pointing out what still needed to be done. At 2.20pm that afternoon I had a reply from the MD to say that I should not worry as they were well on top of the problem and then to hear they went into administration at 5pm the same day.

It has proved difficult to find builders to come and complete the work as no one wants to take over an unfinished site and they are all very busy just now.

However Pemberton Homes have agreed to take over and today, 23<sup>rd</sup> July, they started clearing up the site in readiness for their contractors to move in. I also understand the

Landscape firm will soon be on site to start laying the turf and putting up the fences. It has been 10 weeks where nothing has happened and now Pemberton, who take over



as it were "blind" will have to prove what has been done, check and test it all and finish the development, so it will still be a few weeks before we can offer the houses to the people who have been patiently waiting to move in.

The "wayleaves and easements" needed for Western Power to install the electric supply are now complete so we hope the power will be connected soon. The ducks for the telephone are all in so it should not take long for BT to push their cables through to each house as soon as the householder requests a connection.

I can only hope there will not be any further hold ups and we can enjoy looking at Bramblehay in the future and be proud of what we see.

David Hitchcock  
Chairman Marshwood CLT



## Summer delight: Wild strawberry ice cream

*Joy McClellan introduces another delicious dish.*

Wild strawberry - *Fragaria vesca* - is a low perennial with long creeping runners, routing and carrying clusters of bright green trefoil leaves hairy on the undersides. It has white flowers, 13 -18mm, from April to July and small sweet strawberries. It is common in dry grassy places and in woods.



Wild strawberries are easy to grow in your garden and look pretty in Spring when the white flowers appear and also when the tiny red fruit form. Try planting then along the edge of a path where they can be easily picked and simply popped in the mouth for an explosion of strawberry flavour.

Wild strawberries, if you have the patience to pick them, can be used in most recipes that call for strawberries, but best of all sprinkle a handful into champagne glass and top with sparkling wine.

If you wish to be more adventurous, the following is delicious.

### Wild strawberry ice cream

Ice cream is the perfect treat to cool you off in the midst of summer. Gather wild strawberries for a refreshing way to experience the immense flavour of this tiny fruit.

454 g wild strawberries

2 cups of double cream

$\frac{3}{4}$  cup sugar

30 ml gin or vodka

Mix the strawberries, sugar and gin in a bowl and leave to macerate for about an hour. Add the cream and pulse in a food processor until just smooth, put the mixture in the fridge for about an hour and then churn in an ice cream machine.

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## The Silly Page: some surreal jokes

A classics teacher goes to a tailor to get his trousers mended. The tailor asks: "Euripides?" The teacher replies: "Yes. Eumenides!"

A Roman walks into a bar, holds up two fingers, and says: "Five beers, please."

There are 10 types of people in this world. Those that know binary, and those that don't.

A Buddhist monk approaches a hotdog stand and says: "Make me one with everything".

Most people believe that if it ain't broke, don't fix it. Engineers believe that if it ain't broke, it doesn't have enough features yet.

I've just been on a once-in-a-lifetime holiday. I'll tell you what, never again.

A dyslexic man walks into a bra.

Did you hear about the man who got cooled to absolute zero? He's OK now.

The pollen count, now that's a difficult job. Especially if you've got hay fever.

A man walks into a bar with a roll of tarmac under his arm and says: "Pint please, and one for the road."

Militant feminists, I take my hat off to them. They don't like that.

Doc, I can't stop singing the 'Green Green Grass of Home'. The doctor said: 'That sounds like Tom Jones syndrome'. 'Is it common?' I asked. 'It's not unusual' he replied.

Four fonts walk into a bar the barman says "Oi - get out! We don't want your type in here"

A photon checks into a hotel and the porter asks him if he has any luggage. The photon replies: "No, I'm travelling light."

I was walking along today, and on the road I saw a small, dead baby ghost. Although thinking about it, it might have been a handkerchief.

I supplied Filofaxes to the Mafia – yeah, I was involved in very organised crime.

A Geordie said to me, 'Are yous looking at us?' How many mistakes can you make in one sentence?

I've just read a book about Stockholm syndrome. It started off badly, but by the end I really liked it.

