

Beneath the Vale

Published on behalf of the Upper Marshwood Vale Parish Council

Spring 2018: Issue 27



Romla Ryan in the Marshwood Manor Stores.

Shop opens at Marshwood Manor

A NEW shop has opened at Bettiscombe selling 'luxury goods and essentials'.

Marshwood Manor Stores is run by Romla Ryan. It offers accounts for locals, coffee and lots of friendly chat. Stock includes foodstuffs plus firewood, gifts, outdoor and pet supplies, sweets and icecream. There are artworks by local artists, including Aviva Halter Hurn from Bettiscombe.

'We try to stock local products as far as possible,' Romla explains. 'Things that have been made in the Vale or nearby. We're trying to find a local milk supplier who does cardboard cartons or glass bottles for return and we're looking at ways to supply Sunday newspapers.'

The shop is licensed and carries a range of wine, beer and cider. About 20 local people use the stores and Romla is hoping that more will follow suit. Opening times are 9am-5pm Tuesday to Saturday and 10am to 2pm Sunday. Closed on Mondays.

Marshwood, Stoke Abbott, Pilsdon and Bettiscombe



The (very) broken sign at the bottom of Mutton Street that we hope is next for repair.

Progress being made with signpost repairs

In 2016 BTV carried out a survey of the finger signposts in the Marshwood Vale parishes of Marshwood, Bettiscombe, Pilsdon and Shave Cross.

This identified a number of signs that were in a very poor condition with some missing virtually all of the actual fingerboards. Two prominent signs are at the Pilsdon Pen layby and also at the junction of the Broadoak road and Monkwood lane just east of Shave Cross. Marshwood Community Land Trust (CLT) has agreed to fund the refurbishment of these signs together

with a grant from Dorset CPRE. It has also agreed to fund the repair of the sign at the bottom of Mutton Street. This work was being undertaken by David Hitchcock before his death late last year.

Dorset AONB guidelines

To try to maintain the distinctive appearance of the signposts across West Dorset, the Dorset AONB have issued a set of comprehensive guidelines giving details of the methods of dismantling and reassembly together with the best types of finishes for the oak finger boards. They also offer technical back-up from a company called Normtec, one of the AONB partners.

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Beneath the Vale is published four times a year by the Upper Marshwood Vale Parish Council and posted to homes in the combined parishes of Marshwood, Stoke Abbott, Pilsdon and Bettiscombe. Our mailing list covers household addresses and, where known, individual householder names. We use this list solely to send out copies of *Beneath the Vale* and associated information relating to the parishes. We do not share data with third parties. To unsubscribe from the list, please contact Cllr Ali Cameron, who manages the data: ali.cameron@zen.co.uk Telephone 01297 678 546.

The sign at the bottom of Mutton Street should have four fingers (pictured above left). At present three of the fingers are missing, the one remaining is showing Bettiscombe. The post itself is covered with a thick plastic material that is peeling away and needs to be stripped off. To do this it will be necessary to remove the post from the bank.

Once taken out, the post, together with the assembly of geared brackets, will need to be shot blasted and repainted. The oak finger boards need to be shaped and painted before the aluminium lettering is added.

Many of the signs across the Vale would have had a circular finial on the top. A few still have but many have disappeared over

time. Old maps show this crossroad as being called Marshwood Cross and, funds permitting, it may be possible to have a new finial cast.

The removal of roadside posts is not as straightforward as in the past due to the stringent health and safety requirements applied to work on the public highway.

Dorset Highways will remove and replace these posts but it is not high on their list of priorities. It may be possible to remove the Mutton Street post from inside the field that backs onto the sign with the agreement of the landowner.

David Corneloues

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'If the rest of the country was like West Dorset, we'd be living in a better country' says our MP, Sir Oliver Letwin

Beneath the Vale recently interviewed our MP for West Dorset, Sir Oliver Letwin. The interview was captured on video by Ali Cameron and David Corneloues and can be viewed on our YouTube channel, 'Beneath the Vale Magazine'. Watch the video to see why Sir Oliver said 'there are all sorts of things about West Dorset that are exactly as you would want them to be.'



Sir Oliver Letwin, interviewed at Mountfield.

