

# DISTINCTLY WINKLEIGH



## Working for Winkleigh



**Edition 32**

**Winter 2009**

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## The Journal of the Winkleigh Society

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## **The Winkleigh Society – Chairman’s Report**

The Winkleigh Society as it now exists has reached a ‘tipping point’ in its brief history. There is no longer a Civic Trust at national level (this has been mentioned in a previous edition) and the intermediate tier, the South West Association of Civic Societies having recently adopted this title is reforming, having examined its role and pondered what service it should provide to its members.

The Winkleigh Society committee has similarly debated its role and overall success. The Society’s charter is potentially broad in possibility but somewhat narrow in reality. Membership is now the largest since our inception and stands at some 120 souls. That said, attendance at various events held over the last two years is on average approximately only 25-30 people (20-25%). This seeming lack of interest is difficult to determine but for example could be:

- Type of event
- Date/time/day of the week
- Weather
- Other attractions
- Costs

We should therefore ask; are we achieving, do we offer what people want and meet expectations? Do we need to change our style and modus operandi, leave it alone or stop doing everything?

**Our Society Annual General Meeting (AGM) this year will be held on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December in the Community Centre at 7.30 pm.**

As Chairman I would urge members to attend this AGM as a priority!

The election of new officers to the committee is an essential process and the meeting will also provide the opportunity to question or review policies, events, revenue and costs.

Failure to grasp this opportunity could mean some form of suspended animation or disbandment taking place with the potential loss of our journal and web site too.

I believe that these matters need to be aired in a democratic way and decisions arrived at by the largest number of members possible.

[Should the worse case happen, an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) will be necessary with the dates being annotated in Distinctly Winkleigh’s Spring edition which will be published in early March 2010 and give no less than 28 days notice of the EGM]

**RJS**

I have just been reading something called ‘The Ten Rules for Christmas’ which I was given the other day. It was one of those pieces of writing that raises a smile but also has a very serious point to make. The first of these rules was to make sure you use the word ‘Christmas’ not ‘Xmas’, because, as it stated ‘X’ usually stands for something unknown and Christmas is about Christ and His birth. It went on to remind us that presents are to be valued not by how much they cost but by the love and thoughtfulness that lies behind them.

Then there was a rule which spoke of Father Christmas. Not saying that he should be banned but how he often becomes the main character in some places and Christ gets pushed out. In this way, Christmas becomes not the important event that it is but simply a fairy tale. Go into most shops and shopping centres and you will see how the focus is not on the crib but Santa’s grotto, not that you’d probably be allowed to have a crib because ‘political correctness’ would dictate that you might offend someone — someone who would probably be very upset if they didn’t get any presents at Christmas even though they don’t believe in what it’s really about! Actually, I find it offensive to be wished a ‘Happy Christmas’ in October, to see shops trying to sell you lots of extra things you don’t actually need whilst half the world goes hungry and no sign of a crib anywhere, but then who am I to complain!

For those who want to celebrate the real meaning of Christmas there is plenty of opportunity and the Christmas services in All Saints are listed below. You are most welcome to come to all or any of these and we shall of course be singing all the traditional Christmas Carols from Christmas Eve right the way through the Christmas season (the twelve days of Christmas).

Thursday 24th December 5.00 p.m. Our popular Crib Service for children of all ages in which we tell the Christmas story and sing our Carols. (The collection goes to the work of the Children’s Society)

11.45p.m. Midnight Mass with Carols

Friday 25th December 9.30 a.m. Sung Christmas Eucharist with Carols.

Also, on Saturday 12th December in the Village Hall (2-6 p.m.), the Christmas Story will be told with the aid of puppets along with other activities and on Monday 19th December Winkleigh Primary School will be having their Christmas Carol Service in Church at 2.00 p.m. (you don’t have to have school age children to come!)

## The Winkleigh Lectures - 2010 Series

The Winkleigh Society is pleased to announce the second series of lectures on a rural theme. These will take place in the Community Centre, on Fridays in February and March, 2010, at 7.30.

It would be unwise to take the following programme as definitive, but it will give an idea of the delights in store!

- Friday 5<sup>th</sup> Feb, Tom Hynes, Devon Hedgerows Officer,  
Hedgerow Management
- Friday 12<sup>th</sup> Feb. Janet Daynes, Archaeologist, Dartmoor Bracken Project
- Friday 19<sup>th</sup> Feb. Robert McCurrach, The Balkan Village
- Friday 12<sup>th</sup> Mar Alan Dyer, Plymouth University, Our Children's Landscape
- Friday 19<sup>th</sup> Mar Alistair Newens, UEA, Winkleigh Carbon Management Project
- Friday 26<sup>th</sup> Mar Mike Moser, NDBR
- Friday 9<sup>th</sup> Apr Maggie Watson, Our special places – community project.

