



DISTINCTLY WINKLEIGH

QUARTERLY JOURNAL

The Winkleigh Society

WORKING FOR WINKLEIGH

SPRING 2024



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Chair's Report

SPRING 2024

Busy times lately as the editorial team of The Winkleigh Society has been preoccupied with steering *Distinctly Winkleigh* into a new era with a new editor, change of printer and taking on a paid graphic designer.

We always knew that Godfrey would be a hard act to follow. We have been lucky that two people responded to our call out for a new editor: Peter Hopkinson and Rachel Gordon. After a series of meetings we have agreed on a series of changes about advertising, layout, delivery and distribution.

Producing a village magazine four times a year is major part of what we do in The Winkleigh Society and scouting for stories about local characters and events is one of the most rewarding.

Winkleigh and Hollocombe has its local heroes and champions and over the years we have been collecting their stories in a series entitled **Lives in a Landscape**: Donald Creber, Malcolm Passmore, Justin Scleater, Joyce Brock and many others.

Village Heroes is the theme of our upcoming Social Evening & A.G.M. on Friday 5th April 7pm at the Community Centre.

Our guests of honour will be some of those whom we have featured in our **Lives in a Landscape series**. The plan is to compile these accounts into a book as a follow-up to a previous book by Peter Monkcom and Gillian Holman about local characters entitled; **Its Living History isn't it?**

This collection of oral histories was part of a very ambitious community project in Winkleigh in 1997 overseen by Stephen Leahy [then Chair of the Parish Council], this culminated in a **community pageant** being performed on the school field involving Winkleigh Morris, ballet club, primary school choir, head-teacher Reg Ferris, drama group and local musicians as part of the launch of The Winkleigh Parish Book.

Come along to our Social Evening & A.G.M. and find out what the Winkleigh Society does and plans to do. On display will be some of the village archive and back copies of D.W. We set out the room cafe-style with complimentary ploughman's supper (local cheeses), mulled cider & Winkleigh apple juice on the tables.

All the committee is up for election (standard procedure in any society). It would be good if we could have a Hollocombe resident on board.

Having said this, our Treasurer, Rachel Goldsworthy is retiring after several years of sterling service so in particular we welcome nominations from anyone willing to take this role. Thank you Rachel for all your hard work and dedication in keeping our accounts in order.

Penny Griffiths and Margaret Miller



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Welcome

TO OUR SPRING EDITION

Spring has sprung with new shoots appearing aplenty. Talking of new things there are a few new faces making their debut in this edition of Distinctly Winkleigh (DW). I've joined as Editor and would like to extend my thanks to my predecessor Godfrey Rhodes, who after 8 years has passed me the editorial baton. Godfrey was such an integral part of DW that his workload has had to be distributed across 3 people, all of whom are newcomers to the journal. In addition to myself Rachel Gordon has joined as features editor and Becci Arcscott as our graphic designer. We also have a new contributor in Jo Coffey who is writing a gardening feature for us and the changes don't end there as we are currently looking for an advertisement manager (see page 14).

I jumped at the chance to be involved with Distinctly Winkleigh as the publication speaks volumes for the community spirit within the village. DW exists thanks to the advertisers and sponsors, the Winkleigh Society and the collective effort of the small army of volunteers and contributors (see the team sheet below) who between them write, proof read, sell the advertising, administrate and deliver free copies to homes and businesses in the Parish.

DW is here to serve its readers so please let me know if there are topics that you'd like us to cover which we currently aren't. If there are things, good or bad, concerning Winkleigh that you'd like aired then please send us a letter (peter@hoppy.biz) and we will be happy, assuming the content is legal, to publish it. If you have an upcoming event then please let me have details and the event can be listed on our What's On pages.

Peter Hopkinson

Editor - peter@hoppy.biz

The Distinctly Winkleigh Team

Publisher: The Winkleigh Society

Editor: Peter Hopkinson

Features Editor: Rachel Gordon

Interim Advertisement Manager:

Rachel Goldsworthy

Graphic Designer: Becci Arcscott

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Proof Readers: Jane Beresford-Smith, Ken & Nicolette Tibbles, Phil Griffiths, Rachel Goldsworthy, Sue Ware



WINKLEIGH

Parish Church News

It seems the time since Christmas has flown by and we are already working our way through 2024. Winter feels a little bit like it has gone on forever, the days feel like they have been endlessly gloomy and very wet. In church the other Sunday we had the reading of Noah and the ark – very apt as the rain lashed against the windows! Noah only had forty days of rain though – we seem to have had much more! But just as the dove brought back an olive branch to Noah, there are signs of hope around us; the days are lengthening and the spring flowers are bravely bursting forth. The cycle of new life and birth continues and we are reminded that after clouds and darkness there is always sunshine and light.

As the seasons and the year move on forward, the church's calendar doesn't stop either. We've packed away the tinsel and the crib and now here we are at Easter. We have moved from the crib to the cross and have been on a journey with Jesus through his temptations, his ministry and are now heading towards his crucifixion. We've enjoyed a great range of Lent talks this year which have given us new insights and hopefully got us thinking about the world, the church and our own lives.

Like Christmas, this is a busy season in the church year which lies ahead of us. Unlike Christmas however, Holy Week and Easter feels much more of a journey as the biblical narrative takes us along with Jesus and his disciples towards Jerusalem. We follow the events of Holy Week, stand at the foot of the cross on Good Friday and rejoice on Easter Day that our Lord and Saviour is risen. It always seems appropriate that Easter falls as the season changes from the darkness and cold of winter to the warming spring sun, from barren wet earth to the colour of spring flowers. The journey from darkness to light, from despair to hope. Mirrored in the events of Jesus' life, from the darkness of the cross to the glory of Easter day. Mirrored in our own lives, through earthly struggles and dark times, sustained by the hope of eternal life.

All are welcome to journey with us, this Holy Week and Easter season and experience that joy and hope for yourselves. Our service times are on display on the church door and church is open every day for personal prayer or just some quiet time.

Revd Helen Blaine

01837 83710 or Revhelenblaine@outlook.com

Church events to put in your diary...

**SUNDAY
24TH MARCH**

Palm Sunday

9:30am

Eucharist,

All Saints, Winkleigh

**THURSDAY
28TH MARCH**

Maundy Thursday

7:00pm

Eucharist,

All Saints, Winkleigh

**FRIDAY
29TH MARCH**

Good Friday

2:30pm

Liturgy of Good Friday,

All Saints, Winkleigh

**SATURDAY
30TH MARCH**

Easter Eve

7:00pm

Easter Vigil,

All Saints, Winkleigh

**SUNDAY
31ST MARCH**

Easter Day

9:30am

Family Eucharist,

All Saints, Winkleigh

**TUESDAY
2ND APRIL**

**Children's Easter
Activities**

10:00am - 12noon

All Saints, Winkleigh

Winkleigh Flower Ladies

We are a very small group of ladies that like to welcome local residents & visitors to our beautiful church with the presence throughout the year of a floral display on a pedestal. On special occasions ie. Easter & Christmas additional windows are also decorated.

We would very much welcome any new comers to join our group. No experience is necessary as guidance and help will be given. Simple displays



are all that is required. All necessary equipment will be supplied.

You do not necessarily have to live in the village, but just enjoy flower arranging.

PLEASE CONTACT Linda Millership – 01837 680040


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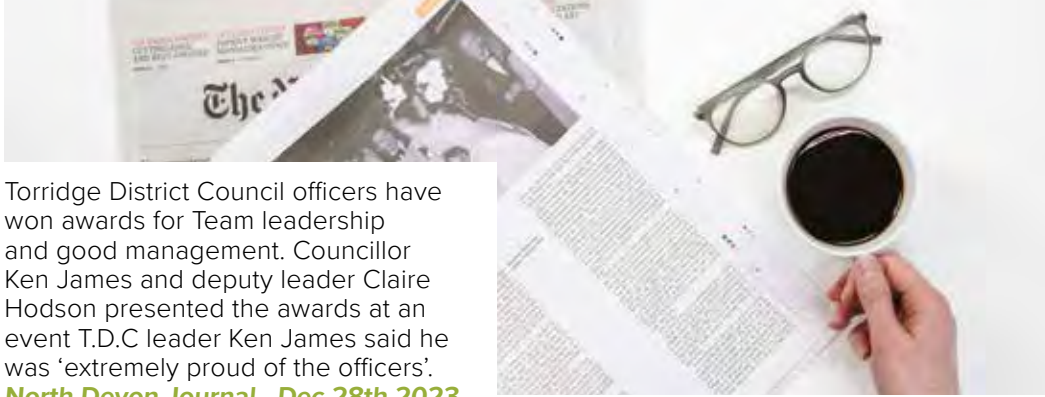
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Torrige District Council officers have won awards for Team leadership and good management. Councillor Ken James and deputy leader Claire Hodson presented the awards at an event T.D.C leader Ken James said he was 'extremely proud of the officers'.

North Devon Journal - Dec 28th 2023.

Traffic down and cycling up in city streets in Low traffic Neighbourhoods trial in Exeter. Many residents have protested, demonstrated and signed petitions against the changes. The trial is due to run for 18 months.

Express and Echo. - Nov 16th 2023.

Purple Poo campaign aims to protect Berry Head eco system. Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust's purple poo campaign is designed to encourage dog owners to pick up their pet's mess. The charity will spray dog mess purple using bio-degradable paint to make it clearly visible and alert walkers to the scale of the problem.

BBC Devon X. Dec 1st 2023.

In the letters page a North Tawton resident questions why North Tawton Council wasted tax- payers' money on a media lawyer when the information required [about the legality and protocol of filming council meetings] was readily available on a public site.

Okehampton Times. Jan 11th 2023.

South West Water denies dishonesty over drought projections. Three of the regions reservoirs hit record low water levels. The Environment Agency assessment obtained by Greenpeace investigative unit revealed SWW has shown complacency prior to the drought and 'a lack of understanding of their own supply system'.

Western Daily Press. Jan 16th 2023.

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USING OUR *Neighbourhood Plan*

In this article Pauline Warner of Winkleigh Parish Council Planning Group looks at the policies most commonly referred to in the Neighbourhood Plan.



Thinking of extending or altering your home? Thinking of building on that spare bit of land? If the answer is yes, then you should try to meet the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan to help you achieve a smooth ride through the planning system.

The Neighbourhood Plan (NP) tries to manage change in Winkleigh so that the development we need to support the community occurs without harming the identity and heritage of the Parish, and impacts positively on the environment. Policies in the NP are used alongside the Torridge Local Plan to help decide planning applications. It is therefore important to look at them and see what is needed before wasting time (and money!) on a planning application. Here is a flavour of some of the things to think about. There is more detail in the plan itself.