We were clear from the start that we would use our time with Sir Oliver to concentrate on matters within our tiny patch here in the Vale. This meant that that the interview would be as politically neutral as possible. (For those interested in such things, our editorial committee encompasses a breadth of political views from both the Right and Left.) We steered clear of Brexit. That topic, once started, could have taken up the entire interview and still not reached any solid conclusions. Here's what we did talk about:

Safe path for walking to Marshwood School: Sir Oliver agreed one was needed as the road was 'not a reasonable place to ask young children to walk along', but said there wasn't the money to pay for it at present.

Agricultural ties: He was against them being lifted in most cases. He thought it was 'a very vexed situation' and an 'insoluble problem'. But he saw no reason to widen the restrictions on who can live in these properties beyond agricultural workers. He said: 'They are a highly imperfect system for doing something worthwhile.'

Creating opportunities for young people in

West Dorset: He thought that it wasn't the responsibility of Government to 'do things for people'; governments should create the conditions for people to do well and leave it up to them.

Public services: He rejected the idea that there has been any kind of erosion of these, and said that public services 'have on the whole improved', even though pressures on them have increased. He recognised there is pressure from an aging population. Older people tend to be frailer and therefore need more services than younger people. He believed the answer was to pay more tax specifically for NHS and social care. At a local level, he blamed administrative issues, which he believed would be sorted by local government reorganisation.

We ended with a brief discussion of the Chideock bypass conundrum. Sir Oliver refused to dismiss the possibility of a bypass through, or even under, the Vale, but said any scheme would only be feasible with the agreement of adjacent parishes.

Sara Hudston

Council supports homeowners with essential repairs

West Dorset District Council is taking the opportunity to remind homeowners about their loan scheme to enable homeowners to fund essential home repairs. The scheme has been developed to keep people warm, safe and dry in their homes.

A variety of works can be considered such as roof and thatch repairs, boiler and other heating system replacement or installation, replacing rotten or draughty windows, structural repairs or electrical or plumbing work to name a few. The scheme has been set up to enable eligible homeowners to choose their own contractor and there are a variety of loan products available to suit individual needs and means.

The scheme is delivered through Wessex Resolutions CIC, a not-for-profit, Responsible Finance provider in close partnership with the council.

Partnership arrangement

The partnership has been running for over ten years across West Dorset and has helped a huge variety of homeowners. A recent client said: 'For all my adult life I have not had central heating and, now I'm getting a bit older, it will be nice to feel warm in the winter.'

Through providing loans, the council is ensuring funds for homeowners are

sustainable, meaning that every repayment goes back into the council pot to lend to homeowners into the future. A loan funded by the council could help spread the cost of home repairs but let you enjoy the benefit right away.

More information

For more information, call Wessex Resolutions direct on 01823 461099, visit www.wrcic.org.uk or email enquiries@wrcic.org.uk.

Loans have a fixed interest rate and typical 4.2% APR and are subject to status. Missing future payments could affect your credit rating and ability to obtain credit in the future. Wessex Resolutions CIC may insist on loans being protected at the Land Registry by a title restriction.

The small print

Wessex Resolutions CIC is a community interest company limited by guarantee, registered in England, company number 4512225. Registered address: Heatherton Park Studios, Bradford on Tone, Taunton TA4 1EU. Wessex Loans and Wessex Home Improvement Loans are trading names used by this company. Wessex Resolutions C.I.C is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority (675263) for credit and debt-related regulated activities.

Article supplied by Wessex Resolutions CIC

Parish council meeting 18 January

The first item for discussion concerned the parish lengthsman, Steve Lee. At the last meeting, the council had agreed to ask Mr Lee whether he put out the correct signs when working in the road and whether he had the relevant safety certificate to carry out such work on the highway. At this meeting, members heard that Mr Lee had replied to say that he thought his accountant had the certificate.

Parish Clerk, John Vanderwolfe, said that he was 'concerned that until we have proof that he has the qualification we shouldn't be letting him do too much.'

He explained that anyone working for the council on the roads needed to have attended an accredited course on safe working, or have one person on site who had been on a safe working course.

With all the wet winter weather we have had recently there have been the usual troublespots on roads in the Vale. One of the lengthsman's jobs is clearing blocked drains and culverts. Cllr Bob Wyatt said he would tell Steve Lee to refrain from work unless there was a flood that urgently needed attention.