For more information, contact **Peter Howard** on **83362** or **peterjhoward@btinternet.com**

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## Winkleigh Carbon Clinic

At the end of October there was a visit from three post-graduate students and their staff from University of East Anglia, from the MBA course in Carbon Management. With the advice of the North Devon Biosphere organisation, they chose Winkleigh to pilot their work which is a technique for a method of evaluating the carbon emissions of a household. As guests of the Winkleigh Society they spent an evening explaining the process of evaluating the carbon footprint for a household, and those attending completed the questionnaire themselves. The easy ways to reduce our carbon footprint were also those where we could save most money.

My own household carbon footprint, prepared earlier, was used as an exemplar – a process not without its embarrassment. This includes the type of house, and its insulation, the lights and electrical equipment that we have, and how frequently it is used, or just left on standby, the flights and train journeys taken and the total mileage of our car. Of course these are very approximate figures, and take no account of ‘embedded’ carbon, so it does not account for the carbon it took to make my house or my car, only that emitted in running them. In fact our household emissions turned out to be just about average, at 12 tonnes for the two of us. The house itself, with our new boiler and double-glazing, fared very well, but I was concerned to realise that the 7 flights we had taken accounted for 4 tonnes of this 12, and our car mileage accounted for a further 3½ tonnes. The fact that 4 of those 7 flights were accounted by my attending conferences connected with climate change was rather worrying. Maybe it is time we got busy with video-conferencing.

The next stage is to look at the results from many more residents and then make a proposal for a village carbon reduction strategy. The University are also using data from Winkleigh to refine their data; they had not previously taken into account buildings made of cob for example, nor the prevalence in a rural area of the number of small-holders. Alistair Newens at [A.Newens@uea.ac.uk](mailto:A.Newens@uea.ac.uk) is the contact for those readers who wish to take part. There is quite a lot of government money available to communities who develop a carbon reduction strategy, and there is no reason why Winkleigh should not dip into that pot. Anyone interested in progressing this should contact me.

**Peter Howard 01837 83362**

**[peterjhoward@btinternet.com](mailto:peterjhoward@btinternet.com)**

## Winkleigh Singers

Winkleigh has a long reach for some events. The Singers come from most of north Devon, from Braunton, Ilfracombe and Holsworthy, even from Dolton! After being one of the key choirs in the performance of Bach's St Matthew Passion in Exeter Cathedral, as part of the Two Moors Festival (and sung in German, which tests the larynx a bit) we are preparing for the annual Christmas Concert in Winkleigh. The central work in this will be Vivaldi's Gloria, and this was also the work at the recent workshop – an annual event for anyone who wants to come along.

That concert is on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30 pm in Winkleigh Church. We have two soprano soloists, both Hannahs, and a guest organist, as well as the Choir and, most of all, yourselves.

If you are a singer looking for a choir, then do give us a try. We are not a huge group, but we can welcome newcomers in all parts. We meet on Monday evenings at 8pm in the Community Centre. We do not have auditions, but we do have a three-week probationary period.

## ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LIGHTS SWITCH-ON

Winkleigh Fair Committee invites you to the annual Christmas lights switch on in the village square which, this year, will take place on **SUNDAY 6<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER**. Following on from last year's success, we will be holding a Christmas Market in the village square from 3.30pm. Come along and do your Christmas shopping from stalls selling local produce and locally produced crafts. There will also be a BBQ, mince pies, mulled wine and cider punch to keep you warm!

Children from Winkleigh Pre-School and Primary School will be in the village square singing carols around the Christmas tree. The Christmas lights will be switched on at 4.30pm. Father Christmas will arrive at about 5pm and will hand out sweets to the children.

If you live in the village, why not join in the Christmas decorations competition. Prizes will be given for the Best Decorated Christmas Window, Best Decorated Christmas House and the Best Decorated Christmas Street. There is also a new category this year – Best Homemade Father Christmas. Just place him outside your house! Judging for all categories will be 5<sup>th</sup> December. Entry forms will be coming through your letterbox any day now!

We hope you can join us for the start of our Christmas celebrations.