The NP puts the environment at its heart. The first policy in the plan (ENV1) asks for a thorough appraisal of any site,

no matter how big or small. This covers how it sits in its surroundings; what are the features of value; what wildlife is present; how can any changes be made without compromising the quality of the site; what environmental gains can be made. The aim is to keep (and improve on) what we value locally and prevent the erosion of habitats for example, through the loss of hedges and hedgebanks.

Following on from the natural qualities of a site, its setting in the built environment is important, and the design and appearance of what is built can have a major impact. The Winkleigh Village Design Statement has been used to build policies in the NP that reinforce the traditional and local aspects of our village, and promotes the use of local materials. The plan contains a picture analysis of the different character areas in Winkleigh. Designing features that add to the village scene, that offer craftsmanship and features to help

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wildlife (e.g. bat, bird and owl boxes; hedgehog underpasses) are promoted. Keeping wildlife corridors intact is important. Completely enclosing areas – with close board fencing for example means wildlife cannot move freely. NP policies ENV2-ENV5 explore these issues in more detail.

Affordable homes for local people are usually provided by developers to meet policies in the Torridge Local Plan. Winkleigh Parish, like many rural Devon parishes has a higher proportion of larger houses than small, entry level properties (where there is a need for more homes). The NP has a policy (HCLW1) that aims to keep smaller rural properties available to buyers. The policy restricts the degree to which homes can be extended or rebuilt, so that small properties cannot be reconfigured into large executive style houses.

The way the village changes has impacts on our health and how the community develops. All too often new housing is built in self contained areas with little thought about how the site is linked to other adjoining neighbourhoods. Where development happens there is a chance to make new footpaths and links between neighbourhoods. We can create circular walking routes, to help residents get to shops, school and other services conveniently without using the car, and to encourage walking for health and exercise (policy TTM3).

This is only a snapshot of issues the NP hopes to influence. To learn more about how the NP aims to shape change in the Parish, please look at the full document www.torridge.gov.uk/media/24045/Winkleigh-Neighbourhood-Plan/pdf/Winkleigh_Neighbourhood_Plan.pdf?m=1633602824583

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From your **District Councillor**

Just back from two weeks' in India where I visited many of the historic sites in Rajasthan; the history was fascinating however what really struck me were the extremes of everyday life that were evident everywhere – the sheer scale of the country with its huge population and vast shanty towns, abject poverty and opulent wealth, riverbeds filled with rubbish and sewage overlooked by architectural beauty, disease and malnutrition balanced against global-scale industry, happiness and sorrow, etc etc.

Once again I was reminded what an easy and soft life we lead – in our society even those who struggle have options, be it credit, the Welfare system, healthcare or local charity. In India many do not have access to bank accounts or their credit cards, the poorer end of society do not qualify for, or are unknown to, the welfare system and there was no sign of food banks or soup kitchens – any spare food from this vegetarian society seemed to be fed to the sacred cows roaming the streets! And yet everyone seemed cheerful, eager to please and yet always on the lookout for the next work opportunity – their work ethic is awesome.

I have just seen on Facebook that familiar poster suggesting that England is for those who do not want to work and where the less you do, the more you qualify for, especially if you have arrived from another country etc. Not true of course, but I do wonder if we are steadily heading in that direction – a constant dumbing down of societal and personal values where no one is allowed to fail and all are told they are winners. No wonder our younger generations do not tolerate being reprimanded or told to do better, or are prepared to work (hard) for people who may be more successful than they. Welcome to reality!

At Torrridge we have agreed the Council's budget for 2024/25 and the Mid-term Financial Strategy for the next five years. We have had to raid reserves for approx. £500k in order to balance the budget and some tough decisions will need to be taken shortly as the Council's reserve will be exhausted in two years' time unless savings are made (it is a legal requirement for the Council to operate a balanced budget). Although nowhere near the difficulty that some councils around the country are in (mainly due to incompetent management or bad investment decisions), I will be pressing hard to ensure those difficult decisions are taken - unlike some councillors who gracefully lower their heads into the sand and hope the problem will go away!

We await the Council's decision on their bids to the Levelling Up Partnership where Torrridge and 19 other Local Authorities have been given a pot of £400m to fund infrastructure projects to boost local economies. TDC's consultation exercise has concluded and responses from the public, Parish councils and industry are currently being collated. A Government team arrives in Torrridge in March to do a "deep dive" assessment to help identify weaknesses and the best areas for support. This follows on from the Maritime Innovation Project (£15m) and the reinvigoration of Appledore Shipyard with a £600m orderbook creating up to 800 jobs throughout the Region – Torrridge has had a good share of Government cash in recent years but I fear not for much longer!

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have an issue that I can help with.

Councillor Simon Newton MBE
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Our Devon County Councillor writes...



It has been a busy start to the year at Devon County Council and here in Winkleigh. I will start on local matters. I am delighted to say that thanks to the additional funding we received from the Government after the cancellation of HS2, the road through the Airfield is due to be resurfaced (and may have already been so by the time you read this). The scheme is due to take place from 19th February – 2nd March and will be done at nighttime so I hope any disruption to residents and local businesses at the airfield is kept to a minimum.

Alongside this, the Council is designing schemes to repair the road leading to Bridge Reeve from Hollocombe, as well as Bude Hill with a resurfacing-style patching repairs and drainage scheme. These are, at the time of writing, still subject to funding and competing demands with other schemes throughout the County... but I will continue to press hard to get these schemes done. It may take time, but readers will know I am persistent, and I will keep pressing Winkleigh's and Torrington Rural's case to the Directors at Highways.

BUDGET MATTERS

Away from local matters, the start of the year at County Hall has been mostly been taken up with budget setting for the next financial year. This is especially important for a large organisation like DCC – the turnover of the County Council is over £1.5 billion pounds, with a net revenue budget of over £700 million in the coming financial year – so it is

no small, or easy, task to set budgets, especially when you are dealing with millions of pounds of expenditure of public money.

That is why so much of the first part of the year is devoted to budget setting and the multitude of meetings it involves. At the time of writing the Budget is being finalised and should have been agreed by the time you read this article as the Budget Meeting will be held on the 15th February. The overall revenue budget is set to increase to £743 million. Adult Care and Health gets a 6% (£20.5m) increase with an overall budget of just under £361m. Children's Services gets a £21.5m increase of 10.4% for a budget of just under £228m.

There is also a 5% increase for the Highways and Transport Directorate which I hope is also welcomed. The overwhelming majority of my 'postbag' is on Highways matters and believe me, I share many of the frustrations about potholes too! But the social services are a function of the Council that is mandated to us in law, we cannot cut someone's care package in order to put that money into Highways instead.

But what we can do is put extra funding into Highways where and when it comes available, and continue to look at different ways of working and using new and different types of road treatments, whether it is using the 'Dragon Patcher' or new types of material like 'elastomac' (made from recycled tyres and which welds itself to the road surface, creating a watertight seal).

In addition, the final grant settlement from Central Government was more generous than expected and as a result of that, a further £1.5 million will go into Highways Drainage which will be on top of the 5% increase I outlined above.

My community grant or Locality Budget will also increase back up to £8,000 and I hope to be able to use some of this fund to support local projects within Winkleigh.

DCC's share of the Council Tax will increase by 4.99%, of which 2% is specifically ringfenced for Adult Social Care. I know Council Tax increases are never welcome... but it is needed to fund the continued demand on social services and Highways and to ensure we have a sound budget. If we took the money out of reserves, it would weaken Devon's financial position and the Council would start getting into the mess that Authorities like Somerset and Birmingham have got themselves into.

It is vital, in these challenging financial times, that the County Council remains on a sound financial footing. I have reported in previous articles on the financial headwinds the Council has faced. So far though, we have weathered these storms and, while money remains 'tight', we are not looking at the kind of budget cuts that other local authorities have been forced into.

DEVON AND TORBAY DEVOLUTION DEAL

The other major development I want to write about this month is the publication of the Devon and Torbay Devolution Deal. The Government has chosen Devon and Torbay as one of only a small number of local authority areas in the country to form a Combined County Authority. This will not require an elected Mayor or changes to the current structure of local councils.

The proposed Combined County Authority would be a partnership made up of Councillors representing the councils of Devon and Torbay,

including the District Councils, and representatives from business and education. Together, this partnership would deliver on a jointly agreed programme working alongside businesses and partner organisations that will draw down more funding for Devon, help stimulate economic growth and support our young people leaving education.

The Deal should allow important decisions to be taken locally by people who know their areas best, on priorities that matter to the people of Devon and Torrington Rural such as building more affordable homes, investing in new quality jobs and skills, and improving public transport.

Initially at least, don't expect any massive changes overnight. But if this Deal does go through it will reset Devon's, Torridge's and indeed Torrington Rural's relationship with Central Government and give us access

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to funding and powers from Whitehall that hitherto our area has always either missed out on or been overlooked on.

Highlights of the deal include granting direct control over further and adult education to create up to 50,000 new training and retraining opportunities by 2030, improving the opportunities for our young people leaving school, college and university. £16 million of capital funding will be made available to invest in new green jobs, homes, skills, and business growth, and accelerate Devon and Torbay's transition to a netzero economy. With our local environmental initiatives here in Torrington Rural, I hope that we will stand to benefit from this.

There should be more powers and funding devolved on housing matters, unlocking funding from national bodies which I hope will mean we have more opportunities to provide housing for

local residents and key workers in their communities who are unable to get onto the housing ladder locally.

And there will be more support and funding to improve local public transport across Devon and Torbay. I know here in a rural area we are reliant and dependant upon car travel. But if we can improve our local bus services in Winkleigh and Devon and introduce new public transport services, that can only be a good thing for us.

So overall, I think this is a positive development for Devon and one which locally, we should stand to benefit from over time. You can read more about the Devolution Deal online at -

www.devontorbaydeal.org.uk

As ever, if there are any DCC issues you'd like to raise with me you can contact me on [f](https://www.facebook.com/cllrsaywell) /cllrsaywell, ring **07886 446560** or email **andrew.saywell@devon.gov.uk**.



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INTERESTED? GET IN TOUCH

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01837 83407 | **penelopegriffiths@gmail.com**

PETER HOPKINSON (DW Editor) **01769 580373** | **peter@hoppy.biz**

Report from **Winkleigh Parish Council Chair**

Winkleigh Parish Council has had a difficult time recently with several changes of clerk. We have now appointed a new clerk who is very knowledgeable about council procedures, but has had a baptism of fire with faulty lap tops, soft ware issues all at the end of the financial year! Sorting out the finances and preparing accounts for the coming fiscal season and setting the precept has had to take priority over other outstanding issues due to deadlines having to be met.

Some councillors and I have been busy creating a “Winkleigh Cares” web page which lists all the useful local and national services available to folks in difficulty or feeling unwell or isolated. We will keep it updated and hope it will help people get the information they may need.