Chairman Cllr Matthew Bowditch proposed that the council does not use Mr Lee's services until the certification has been checked.

During the democratic period when members of the public can speak, John Piper from Marshwood spoke out against a planning application by his neighbour.

The application was to raise a garage roof by 1.5m at the apex. Mr Piper said that if granted, the alteration would affect the amenity value of his home.

The council heard Mr Piper's views and later in the meeting, when discussing planning items, they agreed to make a site visit before making a decision on whether to support the application or not.

One application had been approved by West Dorset District Council since the previous meeting. This was for a two-storey extension at a cottage in Marshwood.

Finances caused some concern with cashflow looking very tight. The council was waiting for a £900 VAT reclaim and release of funds for the neighbourhood plan. The Clerk told councillors that timing would be crucial as the 2018/19 precept money will not be paid until 30 April.

The next parish council meeting was held on 15 March, squeaking past the deadline for the Spring edition of Beneath the Vale. We will have a report in the Summer edition towards the end of June.

Upper Marshwood Vale Parish Council dates

Parish council meetings for 2018 are as follows: 17 May, 19 July, 20 September, 15 November, 13 December. Meetings start at 7.30pm in Bettiscombe Village Hall. All welcome to attend.

Neighbourhood Plan latest developments

The Neighbourhood Plan call-for-sites process closed in early March and four sites were put forward: three in Marshwood and one at Shave Cross.

The NP steering committee met in March to discuss these and arrange site visits with the owners to view them. We will be working with our NP consultant to prepare for the district council, Dorset AONB and others to give us a preliminary view on what emerges as a draft plan.

Towards mid-year, we will organise public meetings at Marshwood and Stoke Abbott to present our first draft NP for comments before moving on in the autumn to drawing up a complete draft plan. By the end of the year, we should be in a position to begin the formal process of submitting our plan for approval leading up to a referendum in 2019.

offered, our Neighbourhood Plan committee sees the 'call for sites' as a continuing development. As residents and their families change, births marriages and deaths inevitably interfere with the tidiest of arrangements.

Should your plans need to change and if selling even a small parcel of land is a possibility, we'd like to hear from you to discuss the options. Indeed, finding an alternative use for smaller plots is very much in-line with the longer-term aims for developing the community as a whole.

So just because we have now closed our 'call for sites', this does not mean we are no longer interested in such developments. As and when your circumstances change, please consider speaking to our Neighbourhood Plan team. We can help you decide what is practical and what is not.

Charles Somers
NP Steering Committee

Although four possible sites have been

Each spring the hedgerows of the Vale light up with wild daffodils. This late, snowy spring has made their appearance even more heartening than usual, reminding us of Shakespeare's lines:

*'Daffodils,
That come before the
swallow dares, and take
The winds of March
with beauty.'*



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Rural bus service updates

Routes 14 and 688, Thorncombe/Marshwood to Chard/Axminster, every Thursday

Passenger numbers on these routes have remained very similar to the numbers reported in previous articles.

PlusBus, Marshwood/Thorncombe/Catherston Lewiston to Bridport, every Wednesday

Passenger numbers have decreased slightly, since the previous article. This has been due to illness; moving away from our catchment area; or as in one case, very sadly passing away.

All three of our buses run on the back of the Beaminster secondary school contract; we breathed a collective sigh of relief, when Dorset Communit Transport (DCT) were awarded part of this contract from First Wessex. Dorset County Council have re-organised all of the secondary school contracts in the County, under the banner of 'One School One Operator' (OSOO).

In our case, the driver needs to make two separate runs to Beaminster School, picking up pupils firstly in Thorncombe then in Seaborough. This has required some fine tuning of the timetables, during the school term, in order to build in a slightly later departure from the Thorncombe area, (9:05am instead of 9am).

This applies to the PlusBus to Bridport on Wednesdays and the No 14 to Chard on Thursdays.

Second application for a Community Transport Grant, from Dorset County Council

We have again been able to pay Dorset Community Transport a total of £2,000, which will cover the funding shortfall for 2017-18. This was made up by the following;

£940 that was the second and final part of the Community Transport Grant from DCC.

£500 from Thorncombe Parish Council precept.

£560 from donations and local fund raising events thanks to the generosity and support of Thorncombe & Area Parishioners, Bus Users and Supporters.