## Winkleigh & District Garden Club – 2010 Programme

The club holds regular monthly meetings, normally in the Winkleigh Village Hall, and in addition we make a number of visits to places of interest, such as local gardens, during the Spring/Summer period. We also hold an annual summer event, the last two years have been BBQs held in a members garden.

In addition to the ‘topic’ of the meeting such as a visiting speaker, meetings also include a raffle, tea/coffee and biscuits, giving time for members to socialise, and we encourage members to bring in plants to sell/swap.

January 19 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting – Village Hall 7:15 New Year Social/Seed Distribution/Membership Renewals
February 26 <sup>th</sup>	Club Dinner – Lymington Arms – 7:30
February 16 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting – Village Hall 7:15 Speaker – “The Bees in Your Garden” – Nicky Craig
March 16 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting – Village Hall 7:15  Speaker – “The National Garden Scheme” Miranda Allhusen
April 20 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting – Village Hall 7:15. Speaker – “Restoration of Heligan Garden” – Colin Howlett
May 18 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting – Village Hall 7:15  Propagation Talk/Demonstration, Seedling & Plant Swap
June 1 <sup>st</sup>	Visit: Moon Farm, Monkokehampton. Smallholding of Steve & Lisa Atfield: 6:30pm
June 15 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting – Village Hall 7:15  Speaker – “Mazzards, North Devon’s Special Cherries”
July 6 <sup>th</sup>	Visit – Hole Farm, Woolfardisworthy. Garden of Nigel Alford: 7pm
July 20 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting – Village Hall 7:15 Gardener’s Question Time
Aug. 7 <sup>th</sup> (Sat)	Club Summer Social – 1pm
Aug 17 <sup>th</sup>	Bat Talk & Walk – Helen Shaw. At Church Cottage Brushford: 7:30
Sept 21 <sup>st</sup>	Club Meeting – Village Hall 7:15  Gardeners’ Market Evening
Oct 19 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting – Village Hall 7:15. Speaker – “Gardening in the Biosphere” – Tom & Jo Hynes
November 16 <sup>th</sup>	Club Meeting – Village Hall 7:15. AGM / Seed Order

December 21<sup>st</sup>

Club Meeting – Village Hall 7:15. Club member speakers & Review of year

New members and visitors are always welcome to our meetings. A nominal charge of £1 is made towards club costs and includes refreshments.

For further information please contact our Chairman **Mr Ed Porter on 01805 – 804838**

## WINKLEIGH WOMEN'S INSTITUTE

2010 will be the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the WI and many events are planned locally as well as nationally. The Devon Federation features in this month's national magazine and during this special year the County wishes to mark the "intrepid spirit" of the farming community, particularly during the crisis of 2001.

An initiative set up in Devon in the 1990s saw the WI, the Women's Food and Farmers Union, and the Townswomen's Guild work together to support those women who are isolated throughout this large county. Certainly many of the events and activities on offer in the county provide interest and entertainment for all tastes. Sports and Leisure, Combined Arts, Environmental & Rural Affairs, Food, Craft & Skills, are all covered by teams at County level, and International awareness projects are ongoing, a recent meeting covering Climate Change having been held at Upplowman. There is regular information to benefit people needing care, and a Public Affairs team give advice to members, including warnings about the latest scam with phone bills where a letter stating non-payment will result in being cut-off unless bank details are given. Thank goodness someone is 'on the ball' to warn us of these dreadful tricks!

Surely with such diverse coverage there must be something for everyone, and the aim in the coming 90<sup>th</sup> year is to swell membership of the WI. As reported in an earlier edition of DW, new groups are springing up around the country, including here in Devon.

Here in Winkleigh we have arranged our programme for 2010 with visits as well as speakers, quizzes and craft sessions, and taking part in the Winkleigh Fair celebrations. We welcome visitors and potential new members and look forward to new ideas for our programmes, so join us during this coming celebratory year.

(Our meetings are usually held at 7.30pm on the first Wednesday in the month, but a notice is placed in the Square – between the Estate Agency and Londis – with details of each month's meeting. We meet in the Back Room of the Village Hall)

## ACE Archaeology Club

For years now I have been writing about our excavation of the Bronze Age roundhouse and the other work at Teigncombe, for the Dartmoor Archaeology and Bracken project. The first phase of the project is now completed with the publication of the report due next spring. The next phase of the project will be a series of small scale excavations in a variety of locations utilising the lessons from Teigncombe to gather the information in a much more targeted manner. What we intend to do is to develop a successful and efficient methodology for landowners, such as the National Parks and National Trust etc, to enable their archaeologists to assess potential damage to the monuments in their care. The results of this phase will certainly help inform future management strategies anywhere that bracken grows for years to come.