We have continued to try to insist that any new builds in our village are fit for purpose and in keeping with our lovely village. Last year we successfully halted the construction of 72 houses at Greatwell Park because the application was a dense, computer pattern book design. For many years members of WPC and others have laboured long and hard in writing a Neighbourhood Plan, which in effect is our planning policy. We have aspired to drive out poor design, so it’s a real shame to see developers chosen who persist in tacking on to our village, what can only be described as urban sprawl with no attempt to absorb the site into the surrounding countryside or pay respect to local architecture or enhance the environment.

Having successfully deferred the construction of Greatwell park, we have to do it all again, on March 7th as the developers have come back with what is called a free go. Which is now a little changed plan with one house fewer (71) therefore completely missing an opportunity to listen to the community, heed the aspirations of the Neighbourhood Plan and create a better design.

We have created an action plan so we can keep track of what we are doing and what we say we will do in order to remind ourselves what we agreed and hold each other to account. If you read the minutes of Parish Council meetings you will see that some things take an awful long time to complete and we hope that this way we can work more smartly!

Finally, The Winkleigh Volunteer Service is still providing people with lifts to medical appointments and other essential appointments. We are getting calls from outside the Parish extending our service to Broadwoodkelly, Wembworthy and Dolton. We are desperate for more volunteers. If you have any spare time please become a volunteer.

**For a conversation about Volunteering ring Angie on 682616/07455365144
Or ring the above if you need a lift**

Angela Findlay Chair of Winkleigh Parish Council

Catkin Blooms

Making Flower Power For Good

With its commitment to trading ethically, Winkleigh's most beautiful shop is also a business with a purpose.

RACHEL GORDON



Catkin Blooms is situated in the former Bissetts Garage on Exeter Road, a former industrial premises that has been transformed into a sublime space with a high ceiling and plenty of boho chic.

But this is about providing far more than retail therapy and top notch coffee and cakes. The aim is to celebrate and supply a range of British flowers and local products as well as being a welcoming space for workshops and other community activities.

Owner Cath Kenny is a passionate environmentalist and her mission is to ensure customers love the experience, and if they want to, “discover more about being consumers in a sustainable way.”

There is always a wide range of flowers available, but customers will notice these change on a regular basis according to the season - and they also won't see a Gerbera or carnation among them.

This is because these are mostly grown abroad and is also the case with the majority of flowers sold in supermarkets and Florists. Some estimates on the number of imported flowers in the UK are as high as 90% and these are often brought in from Holland by lorry, but they can also be

grown even further away and flown in from areas as far away as Africa and South America.

Catkin Blooms sells a few imported house plants, but all flowers are British grown blooms, a wide display of which are displayed at the rear of the shop and these can be purchased and expertly arranged by Cath. She comments: “There's a lot of awareness about food miles and there is also more now of flower miles - often there is a large carbon footprint as well a lot of plastic and wasteful packaging.”

Given that Catkin Blooms feels so well established, it is somewhat surprising when Cath says the business has only been in this building for two years, and she was previously based in another smaller shop just up the road in Castle Street.

This is the first time Cath has run her own business and she had a range of community development and academic roles before doing this. She has a psychology degree but says flowers and horticulture are something she was interested in from a young child. “I've always loved flowers and was inspired by my nan who used to grow many in her garden and used to win prizes at village shows. I also gained more



knowledge when I volunteered for WWOOF (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms) and travelled to Australia and New Zealand, but when I came back, I had a number of corporate and academic jobs.”

Cath later also achieved an MSc in Environmental Psychology but realised she wanted to use her skills in a different way that involved working for herself and with flowers. “I was a mum of three girls and wanted more flexibility, to be able to work closer to home and not have to work for someone else.”

Before opening Catkin Blooms, she also chose to gain some practical experience by working in a florist in Okehampton, also taking a number of courses to develop her skills.

Running her own company now allows her to implement her environmental beliefs and as she says, “there’s always a benefit to knowledge of psychology if you’re dealing with people.”

Cath, who lives in Winkleigh, also continues to grow some flowers at home and brings these to the shop when

available. She uses a number of local suppliers for other flowers and plants, in particular Millwood Plants, based in Umberleigh.

Meanwhile, Catkin Blooms aims to be a destination rather than a place to simply buy flowers and has a number of distinct features. One of these is the weekly flower club, where for £12 a bunch of seasonal flowers styled to





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perfection in a recycled glass vase can be picked up each Friday. “It’s really taken off since we opened and we now have around 160 members. You can either bring your own vase, or we have plenty here and anyone who’d like to join simply needs to sign up.”

Flowers are at the core of Catkin Blooms, but this is also a relaxing venue to enjoy coffee and cake as well as locally produced soup and bread.

In terms of the fittings, pretty much everything is recycled or reclaimed, predominantly from nearby towns and villages. This includes church pews from a disused church and work tops made from a sequoia tree that needed to be felled and the extravagant looking chandeliers were also picked up second-hand and for a bargain price, while an old army trunk acts as a coffee table.

Local suppliers include the hugely popular No 1 coffee, which is roasted in Okehampton, soup from Fiona’s Farm Shop in Winkleigh, sea salt and rosemary focaccia from the Home Kitchen Bakery in Coppleshon (cakes are from Peck & Strong in Crediton). Cath adds that ethically produced milk comes from Taw River Dairy, a farm in Sampford Courtenay, which has high welfare standards, including allowing calves to remain with their mothers until natural weaning, and delivering milk by electric vehicles.

Then there are a range of gifts and provisions, including local soaps, honey, jewellery and pottery.

Catkin Blooms also runs regular and highly popular workshops, including those focused on flowers such as making seasonal wreaths, which are led by Cath, while others are run by Justine Fitton Ashburton-based Green Heart Kitchen and have covered topics such as organic chocolate truffle making and botanical body lotions. Workshops cost £45 and are held on Wednesday afternoon between 12.30-3pm and



repeated in the evening at 6.30-9pm. Details of what is upcoming can be found at the Facebook page - www.facebook.com/catkinbloomswinkleigh

Cath hopes that the sustainable approach taken by Catkin Blooms will also encourage people to make changes. “We get a lot of working people who rush in for a coffee and if everyone has a takeaway cup, that’s a lot of waste, even though we use compostable ones. We’re now seeing more people bring in their own refillable cup and we’re happy to wash these up if necessary. It just becomes a habit to think about how to reduce your waste and it’s good to see more people are wanting to make a difference.”

Catkin Blooms is certainly making a difference to its customers - and what is more, many from a wider area are also appreciating what is on offer. Notably, it was recently named as the Muddy Stiletto’s Best Florist in Devon award for 2023 - which was voted for by readers. This is some accolade and Winkleigh is indeed lucky to have Catkin Blooms on its doorstep.

LANDSCAPES *Transformed*

England's peasant poet John Clare delighted in the detail of his beloved landscape of Northamptonshire, the hedge-banks, the woods, open fields and streams. He was a poet and naturalist in labourer's clothes easily mistaken for a poacher, but while roaming freely [how he loathed the enclosure movement] he was absorbing and observing minute details of the natural world around him which prompted his poetry.

BIRDS AT EVENING

I love to hear the evening crows go by
And see the starnals darken down the sky:
The bleaching stack the bustling sparrow leaves
And plops with merry note beneath the eaves,
The odd and lated pigeon bounces by
As if a wary hawk was nigh,
While far and fearing nothing, high and slow,
The stranger birds to distant places go,
While short of flight the evening robin comes.
John Clare (1793 – 1864)

Peter Howard, (former chair of The Winkleigh Society) regularly chronicled and wrote about birdlife he observed in and around Winkleigh. [We could do with another birdwatcher to send us in their observations to *Distinctly Winkleigh*]. We hold a rich source of data to compare it with in our past copies of D.W.

Peter also wrote about landscapes and how precarious Winkleigh was [as although it had its own beauty] it is not recognised as an A.O.N.B. (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) which affords extra protection for special landscapes.

I thought in my naivety that notable hedge-banks in Winkleigh such as the one on Townsend Hill would have been afforded special protection when construction began as their importance had been flagged up in Winkleigh's Community Plan, Winkleigh's Village Design Statement and our Neighbourhood

Plan. **Winkleigh Parish Council** commissioned a hedgerow survey by **Devon Wildlife Trust** for **Winkleigh Neighbourhood Plan**. **Devon Wildlife Trust** surveyed our hedges and found the richest and most important were in Shute Lane and along Townsend Hill.

Multiple species key indicators of age and bio-diverse richness were logged:

TREE SPECIES: Hawthorne, blackthorne, elm, ash, gorse, guilder rose, holly, beech and sessile oak.

PLANT SPECIES: Male fern, common polypody, black bryony, viola sp., lords and ladies, foxglove, promrose, sweet woodruff and wood sage.

Witnessing the devastation that has been meted out to our longest, oldest and most significant hedge-bank in Winkleigh it is apparent that Developers pay no heed to our surveys and that Torridge lacks the enforcement officers to insist on bio-diversity gain. Deprived of their wildlife corridors the dormice will have struggled to survive along Townsend Hill. Likewise insects and birds. John Clare would have described it better.

Considering Devon is renowned for its hedge-banks [a defining feature of our cultural and ecological landscape] scant regard is paid to the importance of landscape in planning applications. Local distinctiveness is being eviscerated, sacrificed to computer-generated design and the failure of Developers and landowners to fulfil their pledges on sustainability and bio-diversity gain that they pay lip service to in their planning applications.

Belatedly, various wildlife organisations are now logging how much of our county and national hedge system is being lost.

[*Devon Wildlife Consultants Report 18/3372.01 Winkleigh Hedgerow Assessment*].

Penny Griffiths



EDGE

STITCH + PRINT

Where have the first two months gone? It has certainly flown for us! As many of you already know we purchased the embroidery machines and customer base from Gemma at Rocket Clothing back in early December last year when she closed her business.

We had our little workshop across from the Seven Stars (our other business!) where Tracey operated Synergy Gifts and created anything from personalised gifts, keepsakes, educational toys, business signage, home décor, dog tags, bag tags, key rings, printed t-shirts and so much more with her laser cutting and engraving machine. As we were frequently asked if we could produce workwear, it was an easy choice to add the embroidery machines into the mix so we created Edge Stitch + Print and moved both businesses into the one space at Rocket Clothing's previous Unit at Beechlea Industrial Estate.

After our first month of trading, we would like to say a massive thank you to our customers who asked us to produce their workwear, we have created logos and branding for some of you and purely decoration on the rest, we have thoroughly enjoyed working with you.

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To buy or not to buy
PLASTIC GRASS?

Yesterday I was enjoying an unseasonably mild February day and admiring spring flowers in people's gardens when I came across a pristine lawn and discovered that it was a plastic one, that set me wondering if such a thing is harmful to the environment. So, I did some research. If you care about the environment please read on.