Fund raising for the revenue shortfall for the financial year 2018-19

These funds continue to held by Thorncombe Parish Council and separately identified as 'Earmarked Funds', for the rural buses. We remain very grateful for this support.

Our coffee morning, craft fair and raffle, held in Thorncombe Village Hall raised a total of £360.10. This was, as last time, a very enjoyable and successful event and it was especially gratifying to welcome several attendees from other villages served by our buses.

We are holding a breakfast club and raffle, in Thorncombe Village Hall, on Sunday 17 June, 9-11am. All proceeds will go to support the buses. Do please come along.

All are very welcome to attend.

Tesco's Bags of Help initiative has accepted our application for inclusion in the Blue Token Scheme. This will take place in the Chard Store, from 1 September (final date TBC). Obviously, this will be a great help for the 2018-19 fund-raising, as it will generate a minimum of £1,000, up to a maximum of £4,000.

So, if you happen to be shopping at Tesco's in Chard, and you see 'No.14 Bus' on the Token Box, we very much hope that you will do us the honour of popping a blue token in the box please!

Please see the times and details of all three Thorncombe, Marshwood and area buses, which are listed below.

Thorncombe & Villages Bus Schedules:

Wednesdays: (Must be booked ahead by the Monday afternoon of the week of travel) PlusBus – Thorncombe to Bridport. £5 return fare.

Depart: Thorncombe/Birdsmoorgate 9:05am approximately (based on your pickup spot).
Arrive: Bridport 9:40am approximately.
Depart: Bridport at noon.
Arrive: Thorncombe 12:35pm approx.

This bus normally runs from Thorncombe, through Birdsmoorgate, Kittwhistle, Drimpton and on to Broadwindsor, Bowood, Salwayash and other villages to Bridport.

If bookings have not been received for

Kittwhistle or Drimpton, then the route, is over Pilsdon and on to Broadwindsor, Bowood and other villages listed above.
To register and book – ring 01258 287 980.

Thursdays: No. 14 – Regular Scheduled Bus Service. Thorncombe to Chard via Chard Junction, Perry Street, Tatworth:

Depart: Thorncombe 9.05am.
Arrive: Chard 9:30am.

Depart: Chard 11:35am.
Arrive: Thorncombe: 11:58am.

Depart: Thorncombe at noon
Arrive: Chard 12:25pm.

Depart: Chard 2:35pm.
Arrive: Thorncombe 2:59pm.

Connections can be made in Chard for the Taunton and other buses.

No. 688 – Regular Scheduled Bus Service. Thorncombe to Axminster via Marshwood and Hawkchurch and run in between the Chard buses:

Depart: Thorncombe 10am.
Arrive: Axminster 10:40am.

Depart: Axminster 1pm.
Arrive: Thorncombe 1:35pm.

Connections can be made at Axminster for trains and other buses.

**Thorncombe Parish Cllr David Marsh and Mrs Mary Marsh.
Thorncombe And Villages Bus Users
& Supporters (TAVBUS)**

Recipe: A prize-winning pudding

Joy McClellan won first prize for this recipe at the pie and pudding evening in Bettiscombe Village Hall at the end of January.

Tunisian Almond and Orange Cake

(serves 8)

Cake:

45g slightly stale breadcrumbs
200g caster sugar
100g ground almonds
1 ½ tsp baking powder
200ml sunflower or vegetable oil
4 eggs
Finely grated zest of 1 large orange
Finely grated zest of ½ a lemon

Syrup:

Juice of 1 orange
Juice of ½ lemon
85g sugar
2 cloves
1 cinnamon stick

Broadband saga continues to rumble on ...

Our Marshwood Vale Superfast Broadband works are now complete for all premises connected to the Broadwindsor exchange. A few Hawkchurch exchange numbers remain to be completed by the end of March. (Bramblehay and some at Birdsmoorgate). The new fibre cabinet being installed at Whitchurch (connected to the Chideock exchange) is awaiting a road closure but is

Mix breadcrumbs with the sugar, almonds and baking powder. Add oil and eggs and beat well. Stir in the orange and lemon zest.

Pour the mixture into a greased 20cm cake tin. Put into a COLD oven and set to heat to 190 degrees C.