Now is your chance to hear about and see what we have been up to at Teigncombe for the past ten years, I will be giving one of the Winkleigh Lectures on the 12<sup>th</sup> of February on this very subject.

If you want to know more about ACE, contact **Janet Daynes Tel; 01769 520326, email [ace@ACEarch.org.uk](mailto:ace@ACEarch.org.uk) or check out our new website; [www.acearch.org.uk](http://www.acearch.org.uk)**

## House Scouts and Explore North Devon

### English Heritage's Heritage Open Days

The Winkleigh Society contributed to this annual event in September by holding a Heritage Walk and exhibition. This was very successful, thanks to the hard work of all those involved.

The walk itself was well attended by approximately 40 people most of whom had travelled some distance for it, some as far as Launceston and Honiton.

The archive at the Mini Market (every Wednesday 9.00 to 10.30 am) continues to be successful. I just wish that I had the time to follow up the information that comes in. During October photos of the heavy horse event at Taw Green were donated and sparked off wonderful reminiscences of working with horses, it was priceless and unrecorded! Anyone fancy doing some oral history interviews and recording them for the archive? No experience needed as training can be given.

Winkleigh really needs a History group to make the most of the bountiful local heritage here. If you are interested in setting this up please do get in touch.

Don't forget that some of the archive is on view at Explore North Devon [www.explorenorthdevon.org](http://www.explorenorthdevon.org) and the stories of Winkleigh men who fought in WWI can be seen at; [www.winkleighheroes.co.uk](http://www.winkleighheroes.co.uk) . If you have not got internet access but would like to view the above websites, come along to the Mini Market where the community internet point is available for anyone to use.

If you would like to help out with the House Scouts project, please do get in touch with **Janet Daynes** on; 01769 520326 or [ace@acearch.org.uk](mailto:ace@acearch.org.uk)

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## WINKLEIGH BOYS WIN TOP SCOUT AWARD

Oliver and Thomas Bradley (both 14), of Exeter Road, Winkleigh, together with Lois Collins (14) of Dolton, have gained the Chief Scout's Gold Award, the highest badge which can be achieved in a Scout Troop. All three are Patrol Leaders in the 1st Dolton Troop and to gain the Award they had to carry out expedition work, survival skills, camping, first aid techniques and community service among many other requirements. The Gold Award is a valuable asset when applying for a job or a place at University and is appreciated by both employers and University authorities.

All three will shortly be moving up to the Explorer Scout Section which caters for 14 to 18-year-olds and, nationally, is the fastest-growing Section of the Scout Movement. A new Explorer Unit is opening in Dolton and will be run by Gareth Cooper of The Square, Winkleigh, an experienced Scout Leader and well-known in the Winkleigh community.



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## IDIOT SIGHTINGS

1. My daughter and I went through the McDonald's take-out window and I gave the clerk a £5 note. Our total was £4.20, so I also handed her a twenty pence piece as well. She said, 'You gave me too much money.'

I said, 'Yes I know, but this way you can just give me £1 back.'

She sighed and went to get the manager who asked me to repeat my request.

I did so, and he handed me back the 20 pence and said 'We're sorry but we could not do that kind of thing.' The clerk then proceeded to give me back 80 pence in change.

Do not confuse the clerks at MacD's.

2. We had to have the garage door repaired. The Garador repairman told us that one of our problems was that we did not have a 'large' enough motor on the opener.

I thought for a minute, and said that we had the largest one Garador made at that time, a 1/2 horsepower.

He shook his head and said, 'Lady, you need a 1/4 horsepower.'

I responded that 1/2 was larger than 1/4 and he said,

'Nooo, it's not. Four is larger than two..'

We haven't used Garador repair since.

3. I live in a semi-rural area. We recently had a new neighbour call the Highways Department to request the removal of the DEER CROSSING sign on our road.

His reason: 'Too many deer are being hit by cars out here! I don't think this is a good place for them to be crossing anymore.'

4. My daughter went to a local Kentucky Fried and ordered a taco. She asked the person behind the counter for 'minimal lettuce.'

He said he was sorry, but they only had iceberg lettuce.

5. I was at the airport, checking in at the gate when an airport employee asked, 'Has anyone put anything in your baggage without your knowledge?' I replied, 'If it was without my knowledge, how would I know?'