Artificial grass is a man-made surface of synthetic fibres made to look like natural grass. It has been commonly used on sports pitches for decades but is now being purchased more often for residential lawns. I can see why this has come about. It doesn't need to be mowed with electric or fossil fuel mowers, it doesn't need to be fertilised with potentially harmful chemicals and it doesn't need watering, so far this is all good for the planet isn't it?

However, from my research I have learned that the environmental issues caused from choosing to put down an artificial lawn far outweighs any of these potential benefits.

Artificial grass does not provide any food for any living creatures. It restricts soil access to burrowing animals and to the ground above for soil dwellers such as worms. Basically, artificial grass is a coffin lid for these important creatures.

Artificial turf denies animals natural materials like leaf litter which is essential food for worms and microbes and as any gardener will tell you also improves the health of your soil.

Plastic grass also overheats and is unusable in really hot weather and contributes to global warming by absorbing more radiation than living grass and by displacing natural grass and plants which removes carbon from the air through photosynthesis.

The manufacture, transportation and installation of plastic turf creates a huge carbon footprint, whilst surface water is not absorbed by the grass and so runs off potentially contributing to flooding.

Artificial grass is made from polypropylene, a thermoplastic polymer or nylon, fragments of which make their way into the environment in the form of microplastic pollution. A further problem relates to a short shelf life of twenty years at most when it has to be replaced. What then to do with the old grass is problematic as it's not easy to recycle and has to be done at specialist facilities. I suspect that many owners simply take it to the tip, meaning even more microplastic is released into the environment.

What then are the benefits of a real lawn? Grass, like all living plants, takes

up carbon dioxide and releases oxygen. A natural lawn creates an ecological boundary between your house and the street, absorbing sound, reducing noise pollution, acting as a natural filter trapping and absorbing smoke and other pollutants that we would otherwise breathe in. Looking out on over a lovely natural lawn with a border of flowers and trees significantly reduces stress and improves our well-being. How many of us will stop and look at a lovely garden as we make our way on foot?

Urban gardens are increasingly recognised for their potential to maintain or even enhance biodiversity, especially if there are a variety of flowering plants and grasses supporting a number of pollinating insects, which have declined in recent years due to intensive farming and habitat loss. Real lawns are a home for beetles, other insects and worms, and they attract

birds such as starlings that feed on the invertebrates hidden below or seeds from the grass itself.

I remember as a child playing and sitting on lawns, making daisy chains, picking a blade to whistle with or simply chewing a blade. What a shame to miss the tactile and sensory benefits of real grass.

My reflection is that I will be thinking twice about buying a plastic lawn. Personally, if I get to the stage of not being able to cut my grass, I will leave it wild, providing shelter and egg laying opportunities for insects on which birds and other animals can feed. I would allow clover and dandelion and other so called weeds to grow and flower, they are very pretty and will attract birds insects an invertebrates and provide nectar for bees.

Angela Findlay



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A HIDDEN TREASURE

PHOTOGRAPHS © stone@stonefree.org

If walls could speak, they would have much to say about Court Castle, an ancient mound that will have witnessed many turbulent - and peaceful - times throughout the ages.

In February, the gate was unlocked to allow public access to Court Castle, the site of a medieval earthwork castle. But, how many know it is here, since so many of us will probably simply walk or drive past its surrounding walls as we pass through the village?

For many, the word castle conjures up images of turrets and grey stone, but this is an earthwork castle, a Norman invention, also known as a motte and bailey castle.

It comprises an artificial mound, or motte, made of layers of earth and stone, with steep sides and a flat top. At the summit, there may have been a keep, a timber construction that existed as a lookout.

A QUICK BUILD

Today, there is brick structure on the summit and this was built during the 18th century as a tearoom, it has a somewhat spooky appearance and is in ruins. A ditch remains below, which could have been a moat and this would once have been filled with water to deter intruders. It is said these structures could be constructed quickly, typically in about 40 days by some 100 peasant labourers.

A bailey is the name for a courtyard where soldiers, servants and animals would have lived. It is thought this would have been in land across the road where the Grade II listed house Winkleigh Court, is based, but this has been landscaped and no longer exists - the site has been dissected by the A3124.

A SHOWCASE FOR WILD FLOWERS

Host, Mags Zaharia, explains that the land was bought by her parents, John and Tilly Kimber and she has many happy memories of playing there as a child, with her brother and sister along with their friends.



may have been two strongholds owned by rival families, the de Keynes and de Traceys in the 12th century, when the manor was divided into two and so acted as important lookout locations. During the second Civil War between 1642-1651, Winkleigh was a Royalist stronghold in a Parliamentary rural area and the castles too could have been vital for soldiers involved in the conflict.

Winkleigh's long history will contain many secrets, but plenty will continue to remain uncovered and that includes at Court Castle mound - as Mags points out, designation as a 'scheduled monument' means metal detectorists are certainly not allowed.

Mags says her brother oversees some gentle maintenance work at the mound which is peppered with many established trees, including ancient yews, and a proliferation of wild flowers, such as snowdrops and bluebells.

This is a protected site that is normally closed to the public. Entry is restricted because of the site's historical importance and because the family are responsible for any accidents - which could happen because of the uneven ground.

But, it opens, typically annually, when visits can be properly managed. In the past, it has also been used for weddings and fund-raising events for the charity, Little John's House, which Mags founded in Romania.

Many will also be unaware that Winkleigh is the only village in Devon to have two of these castles. The other is Croft Castle, which has had the Village Hall built on top of it.

USED BY WARRING FAMILIES?

Court Castle Mound is believed to date to the late 11th or early 12th centuries and could have been around during the 'Anarchy' civil war between Stephen and Matilda, who were battling for the English throne from 1135 to 1154.

It is not known why there are two of these mounds but some think they

Rachel Gordon



Winkleigh VILLAGE HALL

No sooner have Christmas and New Year appeared and disappeared than Easter is almost upon us. It falls early this year, Easter Day on the last day of March. The hall monthly market with an Easter theme will still be held on the 1st Saturday of the month, which will be 6th April. We hope to see many of you there when Winkleigh Bell Ringers will be providing refreshments.

To ensure compliance with our insurance providers, a full electricity check was recently carried out. Aside from some minor recommendations, it passed with flying colours and a new certificate issued.

Bookings in the main hall and meeting room continue to thrive. All our regulars returned in the New Year together with several new groups and one-off sessions. We were very pleased to welcome Rev. Helen Blaine for a series of illustrated talks, Cath Kenny with her Burns Night event, Aly Leah with her Warm Space Healthy Club and Big Breakfast, Wendy Watkins with Winkleigh Garden Club, Simon Holt using the meeting room for his band practice, a concert of East European folk music provided by the local Devon band, Druzba, Winkleigh Football Club darts night and Winkleigh Fair with its quiz night. Special mention should be made of the drama presented by the Med Theatre in mid-March, "The Experiment", which told the story of a group of children left to fend for themselves and survive during a fateful camping trip on Dartmoor, not knowing that it was all part of an experiment by their parents.

Winkleigh FC is holding its next quiz night on Friday 12th April.

Our movie nights continue to be extremely popular with full houses in January, February and March for "Eddie the Eagle", "The Great Escaper" and "Judy".

On April 19th we will be showing "Till", the true story of Mamie Till-Bradley, who pursued justice after the lynching of

her 14-year-old son in 1950s racist-torn America. See poster. This will be followed on May 17th by a great favourite with a local flavour, "Warhorse", and by "Mrs Lowry & Son", the story of artist L S Lowry, his strained relationship with his mother.

I mentioned in the last DW that we have received a quote for fibre glass roof insulation for a little over £2000. At the moment, as many of you will testify, heat produced in the main hall quickly disappears through the roof space, which has no insulation at all. We appeal to any individuals or businesses who might like to help by sponsoring the fitting of insulation. Also, once purchased, we will be looking for a skilled volunteer who might like to donate time to fit the fibreglass rolls.

A big thank you to Paul Beer for all the gardening work he carries out each month, including pressure-washing paths and steps which can become quite slippery when wet if the build-up of moss and algae isn't removed.

A small sub-committee has been formed to create a series of policies for the hall including, but not limited to, Data Protection, Safeguarding, Hall Hiring, Finance and Risk Assessment. These are required by many bodies from which we can potentially secure grants. Once complete, and approved by the wider committee, they will be published.

Thank you to all residents, visitors and helpers who continue to support hall activities. We couldn't do it without you!

Tony Aston – Chair

CONTACT

Committee, Helpers, and Movie Nights
Tony – 07946 490967
Market Manager and Bookings
Kay – 01837 83248

WINKLEIGH VILLAGE HALL MOVIE NIGHT

FRIDAY 19th APRIL
Doors open 6.30pm for 7pm screening
Pay-bar and refreshments available

Directed by
TILL



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WINKLEIGH VILLAGE HALL MOVIE CLUB - 2024



WHEN	MOVIE	RATING
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FRIDAY 19 TH APR 7PM	TILL (2022)	12
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FRIDAY 17 TH MAY 7PM	WARHORSE (2011)	12A
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FRIDAY 14 TH JUN 7PM	MRS LOWRY AND SON (2019)	PG
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Entry by contribution on the door to Village Hall funds

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**Maximum 35 seats so PLEASE BOOK YOUR PLACES
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WINKLEIGH VILLAGE HALL MOVIE NIGHT

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FRIDAY 17th MAY

Doors open 6.30pm for 7pm screening
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Directed by ADRIAN POOLE
MRS LOWRY & SON



FRIDAY 14th JUNE

Doors open 6.30pm for 7pm screening
Pay-bar and refreshments available

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Winkleigh YFC Update

Winkleigh YFC members have had a busy couple of months recently. We kicked off the year with the club's Christmas meal. This was well attended by members and was held at the Waie Inn, Zeal Monachorum.

This was followed by the New Year's disco, held at Winkleigh Sports Centre. The disco was well attended and a good night was had by all.

To wrap up the festivities, we then held our second annual Christmas tree collection. This event was well supported by the local community so many thanks to everyone who donated money or helped to pick up trees. This is a great way of stopping trees going to landfill and raises money for great charities. A special thank you should also go out to MTF Contracting and Devon Plant for chipping and the use of their yard.

We managed to scratch together a last-minute team to attend the Chulmleigh YFC Chili Quiz at the start of February. This quiz was enjoyed by all who attended and it's great to support other clubs in their fundraising, just as they support ours.

We also aim to support local up and coming businesses where possible,


which is why our club clothing this year is being made by The Country Duck Co. from Wembworthy!

Our annual blind drop was also held in Wembworthy Village Hall. This event was part of the Tarka group of YFCs' Christmas Challenge.

Finally, a bus load of Winkleigh members travelled down to the Devon YFC Valentine's Ball. This ball was held as an alternative to the traditional Christmas ball that was cancelled in December. Members new and old got suited and booted and enjoyed their night out.