Bake for 40-45 minutes until the cake is a rich brown and a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Cool for five minutes in the tin then turn out onto a plate.

While the cake cooks, make the syrup. Bring all the ingredients gently to the boil in a pan, stirring until the sugar has dissolved. Simmer for three minutes.

Pierce holes in the cake with a skewer while still warm and pour the syrup over it. Leave to cool, spooning the syrup over the cake every now and then until it is all soaked up. Serve with whipped cream or thick Greek yoghurt.

expected to be completed within a month or two.

Take up of the new much faster service has grown. The higher take-up we can achieve, beyond 20%, the more funds will be available (through a contractual 'claw-back' mechanism) to re-invest in further small expansions to help those remaining few premises not yet reached.

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Weddings and private parties a speciality in our large, purpose-built function room, or alternatively in our marquee in the garden, with catering for up to 120 guests.

Contact us for further details, or just call in at any time.

Defibrillator unit now in place on wall of Marshwood Garage

Marshwood and the surrounding area now has its own public access defibrillator, thanks to Marshwood CLT.

The defib. unit is housed in an easy-to-see bright yellow cabinet on the wall of Marshwood Garage (DT6 5QD), with the kind permission of Bash Walther.

The subsidised Zoll AED Plus defibrillator came from the British Heart Foundation. Our thanks go to our CLT director Ann-Marie Chapman who has been the main person in driving this project forward.

We have registered the defibrillator with South West Ambulance Service. They will give out its location to 999 callers where they believe its use is appropriate.

The self-contained unit is automatic and easy to use. It even monitors the patient and gives feedback on how well CPR is being performed.

Ten local people attended a defibrillator and CPR training session at Blackdown Hall in January. Ann-Marie led us through this using a kit provided to the CLT along with the defibrillator. I think we all came away feeling more confident of knowing what to do should the need arise.

The kit is available for use by local groups, please get in touch if you would like to borrow it. Even if you haven't had training



our defibrillator is simple to use. It will talk you through what needs to be done. Please do not be afraid to use it! It is fully automatic and very easy to use.

You just open the defib, attach the pad on the patient's chest as clearly shown on the defib and follow the voice prompts. You cannot deliver a shock unless the person is in cardiac arrest. It will never shock a person whose heart is beating normally.

If you would like to learn or refresh your CPR techniques, please contact Ann-Marie Chapman on 01297 678 579, or any CLT director.

Rob England, Chairman, Marshwood Community Land Trust

Marshwood Community Land Trust: Officers

| | | |
|-----------|---|--|
| Chairman | Rob England rob@thequester.co.uk | 01297 678 548 |
| Treasurer | Ali Edwards aliedwards34@icloud.com | 01297 678 382 |
| Directors | Fred Bailey fhpjb1@gmail.com Ann-Marie Chapman coweyehawkins@yahoo.co.uk Charles Somers somers984@btinternet.com Emma Turner em74@live.co.uk Sonia Yorke Martin Ballam | 01308 868 015 01297 678 579 01297 678 178 01297 678 768 01297 678 549 01297 678 194 |

Community Land Trust website: www.marshwoodclt.org.uk

Facebook Page: Marshwood CLT

Interested in renting affordable housing?

Are you registered with Dorset Home Choice?

Would you, or someone you know, be interested in moving into one of the houses at Bramblehay, Marshwood, should a property become available?

Allocation of these properties, and similar schemes in neighbouring villages, is handled by Dorset Home Choice.

To be considered as a tenant, you need to be on the housing register. Be prepared by registering now at www.dorsethomechoice.org

When registering, please make sure you put the following statement on your application to show you qualify for Marshwood CLT housing:

‘Have local connection required to qualify for CLT housing’

These houses are for those in our community. Please register, even if Dorset Home Choice would normally regard you as adequately housed.