## Marshwood Speed Watch Group: results

Date	Start time	Duration (mins)	Cars	Speeding	-----MPH-----				% Speeding
					37-39	40-49	50-59	60+	
5 <sup>th</sup> May	18.50	45	45	7	5	2			15.56
8 <sup>th</sup> May	17.35	30	76	19	9	9	1		25.00
11 <sup>th</sup> May	07.45	60	171	10	6	4			5.85
13 <sup>th</sup> May	18.51	60	99	27	13	13	1		27.27
15 <sup>th</sup> May	18.00	60	147	20	8	12			13.61
20 <sup>th</sup> May	15.30	60	180	17	6	11			9.44
22 <sup>nd</sup> May	17.00	60	259	18	9	8		1	6.95
6 <sup>th</sup> June	16.07	60	192	15	8	7			7.81
8 <sup>th</sup> June	08.38	60	165	15	8	7			9.09
10 <sup>th</sup> June	16.07	60	98	19	10	9			19.39
12 <sup>th</sup> June	17.40	60	246	16	12	4			6.50
22 <sup>th</sup> June	09.05	60	130	18	13	5			8.66
1 <sup>st</sup> July	18.10	60	150	13	6	7			6.67
15 <sup>th</sup> July	13.28	60	128	27	15	11	1		21.09
17 <sup>th</sup> July	16.25	60	254	15	12	3			5.91
19 <sup>th</sup> July	16.00	60	219	15	11	4			6.85
<b>Totals</b>	<b>Cars</b>		<b>2,559</b>		Further data including the official police statistics are available from Ali Edwards				
	<b>Hours</b>		<b>15.25</b>						
	<b>Cars Speeding</b>		<b>271</b>						
	<b>Average cars/hour</b>		<b>167.8</b>						

## Editorial

It is disappointing to find our County Council operates with disputed information, but where lives are involved, it is paramount that the information presented to a committee to enable a proper decision to be made, by completely inaccurate.

It is therefore very unfortunate that a technician had registered just 50 vehicles per hour when and where our Speedwatch Team is seeing three times that number.

Same road, same times, often the same cars, just that there ARE so many more of them. Precise and verifiable, Speedwatch Group figures from at least 4 people proves this.

But his reported statistics call into question other information presented to the committee by a DCC caseworker in which she stated that there are no other concerns re the road. This is simply not true as we know of these concerns and the Police support our contention. Traffic calming is budgeted and a pavement is under consideration.

The committee concerned must work with the correct information from unbiased parties.

**The decision must to be revisited without delay.**

## **Parish Council Meeting: May 23rd**

The May parish council meeting divided itself into 2 main areas, recovery from the unfortunate problems several councillors found themselves in, and complaints about the coverage in this magazine of a parish meeting at Thorncombe.

No less than five councillors had failed in their attempt to be re-elected to your council. The reasons for this varied from the bizaare - Chairman Roland Bugler submitted a nomination form signed by someone from Marshwood, not Bettiscombe so was told to resubmit his nomination. He did so with a proper signature along with that of his wife who had already countersigned his first application. She was deemed to have 'spent' her signature so eliminated the application of a good and worthy chairman.

And with a far longer period than is usual, due to the general election, several councillors who are busy farmers failed to notice that their due date had been missed. As a result only Marshwood had their full compliment of councillors returned.

As the feeling amongst councillors was that the council was an effective team, the meeting started with the re-election of a chairman to replace Roland Bugler; he had decided that he would not stand again so we have been deprived on bureaucratic grounds of a first-class chairman and an effective councillor who will be much missed.

Firstly vice-chairman, Matthew Bowditch, was elected as chairman unanimously. Next came the co-option of the other councillors, also unanimously, who then took their seats

to form an 11-person council.

Clr Eddie Rowe was then proposed as vice-chairman, also with complete approval.

With a new, smaller district council, Jacqui Sewell, who now represents Marshwood, Betticombe and most of Pilsdon introduced Mark Roberts as the new district councillor for Stoke Abbott as this is now part of Netherbury.

She also announced that she would serve as vice -chair on the Policy Scrutiny Committee, which will include how we have been lumbered with the new and highly complex town parking meters.

Item 12 on the agenda was reached after two members of public - not from Marshwood - raised a complaint against this magazine. Several others present claimed that we had published a report that insulted their Parish Council. This was denied by your editor who pointed out that the phrase 'Thorncombe Parish Council' did not feature in the article.

A debate ensued with the chairman allowing members of the public considerable leeway in the pursuit of an open debate.

Eventually a motion from Cllr. Cassian Grey, but based on the comments of Cllr. Jacqui Sewell, proposed that the Chairman should apologise for any insult felt, to put this incident behind us and to move forward, was passed unanimously.