UPCOMING EVENTS

In March, several members from the club will be attending South West Area. This is a great networking event where every club in the South West will meet at Newquay to take part in activities for the weekend. One of these activities might be attending the pub!

For more information about our club or membership, feel free to call me on 07498 972991 or  Winkleigh YFC.

Tim Laarveld Social Secretary



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Potholes

In this article Andrew Warner looks at potholes and the hazards they present to those on two wheels

Pity the poor pothole. They are under attack from DCC with their HS2 cancellation bounty. They are certainly not lonely as there are lots of them and given their current numbers, they are still not likely to be classified as endangered, certainly not in Devon.

So now what can I tell you about potholes, as a cyclist?

The criteria for repair are that they need to be at least dinner plate size and with vertical edges. Now these potholes may have reached the size at which your car tyre and rim is in danger and in some circumstances the county council might have to pay out if your car is damaged.

How does a cyclist fare? Well, we can burst inner tubes and dent rims and come off our bikes on much smaller potholes. There are also other dangerous defects in our roads. There are those gaps you see next to the metal work of drains at the edge of the road that our tyres can drop into and not get out. The long cracks that appear running down the middle of the tarmac on our roads, can grip or snatch our wheels. The worst are those cracks

at junctions when you are approaching at 45% to the main road, (think level crossings with gaps alongside the lines).

The cyclist will probably add clothing, bruising and broken bones to the claim for the bike repairs. Concussion has caused an ongoing problem for some unfortunate cyclists. Now that is an expensive CLAIM.

Why do vehicles need to give cyclists a wide berth on the road? Although my friends tend to ride close to the kerb, we are advised by the Highway Code (HC) to ride 1 metre from the edge. The potholes love to lurk in the road near to the edge. Don't be surprised if we cyclists seem to veer about on the road, we are probably avoiding potholes. The HC advises car drivers to pass cyclists with 1.5m clearance. If you add this to the 1m we need to ride from the edge of the road, this means cars should be passing us 2.5m from the verge, and MORE if driving over 30mph.

I love cycling in the Devon countryside but I am always shy of encouraging others to take it up as a pursuit. I think we need cycling proficiency PLUS pothole avoidance for our children.



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THE BOMBER AND THE WEATHERVANE

Tony Aston – Author Talk

I was delighted to be able to give an authors talk to a packed Community Centre in January, about my forthcoming book, "The Bomber and the Weathervane".

This is a unique and compelling story of wartime bravery, unbridled passion and eternal remembrance. It commemorates the crew of a WWII Lancaster bomber shot down in 1944 with all souls lost, then drawing together, nearly 80 years later and for the first time, family descendants of the crew in an emotional and poignant war memorial dedication, all as a result of the finding of an old, beaten up, metal weathervane, fashioned in the shape of a Lancaster, buried amongst a myriad of items for sale at a salvage yard in leafy Surrey.

I was amazed to see so many turn up for the talk. Thanks to everyone who



braved a cold winter's evening. I truly hope you enjoyed it. Huge thanks also to Aly Leah for supplying delicious hot pies, and to all those who made donations to Winkleigh Warm Space. Also to Rachel and Greg Goldsworthy for hosting on the night and taking photographs.

By the time you read this I am hoping to have a publication date for the book. Watch this space!

SPRINGTIME ART EXHIBIT

at RHS Rosemoor



© VICKERS

As an artist living in Winkleigh, Connie Vickers is inspired by our beautiful countryside and nearby coast. The changing seasons and all the glorious colours seen in our gardens and surrounding landscape have provided her with plenty of inspiration over the years!

This year RHS Rosemoor have selected Connie to be one of their guest exhibitors. The 50 or so artworks on display will show how nature has inspired her from landscapes to florals and beyond.

Creating in her studio brings Connie joy and calm. It is this sense that you will see in the paintings and can also experience for yourself when visiting the exhibit.

On weekends Connie will be in attendance between 2pm to 4pm and you are also welcome at any other time during RHS Rosemoor open hours.

Nature: Through My Eyes
PBLC Exhibition Room
RHS Rosemoor

EVENT TIMES

Daily, 10am–4.30pm (March) and 10am-5.30pm (from 1 April)

All at sea with fabulous sculptures

Anyone fortunate enough to go on a cruise holiday aboard the Icon of the Seas will have an additional treat in store thanks to specially commissioned works from Andrew Sinclair.

Just outside of Winkleigh, something very creative is going on. Andrew Sinclair Sculpture at Bondleigh is one of the UK's leading centres for realistic figurative sculpture and this is where three amazing divers were made before being transported to their new home on the Icon of the Seas, the world's largest cruise ship and part of the Royal Caribbean fleet.

A perfect balance

They are now in position on three of the 365 metre long Icon of the Seas' 20 decks. The sculptures are made of resin, which is a light material. Andrew says:

"Resin is light and that's the principle behind it. Everything on these ships, despite their huge size, all comes down to weight. You can't go above a certain weight without making the ship unstable."

Each sculpture is in a different pose, one is diving backwards, another is looking over the edge, while the third is doing a swan dive.

Andrew moved to Devon some 10 years ago from Buckinghamshire, founding not only a studio, but also The Sculpture School, where he is the co-director and lead tutor. This attracts students from around the world who are both professionals and novices.





Where possible, Andrew uses Devon-based technicians and suppliers, such as for steel and paints.

On the news

The 7ft tall sculptures have since been featured on world wide media, including the BBC, CNN and Sky.

The Icon of the Seas was completed in November 2023 and were then sent to a shipyard in Turku Finland, before being taken to the US and sailing off on the liner's maiden voyage from Miami in January. Andrew completed them in August 2023 and also oversaw the engineering and fixings of each piece so they could be installed on the decks.

He comments: "I'm delighted to see that my diver sculptures have been featured in many news articles around the world – creating them was certainly a voyage of discovery! We used innovative techniques and new materials in their making and I'm extremely proud of the high-quality design and finish that my team and I ultimately achieved."



Andrew has previously produced other sculptures for cruise ships being commissioned by the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) which have included giant venetian masks, fire-breathing dragons, astronauts and breakdancers. He is also well known for a David Bowie sculpture in Aylesbury and the Duke of Wellington's Regiment memorial sculpture in Halifax.



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ACE Archaeology Club

Spring! And we have a lot to look forward to. We will be doing our usual dig at Moistown in the summer, dates are almost finalised but if you are interested you can check out our website soon.

We are starting a new project which will be looking at old roads, paths, trackways, in between Exmoor and Dartmoor. We hope to try to date some of them and to work out what they were used for, were they drove roads, for example. We are drawing up a project outline at the moment and hope to start work in April. Again, if interested contact us through the website or Facebook page. Lots of different research to do, maps, place names, as well as getting out there and looking.

As if that wasn't enough, we will be re-visiting Rough Tor, doing some work with Dartmoor National Park, possibly

some field walking . All of these things are weather dependent and we will update the website to let people know what we are doing. So do take a look at it. We now have a member who has volunteered to look after it and it has made a big difference.

The Moistown finds from last year are still being catalogued and three of us are going to Wells in April as the Museum of Somerset are hosting a meeting of the Medieval and Later Pottery Research Group, which ACE belongs to. We hope to take some of the pottery finds for identification.

Do contact us for more information if anything takes your fancy.

Erica Williamson

ACE Archaeology Club
www.acearchaeologyclub.wordpress.com

 ACE Archaeology Club

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THE WINKLEIGH SOCIETY ARCHIVE

The Winkleigh Society is the custodian of the Winkleigh Archive and over the last eighteen months has undertaken to sort, number and index all of the items found within. Over many years people have donated photos, articles and many items that they thought may be of interest. Unfortunately many items had no information on them so it has been a painstaking task to track down and identify some of them. A lot of help has come from senior members of the village and their memories. Before Covid we held a very successful open day which aroused the interest of not only long standing residents of the village but of many newcomers. It also got people talking amongst themselves and sharing their own memories of the various occasions held in the village. This prompted us into action to list the items

that we hold. The computer system has also taken many hours to go through but we now know what is held in its memory.

Last year the Beaford Archive were also going through their documents but were destroying anything that was not relevant to them. Due to the quick thinking of Margaret Ferguson a large amount of photos that are on hard card were saved as they depicted life in the early 1900's and many of them of the Saunders Family who were very prominent in Winkleigh. Some of these are now on loan to Tony Aston who hopes to display them in the village hall.

It is our intention to have some of the items on display sometime during this summer to coincide with the Saturday market.

Barbara Jenkins

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Britannia

SV Britannia may have left Winkleigh but she is not forgotten. Here Vicki Samuels gives us an update on her restoration in Exeter



The past year was a momentous one for Britannia, marked by her return to the water after nearly a decade of meticulous restoration, by our volunteers in Winkleigh and beyond.

Following the successful relaunch, Britannia has found a new home at Exeter Heritage Harbour. Plans are underway for re-rigging and outfitting her interior, setting the stage for the next phase of her extraordinary journey.

We hope you will continue to follow and support us in 2024 and that you're looking forward to all the exciting things we have in store for the next few months. Personally, we all want to see Britannia re-rigged with mast and spars, looking like a real ship again!

We have moved our workshop from Airfield Garage in Winkleigh, to East Quay, the Canal Basin in Exeter and it is now in a smart blue container (but not nearly big enough!) The team can be found working there every week from Tuesday to Thursday. As well as moving all our timber, equipment, machinery and the long

spars needed to rig the ship, we have been busy fitting out the new container as a fully fledged workshop, and making a cover for Britannia so that she can be protected in winters to come. We are planning on making Exeter Quay our home berth, and even when we get Britannia back to sea, we shall return to Exeter every winter.

It hasn't been an easy few months weather wise, but spring is in the air and we are looking forward to our first Open Day of the Year which will be held on Sunday 14 April - let's hope the rain will keep away for that day! This is to celebrate Britannia's 109th Birthday and is becoming an annual event, albeit in a different venue. We are planning activities now and the day will be advertised on the Winkleigh community facebook page, so keep the date in your diary and come and see Britannia afloat instead of encased in a large shed, and have a brew with the crew...(cakes and ale and shanties)

If you want to follow our activities, our website at britanniasailingtrust.org, has recently been updated and we also post regularly on instagram and facebook.



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Taw Valley Quilters

We are a lively group of ladies (by accident not design!) who enjoy patchwork and quilting, meeting once a month on a Saturday in the Community Centre, Winkleigh.

If patchwork and quilting appeals to you, or you have recently moved into the area and looking for a new group, please think about joining us. There is a range of expertise, from beginners onwards, all doing projects from tiny pieces to large, sometimes very large, quilts. Projects range from hand-sewing to machine sewing.

Sometimes the group have workshops with professional quilters, also in-house workshops, although everyone likes to assist each other.