He smiled knowingly and nodded, 'That's why we ask.'

6. The stoplight on the corner buzzes when it's safe to cross the street. I was crossing with an intellectually challenged co-worker of mine. She asked if I knew what the buzzer was for.

I explained that it signals to blind people when the light is red.

Appalled, she responded, 'What on earth are blind people doing driving?!'

7. When my husband and I arrived at our Local Ford dealer to pick up our car, we were told the keys had been locked in it. We went to the service department and found a mechanic working feverishly to unlock the drivers side door.

As I watched from the passenger side, I instinctively tried the door handle and discovered that it was unlocked.

'Hey,' I announced to the Fitter/Mechanic, 'its open!'

His reply, 'I know. I already did that side.'

**STAY ALERT!** They walk among us... and the scary part is that is they have the **RIGHT TO VOTE** and **REPRODUCE!**

**Don't forget Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December**  
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**At 5.30pm**

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## Winkleigh Growers

The Winkleigh allotments finally opened to members at the beginning of May this year. Only those involved from the start know how much hard work went into obtaining the land and into procuring funds to make the whole scheme possible. But for their efforts there would be no allotments and we owe a big vote of thanks to those people.

The site is on a field adjacent to the Sports Hall and is divided into full-size and half-size plots. During the first couple of weeks as the allotment holders rotavated and dug their ground the sturdy deer and rabbit proof fence went up. Despite the (no doubt) aching backs and blistered hands people began to plant their vegetables and the good weather in the early weeks make it a pleasure to work up there. The only problem was lack of water and members could be seen scrounging large containers from all and sundry before filling and carrying them to the site in order to keep their young plants growing. Eventually we were able to bring a massive container to the site to fill with water from the adjoining farm and then pipe to a tap, this was just in time for the weather to change giving us a damp and dreary spell making additional water unnecessary! (Did I hear someone say Murphy's law?) At the same time, as everyone beavered away planting, Ray and Dougie took on the additional task of mowing and maintaining the paths which keep the site tidy and pleasing to the eye. We all owe a vote of thanks to them. One of the things which have developed is a great sense of camaraderie and shared purpose among the allotment holders.

During the summer we began to reap the rewards of all the work and home-grown vegetables were proudly taken home to be prepared and eaten; my, do they taste different from those bought in the supermarkets! Many of us had not grown food before and it has been a steep learning curve. Speaking personally we have learnt not to plant things too close together as it makes hoeing and harvesting difficult and frustrating when one finds it necessary to walk on one lot to gather another. Sadly the whole site was affected with potato blight and most of us lost our crop of spuds and some tomatoes.

We've been very fortunate that our vice-chairman has negotiated a discount with B & Q for sheds. These were delivered a week ago and, at the time of writing, are springing up like mushrooms around the site. The costs of fencing, purchase of a rotavator and mower and a shed in which to house them have been funded with the aid of grants. Torridge District Council awarded us the sum of £800. The picture appended shows the formal presentation of their cheque. Water supply remains a problem and it seems that the best long term solution is to sink a bore-hole to provide as much as we need and at the moment we have part of the funds needed to complete this. Any ideas for additional fund raising would be welcome.

As some people have much greater knowledge of growing and some are more innovative cooks it would be good to have suggestions from anyone with tips for growing, particularly for difficult or unusual vegetables and interesting recipes for cooking using any produce, but especially those we tend to get in gluts. With this in mind we would like to invite allotmenters and members of the gardening club to send their ideas to us to be put into a newsletter which we will submit to Distinctly Winkleigh. **If** we have an enthusiastic enough response it might eventually be possible to put them into a small book which could be sold to raise funds for both groups. Please send suggestions to Gillian and Ivor at: [gillyholman@onetel.com](mailto:gillyholman@onetel.com) or by post to Gillian Holman, The Courtyard, Winkleigh Court, Winkleigh, EX19 8HZ.



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## **Winkleigh Youth Club - Autumn 2009**

As usual, Youth Club activities have been moving at a frantic pace through from the summer period into the autumn and, as this is written, we have settled into the routine of turning on floodlights for the hard court activities (mostly football) at the start of our Wednesday night session. On the subject of the hard court, it should be mentioned that we have now secured funding to enable repairs and repainting of the surface which suffered badly in the period of snow and hard frosts last winter. The repair work should be due to start at about the time you read this but the final painting and curing cannot take place until warmer weather appears in the spring (we hope!).