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee: Members

| | | |
|--|---|--------------|
| Chairman | Charles Somers somers984@btinternet.com | 01297 678178 |
| Secretary | John Vanderwolfe, UMV parish council clerk | |
| Members | Jacqui Sewell, WDDC councillor Ali Cameron, UMV parish councillor Ali Edwards, UMV parish councillor Rob England, Marshwood CLT chairman David French, Stoke Abbott resident John Piper, Marshwood resident Sara Hudston, Editor, <i>Beneath the Vale</i> | |
| email: np@uppermarshwoodvale.org | | |
| Address: NP Steering Committee, c/o The Old Rectory, Marshwood, Dorset DT6 5QJ | | |

District Councillors

| | | |
|----------------------------------|--|---------------|
| Marshwood, Bettiscombe & Pilsdon | Jacqui Sewell jacquisewell@me.com | 01308 867 145 |
| Stoke Abbott | Mark Roberts lucullas.luccas@virgin.net | 01308 487 866 |

County Councillors

| | | |
|----------------|--|---------------|
| Marshwood Vale | Daryl Turner d.w.turner@dorsetcc.gov.uk | 01297 444 195 |
| Beaminster | Rebecca Knox r.knox@dorsetcc.gov.uk | 01308 863 365 |

Beneath the Vale Editorial Board

| | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| Pauline Bailey | fhpb@hotmai.co.uk | 01308 868 015 |
| Matthew Bowditch | m1bowditch.vets@virgin.net | 01308 862 758 |
| Ali Cameron | ali.cameron@zen.co.uk | 01297 678 546 |
| David Corneloues | d.m.corneloues@gmail.com | 01308 868 094 |
| Joy McClellan | joy.mcclellan@sky.com | 01297 647 185 |
| Newsletter Editor: Sara Hudston | sarajhudston@gmail.com | 01297 489 253 |

Parish Council

Website: www.uppermarshwoodcouncil.org

| | | | |
|--|---------------|---|---------------|
| Chairman Matthew Bowditch Stokewater Farm Stoke Abbott, DT8 3JL m1bowditch.vets@virgin.net <i>Stoke Abbott</i> | 01308 862 758 | Clerk John Vanderwolfe Newenham, 5 Halletts Way Axminster, EX13 5NB johnvw@tiscali.co.uk | 01297 344 44 |
| Councillors Fred Bailey Meadowrise Bettiscombe, DT6 6HP fhpb1@gmail.com <i>Marshwood</i> | 01308 868 015 | Christopher Rabbetts Gerrards Farm Pilsdon, DT6 5PA chrisrabbetts@btinternet.com <i>Pilsdon</i> | 01308 867 474 |
| John W. Brown 2 Church Cottages Bettiscombe, DT6 5NT avril.sergison574@btinternet.com <i>Bettiscombe</i> | 01308 867 542 | Trevor Richards Deer Park Farm, Marshwood Vale, DT6 5PZ, info@rochestershire.co.uk <i>Marshwood</i> | 01308 868 848 |
| Ali Cameron Blue Haze Marshwood, DT6 5QB ali.cameron@zen.co.uk <i>Marshwood</i> | 01297 678 546 | Eddie Rowe Highlands Farm, Templemans Ash, DT6 5NX edwardrowe3lb@btinternet.com <i>Bettiscombe</i> | 01308 867 577 |
| Alison Edwards 3 Marshalsea Marshwood, DT6 5QE aliedwards34@icloud.com <i>Marshwood</i> | 01297 678 382 | Roy Warburton Shave Cross House, Shave Cross, DT6 6HW roy.warburton45@gmail.com <i>Marshwood</i> | |
| Jane Gillingham Mabeys Cottage Pilsdon, DT6 5NY janie.gillingham@btinternet.com <i>Pilsdon</i> | 01308 867 197 | Robert Wyatt Blackney Farm, Blackney, DT6 5PB bob.j.wyatt@googlemail.com <i>Stoke Abbott</i> | 01308 868 249 |
| Cassian Gray Horsehill Cottage Stoke Abbott, DT8 3JL cassian@montmeru.com <i>Stoke Abbott</i> | 01308 862 448 | | |

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stephenlee93@hotmail.co.uk



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www.parkersproperty.com



The British Property Awards Winner for Bridport

Parkers have won The British Property Awards for Bridport. Their team performed outstandingly throughout the extensive judging period, which focused on customer service levels. Parkers have now been shortlisted for a number of national awards which will be announced later in the year at our lavish ceremony in London. The British Property Awards provide agents with an invaluable opportunity to compare the service that they provide against the service provided by their local, regional and national competition. Agents who go that extra mile and provide outstanding levels of customer service are rewarded with our accolade, which acts as a beacon to highlight these attributes to their local marketplace.