We now have space for more members as we have moved into the large hall, so please get in touch if you want to know more about us.

Barbara Jenkins

01837 83660

mferguson48dm@gmail.com

WINKLEIGH BIODIVERSITY GROUP

We welcome anyone to join us in our activities. We don't charge for membership and you don't need experience, just enthusiasm.

Take a look at what we have achieved over the past years in our blog at: www.winkleighbiodiversity.blogspot.com


Following on from a talk from the Barn Owl Trust in March in Ashreigney, we have fully funded an indoor Barn Owl nesting box, which was made by volunteers at a recent workshop. **We are now looking for suitable site to locate the box.**

Ideal buildings for Barn Owl nestboxes are:

- At least 4 metres (13ft) high.
- With an opening or hole at least 3 metres (10ft) above ground, which overlooks open countryside.
- Where the nestbox can be positioned 3+ metres (10+ ft) above the ground.
- Where the nestbox access hole is visible to an owl from the most likely entrance point.
- Ideally within 1 km (1/2 mile) of areas of rough grassland

So, if you have a barn overlooking countryside and away from a main road, we would be interested in hearing from you. This year we only have one box to give away. They can be purchased from the Barn Owl Trust for £78 plus delivery.

Another event you may be interested in: May 25th 10-4 **Nature Day** at the Sports and Recreation Centre. Activities for adults and children. See posters or Facebook for further information.

We also have a Facebook page  Winkleigh Community Action.

If you would like to be kept informed of events, please do get in touch: Kim J Melhuish, wildspacestorridge@gmail.com



Financial Focus – BOOM!

Disclaimer: The author is an active, regulated Director and the founder of Moor Independent Financial Advisers Ltd, a local, independent financial planning and investment management firm serving private clients and trustees. This guide is for information purposes and does not constitute financial advice, which should be based on your individual circumstances.

The value of investments may go down as well as up and you may get back less than you invest. Past performance is not a reliable indicator of future performance.

A global rally in December across global markets led to some muted price action in the first month of the year. Bearish commentators began to rumble about the chance of a market correction, or a fall of up to 10%, occurring imminently. Other participants were more upbeat and took positions anticipating a good year ahead. Views on the health of the global economy appear healthily divided at present, with a range of views being expressed across media platforms. February, however, has proven to be a remarkable month in more ways than one.

Following results announced after the markets had closed the previous day, on Thursday, 22nd February, Nvidia added \$277Billion in stock market value in a single trading session. This is Wall Street's largest one-day gain in history, coming after the heavyweight chipmaker's quarterly report beat expectations and reignited the rally fuelled by optimism about Artificial Intelligence. The company soared 16.40% to close at a record high of \$785.38, lifting its market capitalisation to \$1.96Trillion. The knock-on effect of this momentous move of the stock that Goldman Sachs has cited as the most important in the world, fuelled global stock markets, including Europe's STOXX

600, Japan's Nikkei and the US S&P 500, to close at record highs as investors sought to trade in companies affiliated to the move and optimism flooded the trading floors. Reuters reported that Short sellers betting Nvidia's stock would fall rushed to close those trades on Thursday and lost \$2Billion on paper, taking their declines to more than \$6.8Billion so far this year. Whilst many are suggesting the US stock market rally is becoming overdone and that a correction is due, many others remain firmly in the bull camp. There is general optimism in the US about the strength of the US economy, the global macroeconomic backdrop and the anticipation of looser monetary conditions as interest rates are potentially cut in the US and across many developed nations.

Japan has defied the bears and the stock market has closed at record highs this quarter, surpassing a peak last seen in 1989. Japan seeks to exit a deflationary environment and is now seeing signs of inflation at its target of 2% persisting and the BoJ is citing rising wage growth. In addition, many market participants have commented that company valuations do not seem stretched yet and that the market rally appears sustainable. Others disagree and currency traders have cited that the carry trade on the Yen, where participants may borrow the Japanese Yen at around 0% and invest the money within interest-bearing assets in other currencies, continues unabated. In February, the Yen touched its weakest for three months against the Euro and dropped by the same margin on sterling to hit its lowest since late 2015 at 190.83. It also made nine-year nadirs on the Australian and New Zealand dollars. It has fallen 6.3% against the dollar this year and is the worst performing

currency of the G10. It has also been highlighted that Japan slipped into recession in the last quarter of 2023; Japan's gross domestic product (GDP) fell an annualised 0.4% in the October-December period after a 3.3% slump in the previous quarter, confounding market forecasts for a 1.4% increase. Therefore, it does not necessarily follow that interest rates will rise in the near future at all. Some analysts are warning of another contraction in the current quarter as weak demand in China, sluggish consumption and production halts at a unit of Toyota Motor Corp all point to a challenging path to an economic recovery. Meanwhile, the Nikkei powers on.

India continues to grow apace and India's blue-chip Nifty 50 is smashing new record highs almost daily, making five of them in consecutive sessions during the third week of February. A report by Nikkei Asia in February revealed that Google plans to commence production of its Pixel smartphones in India by next quarter. The U.S. tech giant has been striving to diversify its supply chain away from China amid U.S.-China tensions, whilst seeking to capitalise on the booming smartphone market in India, the report added. This comes after the news last year that Apple was moving the production of its iPhone15 to India as the company sought to move away from Chinese production. "Indian equity markets will continue to do well due to underlying strength in

the economy, acceleration of business activity, strong corporate profitability and sustained domestic inflows," stated Pankaj Murarka, director and chief investment officer at Renaissance Investment Managers, in a recent Reuters article. India's business activity accelerated to a seven month high on solid demand in February.

In the UK, a series of positive updates from blue-chip firms have quietly been reported so far this quarter, while data points to strong growth for domestic services firms and showed business optimism at a two year high. UK markets are underperforming European and US markets this year predominately due to their focus on commodities and energy in the larger firms that compile the FTSE 100, alongside a lack of technology stocks.

In the Eurozone, France has proposed starting an EU Markets Union with a small group of countries, to unify national rules on bankruptcies, prospectuses, taxation of capital gains and so forth. "I have been trying for more than six years to build a capital markets union. My conclusion is that starting with the 27 member states is a non-starter," French Finance Minister Bruno le Maire told reporters.

Jonathan Cotley Chartered FCSI
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That was the (wet) year that was!

With Horry Mill at Hollocombe being an official Environment Agency rainfall recording station someone at the same time of every day of the year, come rain or shine, reads the rainfall gauge. This is no recent thing as the gauge has been read and the readings recorded and submitted to the EA for the last seventeen years which if my arithmetic is correct is over 6200 times.

The table below shows the monthly rainfall figures for the last 5 years with 2020 being the wettest year with an annual rainfall of 1346.7mm. Interestingly, within that figure were both the driest and wettest months in the 5 year period which were May with a miserly 4.1mm and December with 228.2mm.

2022 with the scorching summer was unsurprisingly the driest with annual rainfall of 900.5mm.

Last year's rainfall of 1270.2mm made 2023 the 2nd wettest of the 5 years with a massive 41% increase on the paltry annual figure for 2022 but it was

still 75.5mm short of the 2020 total. So a wet year but not the wettest.

As for 2024? Who knows it is in the lap of the gods" or was Sonia being amusing?



	2023 mm	2022 mm	2021 mm	2020 mm	2019 mm
January	143.7	60.2	156.6	107.9	75.8
February	14.3	80.3	81.4	224.1	59.4
March	166.1	34.9	52.4	81.9	123.0
April	76.9	35.0	10.1	24.1	45.7
May	48.2	56.3	170.8	4.1	42.7
June	41.3	56.3	47.5	181.0	89.9
July	143.6	14.6	94.3	62.0	45.1
August	70.2	36.2	51.4	139.2	78.0
September	105.1	130.2	83.7	46.2	150.1
October	126.0	77.3	162.1	164.9	153.9
November	174.8	194.9	63.7	83.1	152.8
December	160.0	124.3	162.6	228.2	162.0
TOTAL	1270.2	900.5	1136.6	1346.7	1178.4

Our thanks to Sonia Hodgson for supplying the data.

GARDEN NOTES

by Jo Coffey



One of the most important factors in a garden is the water.

The best gardens have wild wet spaces where aquatic wildlife like dragonfly larvae can grow, the thirsty can drink, and a whole range of moisture loving plants can thrive, but there's more to garden water than ponds and bogs.

Every productive garden will consume water to, and often direct rainfall isn't quite enough if we want our choice of plants to survive. Right plant, right place is important, know your land and what is best suited to conditions, but even then when plants are establishing or in dry patches extra water is often needed. Our tap water is a precious commodity so when we have the chance to supplement it by collecting rain in the wetter times it makes sense.

Plants use water for many parts of their existence: water is needed for the sap to flow around the plant transporting nutrients; water is part of the process of transpiration which plants use to safely control their temperature in hot environments; water is also essential to photosynthesis - the process by which plants turn water and carbon dioxide into oxygen and glucose; even germination of seeds requires water to be present. Even the shape and form of the plant is supported by the presence of water,

keeping plants and their cells turgid rather than wilted and collapsed, beyond the permanent wilt point the collapse is irreparable, so it really is essential that plants have enough water.

In previous years there have been free water butts available to encourage reductions in mains water usage for gardens. Check either South West Water's website or savewatersavemoney.co.uk to see if this scheme returns.

Spring is a great time to get water butts connected, to make sure ponds are looking healthy and clear of winter debris, and to check swales and ditches.

APRIL

- Keep weeds under control
- Protect fruit blossom from late frosts
- Tie in climbing and rambling roses
- Sow hardy annuals, herbs and wild flower seed outdoors
- Start to feed citrus plants
- Increase the water given to houseplants
- Feed hungry shrubs and roses
- Sow new lawns or repair bare patches
- Prune fig trees
- Divide bamboos and waterlilies
- Consider fitting water butts to catch April Showers

MAY

- Watch out for late frosts. Protect tender plants
- Earth up potatoes, and promptly plant any still remaining
- Plant out summer bedding at the end of the month (except in cold areas)
- Water early and late to get the most out of your water, recycle water when possible
- Regularly hoe off weeds
- Open greenhouse vents and doors on warm days
- Mow lawns weekly
- Check for nesting birds before clipping hedges
- Lift and divide overcrowded clumps of daffodils and other spring-flowering bulbs
- Watch out for viburnum beetle and lily beetle grubs

JUNE

- Hoe borders regularly to keep down weeds
- Be water-wise, especially in drought-affected areas
- Pinch out side shoots on tomatoes
- Harvest lettuce, radish, other salads and early potatoes
- Position summer hanging baskets and containers outside
- Mow lawns at least once a week
- Plant out summer bedding
- Stake tall or floppy plants
- Prune many spring-flowering shrubs
- Shade greenhouses to keep them cool and prevent scorch
- Maintain healthy humidity in greenhouses 40-80% depending on crops & pests present



THE WINKLEIGH SOCIETY
IS SEEKING NOMINATIONS FOR AN

HONORARY TREASURER

TO JOIN THE TEAM OF WINKLEIGH'S POPULAR QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

Due to the imminent retirement of Rachel Goldsworthy who has served as Treasurer for several years, the Society is inviting applications from committed persons to take on this fulfilling role.