Accounts were then agreed and as were the annual accounts with notices distributed to that effect for councillors to place on various notice boards.

Councillors' reports started with a proposal to distribute flood-warning signs which was extended to include traffic control signs for use when the A 35 is closed by the police.

As reported elsewhere, the almost ready affordable homes will be completed by Hastoe, in place of the builders, Brookvale, who are in administration, the main outstanding problem being electricity supply to these homes.

Cllr Fred Bailey reported that the CLT chair David Hitchcock had changed locks and was negotiating with Hastoe for a satisfactory handover to excited new residents as soon as possible.

Mike Robinson, as chair of the Marshwood Neighbourhood Plan asked the clerk to set in motion the process of registering our boundaries.

Your editor reported on the Broadband situation also dealt with elsewhere in this issue and fielded councillors' questions.



**Your Council: L to R**  
Fred Bailey, Eddie Rowe, Jane Gillingham,  
Ali Edwards, Matthew Bowditch, John  
Vanderwolfe, Bob Wyatt, Trevor Richards,  
Cassian Grey, Chris Rabbetts  
not present: Roy Warburton



**Taken at Stoke Abbott by your editor**

## Parish Council Meeting: July

With no councillors declaring any interests, the minutes signed off, and no police representative present, our 4 senior councillors started the July council meeting, held at Stoke Abbott, with their news. As this is coming up to holiday time, such news was short and sparse.

Rebecca Knox, County Councillor for Beaminster, which for our purposes includes Stoke Abbott, defined the recent changes and explained her role in a revised, more holistic social service. Her opposite councillor member for Lyme Regis and Charmouth, Daryl Turner, was next, followed by District Councillors Jacqui Sewell and Mark Roberts.

As soon as our chairman Matthew Bowditch declared the democratic period a member of the public leapt to his feet and announced he was a property consultant acting on behalf of a couple - also present - who had acquired property in Bottle Lane near to the Bottle Inn. He wanted to make contact with local councillors to ensure that his clients' case regarding who owned access rights long claimed by 2 local farmers and the public, was thoroughly understood.

Edward Dawson, a professional consultant had clearly got his message in a twist referring to Marshwood as 'Marshfield'. Comment was passed by councillors who had noted some confrontation regarding the right of way of the lane.

A planning application then followed for a change of use for a property with an agricultural tie. Golden Cap View, Harmshay is reserved for use by an agricultural worker associated to Harmshay

Farm which no longer works as a farm. This makes it difficult to let and the owners want to remove the tie and allow the cottage to be let or otherwise disposed of. Upper Marshwood Vale Parish Council agreed and has recommended the change to West Dorset District Council for final approval.

Such ties are becoming increasingly irrelevant as farmers have shed surplus staff whenever practical. Cllr. Jacqui Sewell set this concern in perspective indicating a similar situation in North Dorset and that this was an increasing problem for all councils. Trevor Richards echoed this concern, asking for a policy to be set to cover this possible problem. This could well form part of our new Neighbourhood Plan.

Councillors reported on various matters - Bob Wyatt on the highways and lengthsman, Fred Bailey brought us up to date on the affordable homes - a new builder has been appointed - and we await action by Western Power to supply electricity. This newsletter is expected 1<sup>st</sup> week of August and, as reported elsewhere, Superfast Broadband is to be even better than indicated as the full specification signal will largely be connected by fibre to local homes and premises. Our Neighbourhood Plan is awaiting approval for the area to be covered.

And, in less than an hour, that was that for July 2015!



## **Your Community Land Trust: Officers**

Chairman	David Hitchcock	01297 678257 <a href="mailto:threecountiesnurseries@live.co.uk">threecountiesnurseries@live.co.uk</a>
Secretary	Emma Turner	01297 678768 <a href="mailto:emt74@live.co.uk">emt74@live.co.uk</a>
Treasurer	Ali Edwards	01297 678382 <a href="mailto:aliedwards@onetel.net">aliedwards@onetel.net</a>
Directors	Fred Bailey	01308 868015 <a href="mailto:fhpjb@aol.com">fhpjb@aol.com</a>
	Ann Marie Chapman	<a href="mailto:coweyehawkins@yahoo.co.uk">coweyehawkins@yahoo.co.uk</a>
	Rob England	01297 678548 <a href="mailto:rob@thequester.co.uk">rob@thequester.co.uk</a>
	Charles Somers	01297 678178 <a href="mailto:somers984@btinternet.com">somers984@btinternet.com</a>