For further information and details of this position, please contact

PENNY GRIFFITHS (Chair, The Winkleigh Society)
01837 83407 | penelopegriffiths@gmail.com

HOW DOES YOUR *garden grow?*

Clifford's Way has prompted more active and safe walking than any other initiative in Winkleigh and enabled many of us over the years to walk, not drive, to the surgery and has been a traffic-free route for children and parents walking to and from Winkleigh Primary School. The short cut is named after Clifford Short, Parish Councillor who campaigned hard to create this pedestrian route as he was worried about the safety of school children walking up and down Townsend Hill to school.

Coshy's imaginative and creative gardening behind the doctor's surgery alongside Clifford's Way has made for a visual and sensory feast for walkers who take this much loved and frequented short cut.

In the summer we can smell the Philadelphia and the rambling Rector rose that screens the link fence. Seeing her at work provokes engagement and questions: what is that plant? What have you done to the soil to grow such amazing vegetables?

Courgettes, squash, onions, broad beans, spinach, Jerusalem artichokes have all flourished there, including cucumbers. The passing walkers glimpse a horticultural work in progress, breathe in the sounds and smells and spy the nosy robin that always seemed to appear when she set to work.

Encouraged as a child [tending a plot in her parent's garden on Dartmoor] Coshy is steeped in horticulture. The pleasure, she explained, is in experimenting, attending to soil health,

re-planting and re-homing plants and cuttings and an abiding interest in self-sufficiency.

Coshy expressed her gratitude to Graham Wonnacott who helped her greatly when she took over the plot a dozen years ago. It had been worked before as an allotment by Sid and Terry Davey [and later Peter Stutt] as a result of an informal and amicable agreement with Wallingbrook Health Centre [eager to have a use for the redundant garden] when the bungalow transformed into Winkleigh surgery.

On gaining stewardship she added some frames and replaced the old shed and set to work on restoring soil health.

Over the years Coshy transformed this strip of land into a visual, sensory, productive and insect- rich habitat.

Alongside this green oasis another pro-active resident of Winkleigh regularly sweeps and cleans Clifford's Way: keeping it in good order, picking up and disposing of dog mess, straightening up the posters and cleaning the Clifford's Way sign [that Joyce Brock had made at Appledore shipyard]. No lack of active citizenship on Southernhay.

Thank you Coshy for enriching the landscape of Southernhay and let's hope some of your prize plants can be incorporated into the planting scheme around the new extension of Winkleigh surgery.

Penny Griffiths

Countryfile



A sparrowhawk perches in our elder. He has come for breakfast.

For as long as I've been here we've had sparrows living in the roof. They mob the feeders, they gaggle and chatter in our massive forsythia. I love our little cheeky chappy chirpy chattering grey cap black beard LBJs. Passer (of Passeridae) domesticus (very domestic they are).

I love them but I know that they breed in wonderful and copious numbers. Up to three batches a year, of up to 5 chicks, for each pair, 15, each breeding season. Only a few survive. That's why they breed so fecundly, so abundantly. If sparrows bred fifteen survivors new for every pair year on year the air would soon be thick with sparrow. Five years on no room to breathe. Each pair of sparrows now more than ten thousand.

Its how sparrows work, make many and the strongest survive.

A little natural predation helps keep sparrow evolution on the up. (There is no evidence of sparrowhawks damaging songbird numbers, that's our role stealing their habitat and poisoning them).

Sparrows breed so well we have not only had them as casual companions, but domestic pets and our own food animals! They are associated with lust

and potency. Inevitably all that shouting and sex and they are also associated with vulgarity and commonness.

For all of that they are so many their numbers were able to spare one today (sorry little one, it wasn't to be, you drew the short straw) for the sparrowhawk's breakfast today.

Hawk stood on a table of a branch, stable, steady and broad, spreadeagled his spread sparrow. Plucked carefully at all those little white breast feathers, scattered white blossom come early around the elder and apple tree, dancing in the wind.

by Jo Coffey





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With a little help from my friends

DW caught up with Marcia Butt, chairperson of Winkleigh's Friendship Club, and she explains why everyone is welcome

If you're in Winkleigh or the surrounding area, why not pop along to the Friendship Club, which meets fortnightly at the Community Centre, situated in the heart of the village?

This is something Marcia Butt did and two years ago, she took over as the club's chairperson. She explains it was formerly known as the Senior Citizens' Club, but the name was changed to the Friendship Club, to ensure everyone felt included. Even so, many of those who attend may be somewhat older and wiser because it takes place on alternate Thursdays between 2.30 to 4.30 pm, when younger folk may be at work. The cost is just £5 a year, so should not break the bank.

"There are a range of activities on offer, you can play whist, we have a craft table and board games. There's also a raffle, or

you can just have tea, coffee and biscuits, while talking to people," she says.

Along with this, the club also organises coach trips. "These start in April. We leave at 9.30 and get back at 4pm, with a stop for coffee, it's a lot of fun getting out and about." There are 5 trips planned for this year which can be seen in the What's On Diary on pages 56 & 57. Marcia also brings in regular speakers, covering a wide range of topics, from local history to mastering the basics of Makaton. There is also a Christmas meal, which many members enjoy.

There are all sorts of reasons why getting to know others in the community is a positive thing to do, and as Marcia concludes: "I went on my own and you certainly don't need to already know someone. We're a friendly group and always welcome new members."

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Letters...

Dear Distinctly Winkleigh,

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that has enabled us to reach our 5th anniversary. It has not been an easy 5 years what with Covid and cost of living crisis but thanks to our customers, we have managed to make the best of the situation.

For those of you that are new to the area a quick potted history of Mid Devon Motors. The garage was founded in 1981 by Gordon and Shirley Rogers on the site of the old Saunders bus garage. I originally joined the company in 1991 as a trainee mechanic and thanks to Gordon I qualified in 1994. I moved on in 1998 and spent time working in various departments and jobs for the County Garage Group then in 2015 I rejoined the company as a manager. This put me in a great position so that when Gordon decided to sell it seemed the obvious thing to make the next (Big) step having been a trainee, a mechanic and a manager there was only one role left to fill and that was to become the owner.

As a company we are looking forward to continuing to support and serve Winkleigh and the surrounding communities.

**KEVIN AND THE TEAM
AT MID DEVON MOTORS**



Dear Distinctly Winkleigh,

VILLAGE LITTER

It has become very noticeable over latter months that the village of Winkleigh is becoming strewn with litter. Hence I am looking for any volunteers that can spare a morning of approx.. 2hrs to do some litter picking.

Suggested times:

Tuesday 10.30 – 12.30

Thursday 10.30 – 12.30.

Any persons interested please contact:

Linda Millership

01837 680040

WHAT'S ON...

REGULARS

MONDAY

Therapeutic Pilates 7:15pm-8:45pm
Village Hall

TUESDAY

Tap Dancing 7:00pm-8:00pm Village Hall
Free 'Sewcial Crafternoon' at Catkin
Blooms 1:00-3:00pm

WEDNESDAY

Mini market & charity coffee morning
9:30-10:30 Community Centre

THURSDAY

Tai Chi 10:30am-12:00pm Village Hall
Tai Chi 8:00pm-9:30pm Sports Centre

FRIDAY

Youth Club 7:00pm-9:00pm Sports Centre

SATURDAY

Badminton 7:00pm-9:00pm Village Hall

MARCH

28th Maundy Thursday 7:00pm
Eucharist, All Saints, Winkleigh

29th Good Friday 2:30pm Liturgy of
Good Friday, All Saints, Winkleigh

30th Easter Eve 7:00pm Easter Vigil,
All Saints, Winkleigh

31st Easter Day 9:30am Family
Eucharist, All Saints, Winkleigh

APRIL

2nd Children's Easter Activities
10:00am-12noon in All Saints, Winkleigh

5th Winkleigh Society AGM Community
Centre 7:00pm

6th Winkleigh Monthly Market, Village
Hall 10am to noon

9th Winkleigh Friendship Club trip to
Buckfast Abbey and Totnes £12

12th Winkleigh FC quiz night at the
Village Hall

12th One Life showing at The Pavilion,
Leigh Road, Chulmleigh EX18 7JL Film
starts at 7:30pm

14th Annual Open Day Britannia's 109th
Birthday at East Quay, the Canal Basin
in Exeter

19th Movie Night: "Till", the true story of
Mamie Till-Bradley, who pursued justice
after the lynching of her 14-year-old son in
1950s racist-torn America. Showing at the
Village Hall 7.00pm - Film starts 7:00pm

MAY

4th Winkleigh Monthly Market, Village
Hall 10am to noon

17th Movie Night: Warhorse showing at
the Village Hall. Film starts 7:00pm

24th Talk on historical and present day
Palestine, Chulmleigh Pavilion 7:30pm

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25th Nature Day 10am-4pm at the Sports & Recreation Centre. Activities for adults and children.

JUNE

1st Winkleigh Monthly Market, Village Hall 10:00am to noon

8th Winkleigh Car Show – Airfield Garage

11th Winkleigh Friendship Club trip to Homeleigh Garden Centre and Bude £12

14th Movie Night: Mrs Lowry showing at the Village Hall. Film starts 7:00pm

29th 2024 Coldridge Village Fete & Vintage Rally, Flower Festival & Dog Show

JULY

6th Winkleigh Monthly Market, Village Hall 10:00am to noon

8th The Winkleigh Singers 8:00pm
Umberleigh Village Hall *Venus and Adonis*
by John Blow. Concert performance with South West Baroque Players.

9th Winkleigh Friendship Club trip to Greendale farm Shop and Exmouth £12

14th- 20th Winkleigh Fair

AUGUST

3rd Winkleigh Monthly Market, Village Hall 10:00am to noon

SEPTEMBER

7th Winkleigh Monthly Market, Village Hall 10:00am to noon

10th Winkleigh Friendship Club trip to Boscastle and Tintagel £12

OCTOBER

5th Winkleigh Monthly Market, Village Hall 10:00am to noon

NOVEMBER

2nd Winkleigh Monthly Market, Village Hall 10:00am to noon

12th Winkleigh Friendship Club trip to Strawberry Fields and Tavistock £12



Coldridge Fete & Vintage Rally
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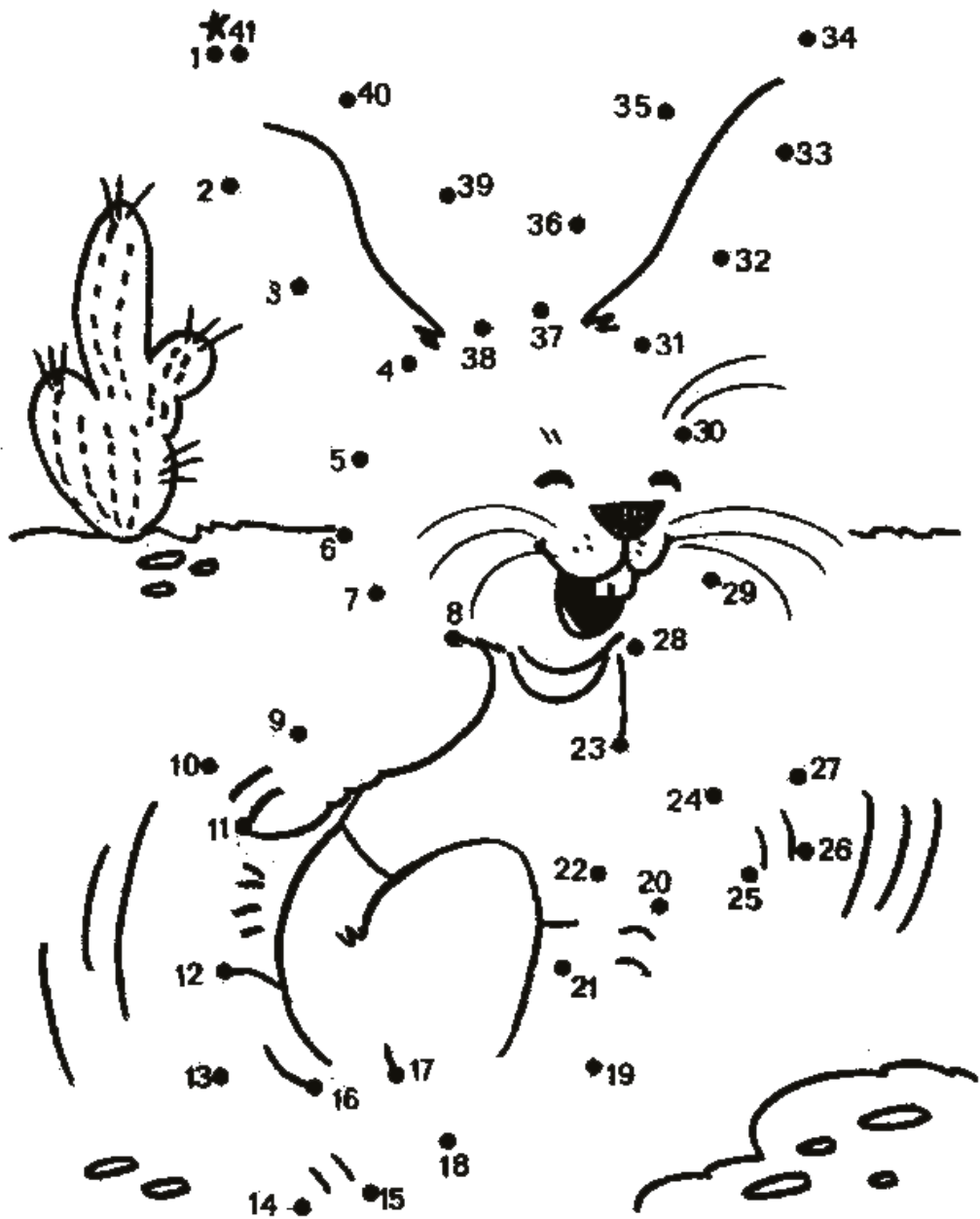
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SCHOOL NEWS

Head Teacher Mrs Victoria Fenemore gives her near end of term report

It has been a busy term at Winkleigh Primary School; time is moving fast as we head towards the end of the Spring term and the children prepare for our wide offer of outings and residential. As a school, we value trips and enrichment as a means of enhancing our curriculum.

Over the last term our children have visited Rosemoor, West Town Farm, Exmoor Zoo, Kent's Cavern and Stover Country Park, all of these trips have been linked to our curriculum in support of children's learning. We also invite people or companies into school in order to broaden children's world experiences. Recently, we have also had South West Water, Energy Waste in to visit the children and talk about their role and how children can help.

Each term we have a subject enrichment day and this term it was science. Children participated in science activities throughout the day and the company 'Wonderstruck' came into school and led assemblies and workshops for the children. There was lots of smoke, bangs and fire! All very exciting!

As part of our Key Stage 2 residential programme, each year group from Yr 3 to Yr 6 go on their own overnight stay. Year 3's spend a night at a local campsite participating in forest school activities. Yr 4's spend a night at Escott in yurts and our Year 5 's will be spending 2 nights at Skern Lodge Activity Centre after Easter where they will be kayaking, raft building, tunnelling and taking part in lots more outward bound activities. Our Year 6's spend 2 nights in London visiting the sights and then end their time at primary school with a special 1 night surfing residential.

We are very proud of our enrichment programme and are able to subsidise



every trip and residential thanks to the wonderful work of the ' Friends of Winkleigh' (and all those that support their events) who this year gave the school £4000 to support these trips. Add to this the use of our PE premium money as well as our own fundraising programme with events such as the family breakfast; Christmas games day and Mother's Day Cream Tea; we are able to offer trips at a reasonable and reduced cost.

PE, too, is a big focus at the school; we understand the importance of physical activity to support a healthy body and mind. Some of our Key Stage 2 children have taken part in netball and football tournaments involving local schools, all Key Stage 2 children have taken part in inter school games. This term our focus has been Netball.

Our nursery is also thriving. It is a truly special place where we take children from 2 years old and support their learning through wonderfully crafted play based activities. Visits are highly recommended if you have a small child and are considering your options. If you would like to arrange a visit please e-mail admin on admin@winkleigh.devon.sch.uk, we would love to hear from you.

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FOOTBALL ROUND UP

Tom Robinson gives his report on the 1st half of the season

It's another annual round of everything football as Winkleigh FC find themselves heading towards the second half of the season with still a lot to play for.

Welcome back to a long awaited 'Robinson round up' as I hold my hands up and admit I keep forgetting the deadline day for writers' submissions.... But enough of that as we talk football.

Over the last 10 years Winkleigh football club have gone from strength to strength in what will go down as the club's most decorated decade. With two league titles and numerous runner up medals. Winkleigh have found themselves rising from the shadows of Division 6 to now competing with the big boys in the premier. The introduction of our youth teams can only be seen as rivalling the success of the men's.... Importantly protecting the future of this club.

Winkleigh started their maiden voyage in the premier all guns blazing going unbeaten in their first 9 fixtures of the season which saw them sit top of the table again and arguably eclipsing their own expectations for the season.

As always winter began to set in and with that came the bad weather. Like usual the rain never knows when to stop leading to games being postponed. Ultimately it came at a bad time because when you're winning you want to keep the momentum going. In the lead up to the Christmas break Winkleigh managed to play three games falling to two defeats and drawing once.

As much as this was a huge title dent and more importantly an eye opener for

the team, you have to always try and take the positives from any given situation. So over Christmas it was time to refocus, knuckle down and find a way to get back to winning again.

Winkleigh's first fixture after Christmas didn't come until February 3rd when we hosted Okehampton, one of the teams we had previously lost 2-0 to. Redemption was sweet as Winkleigh battled to a 2-1 victory in tricky weather conditions leaving them with a valuable 3 points in the bank that now sees them sit 4th in the table.

As of writing, Winkleigh arguably have their biggest game of the season this Saturday as they take the short trip to Lapford. Once upon a time the two sides used to be team mates but for 90 minutes they will put friendship aside and go head to head in what is a hotly anticipated match. This game doesn't need any more drumming up but the fact Winkleigh and Lapford sit 4th and 5th in the table only adds fuel to the fire.

Even with our recent blip in form the season has been massively successful, challenging but one the lads have stood up to and shown that Winkleigh deserve to be in the top division. With all our recent successes Winkleigh strive to continue to move forward, so from this summer Winkleigh will be looking for a new management team to take the club forward. If this is of interest or someone you think would be interested please spread the word or get in contact. 'See advert for more information'.

Up the Wink.

Robin Harper

1940 – 2023 - R.I.P.



After a working life spent teaching woodwork (latterly known as Design and Technology or D&T), Robin Harper reached the position of Senior Deputy Head at Altwood C of E School in Maidenhead. During his career he also worked with the AQA Exam Board, firstly marking exam papers before moving up to more senior positions. Robin retired from his teaching role at Altwood School in 2001 and moved to Winkleigh with his partner Dot.

By then Robin had been appointed Senior Examiner for the AQA GCSE Exam Board in D&T and in 2004 he was appointed Chair of the Exam Board; a position he eventually retired from in 2011.

Not wishing to leave education completely, in 2012 he joined the board of governors at Winkleigh Primary School and was appointed Chair of Governors around 2018. He continued in this role until sadly, due to ill health, he had to retire at the end of 2022. Robin loved his role at Winkleigh School, he was always passionate about the school and all those under its umbrella. He had a real wealth of experience in education and all its complexities – never pushing it on anyone but quietly giving advice when needed or prompting you to think and reflect.

Whilst in Winkleigh Robin had time to enjoy his love and skill of woodwork and undertook several local projects one of which was new gates for St James Church in Iddesleigh. His craftsmanship was always much admired and appreciated. Robin was an active member of the local Rover Club. With a love of classic cars he owned a 1959 Rover P4 and took part in many of the club's activities and outings making many friends along the way.

Robin was a man of few words and he lived by the saying “you have two ears and one mouth for a reason”. You always knew that whenever he spoke the words had been carefully chosen.

Robin will be sadly missed by all his family and many friends.



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DISTINCTLY WINKLEIGH

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

The Winkleigh Society publishes Distinctly Winkleigh quarterly at the end of **March, June, September** and early **December**. Copies are available free of charge to all homes and businesses in the Parish (many hand delivered others available from village shops).

Please email Articles to articles@distinctlywinkleigh.co.uk and Adverts to adverts@distinctlywinkleigh.co.uk One-off posters for community 'not-for-profit' events are free of charge.

Please ensure that any images you submit are of the highest possible resolution and that all articles and images are copyright-free. All articles submitted for publication may be subject to editing, primarily for space or layout reasons.

Note also that it takes only 500 words to fill each (A5) page without any images.

Please be aware that the views expressed in submitted material are not necessarily shared or endorsed by the newsletter team or The Winkleigh Society. Furthermore the Society does not accept any responsibility for the accuracy of any information, goods or services advertised in adverts or articles.

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All residents of Winkleigh Parish are welcome to attend and vote at Winkleigh Society General Meetings.

Further information about the Society can be accessed at:

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