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

**Facebook page:**

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

## **Your District Councillors**

Marshwood, Bettiscombe & Pilsdon	Jacqui Sewell	01308 867145 <a href="mailto:jacquisewell@me.com">jacquisewell@me.com</a>
Stoke Abbott	Mike Roberts	01308 487866 <a href="mailto:lucullas.luccas@virgin.net">lucullas.luccas@virgin.net</a>

## **Your County Councillors**

Marshwood Vale	Daryl Turner	01297 444195 <a href="mailto:d.turner@dorsetcc.gov.uk">d.turner@dorsetcc.gov.uk</a>
Beaminster	Rebecca Knox	01308 863365 <a href="mailto:r.knox@dorsetcc.gov.uk">r.knox@dorsetcc.gov.uk</a>

## **Beneath the Vale: Editorial Board**

Pauline Bailey	<a href="mailto:fhpjb@hotmail.co.uk">fhpjb@hotmail.co.uk</a>	01308 868015
Matthew Bowditch	<a href="mailto:m1bowditch.vets@virgin.net">m1bowditch.vets@virgin.net</a>	01308 862758
David Corneloues	<a href="mailto:davidcorneloues@tiscali.co.uk">davidcorneloues@tiscali.co.uk</a>	01308 868094
Joy McClellan	<a href="mailto:joy.mcclellan@sky.com">joy.mcclellan@sky.com</a>	01308 867410
Ali Edwards	<a href="mailto:aliedwards@onetel.net">aliedwards@onetel.net</a>	01297 678382
Newsletter Editor	Ali Cameron	01297 678546 <a href="mailto:ali.cameron@talktalk.net">ali.cameron@talktalk.net</a>

**Your Parish Council website:**  
**[www.uppermarshwoodcouncil.org](http://www.uppermarshwoodcouncil.org)**

**Chairman**

Matthew Bowditch      01308 862758  
Stokewater Farm,  
Stoke Abbott  
DT8 3JL  
[m1bowditch.vets@virgin.net](mailto:m1bowditch.vets@virgin.net)  
*Stoke Abbott*

**Clerk**

John Vanderwolfe      01297 34444  
Newenham, 5 Halletts Way,  
Axminster,  
EX13 5NB  
[johnvw@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:johnvw@tiscali.co.uk)

**Councillors**

Fred Bailey,      01308 868015  
Meadowrise,  
Bettiscombe DT6 6HP  
[fhpb@aol.com](mailto:fhpb@aol.com)  
*Marshwood*

Christopher Rabbetts      01308 867474  
Gerrards Farm,  
Pilsdon DT6 5PA  
[chrisrabbetts@btinternet.com](mailto:chrisrabbetts@btinternet.com)  
*Pilsdon*

*Pilsdon*  
Ali Cameron      01297 678546  
Blue Haze,  
Marshwood, DT6 5QB  
[ali.cameron@talktalk.net](mailto:ali.cameron@talktalk.net)  
*Marshwood*

Trevor Richards      01308 868848  
Deer Park Farm,  
Marshwood Vale, DT6 5PZ,  
[info@rochestershire.co.uk](mailto:info@rochestershire.co.uk)  
*Marshwood*

Alison Edwards      01297 678382  
3 Marshalsea  
Marshwood DT6 5QE  
[aliedwards@onetel.net](mailto:aliedwards@onetel.net)  
*Marshwood*

Eddie Rowe      01308 868334  
Courtwood Farm,  
Broadwindsor  
[edwardrowe3lb@btinternet.com](mailto:edwardrowe3lb@btinternet.com)  
*Bettiscombe*

Jane Gillingham      01308 867197  
Mabeys Cottage,  
Pilsdon DT6 5NY  
[janie.gillingham@btinternet.com](mailto:janie.gillingham@btinternet.com)  
*Pilsdon*

Roy Warburton      01308 868358  
Shave Cross Inn,  
Shave Cross, DT6 6HW  
[roy.warburton@virgin.net](mailto:roy.warburton@virgin.net)  
*Marshwood*

Cassian Gray      01308 862448  
Horsehill Cottage,  
Stoke Abbott DT3JL  
[cassian@montmeru.com](mailto:cassian@montmeru.com)  
*Stoke Abbott*

Robert Wyatt      01308 868249  
Blackney Farm,  
Blackney, DT6 5PB  
[bob.j.wyatt@googlemail.com](mailto:bob.j.wyatt@googlemail.com)  
*Stoke Abbott*



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