There have been a number of events outside of club night during the period, including a sponsored walk and a cycle ride, both up on Exmoor and both notable days which I will not try to report in detail in the space available here! This year's AGM was held on 26<sup>th</sup> Oct and, as usual, there was a great deal to report on and considerable debate on developments during the year and the future of the club as we continue to expand our range of activities.

The other notable event was the holding of an "open night" by the Tuesday night snooker group on 3<sup>rd</sup> Nov. This was an opportunity for parents, relatives and friends to come along and see at first hand just what a fantastic job Anthony Tanner is doing for this group.

We are, of course, always happy to report the appearance of a new face amongst our volunteer force, so I take great pleasure at this point in welcoming Jon who joined us a few weeks ago and has already made his mark significantly, particularly in the tuck shop as he has a rare talent with Italian dishes - his pizzas and pastas have disappeared down throats at a rare pace and proved a hit with young and not so young amongst us! Jon is also a dab hand with computer games and has


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introduced his mother to the scene to help out with arts and crafts activities on occasional weeks. On this subject we are also expecting some input from the youth network in the future as a result of the employment of somebody in this role who will cover the local area. This particular news was brought to us by Chanelle, who you will remember took my place last time to bring you the Youth Club report. Chanelle, incidentally, has certainly been making her mark since joining us, having taken on the role of “Junior Project Leader”, with Amy moving up to “Senior Project Leader”, she has been our representative in the youth network organisation and at a recent network meeting she was elected to the role of Chairman! That should carry some weight for us in network activities.

One final item to finish on I must give a mention to the Saturday Club which now has plans to develop a “Mini Orchard” on part of the old shrubbery- we are looking for funding for this but would also appreciate donations of unwanted tools and also any shrubs, particularly herbs, rhubarb, strawberries, etc. We are also hoping to introduce cookery, so any unwanted kitchen equipment would likewise be made good use of.

Brian Holland.01837 83521.

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## SPORTS CENTRE REPORT – AUTUMN 2009

It has come to my attention on reading through previous reports that I do not appear to have mentioned the appearance on the scene and the ongoing development of the Bluecoat Children's Centre as part of the regular programme for the sports hall. After an initial test period their activities are now occupying the greater part of Thursday's daytime sessions and anybody who has seen them in action cannot fail to be impressed. The sports hall is itself the only building which has the space to accommodate the range of diverse facilities for parents and children which they have to offer and in addition they have worked along with the youth club for use of storage space, in return for which the youth club are able to utilise some items of their equipment - an example of community co-operation in action!

Looking at other activities, nobody can fail to have noticed how the allotments are establishing themselves on the landscape with the appearance of uniform looking huts, eliciting comparisons with Toytown from some observers. On the produce front itself I have heard reports of good harvest from many. The other groups within the set up are all reporting increased levels of activity and this is the time of year when some are holding AGM's and others, such as the bowling groups, are going through the transition period which comes with the seasonal change. The outdoor bowlers have had a good summer and, sadly, mowers are now stored until the spring but indoors the winter season is now in full flow and membership levels are reported to be on the up quite significantly. The snooker room has shown a considerable increase in user levels during recent months but there is always room for more. The time is also approaching when the annual tournament will be getting underway again. With regard to the youth club, their activities are documented in the report which you will find elsewhere in this publication. The tennis club and netball group are currently looking forward to repair works and eventual re-coating and marking of the court surface arranged in conjunction with the youth club. A snippet fresh of the press from the netball girls is to report the arranging of the first competitive **home** fixture, which will have happened by the time you read this. Perhaps a small happening but a landmark nevertheless.

So I will finish on that note, not forgetting of course to wish everyone a merry Christmas and the next report will be from another year and looking forward to longer, warmer daylight hours and the community making good use of our new play area facilities (notice the new seating areas?). Oh, I forgot one thing - do you like the new sign?

**Brian Holland 01837 83521.**

## Winkleigh Methodist Chapel

At the time of writing, we are about to enter the Church's busiest time of year: the lead-up to the annual celebration of the coming of the Son of God to Earth, which is called the Incarnation, in other words: Christmas.

The Chapel, like other places of Christian worship and our Society as a whole, is currently preparing for the celebration of the occasion. This will be through three special events during December:

On the **Sunday afternoon/evening of December 6<sup>th</sup>**, at the same time as the switching on of the Christmas Lights, there will be no service in the Chapel. Instead we will be serving cups of hot **home-made soup** and other refreshments in our newly refurbished kitchen. Please drop in, have a warm, enjoy a mug of soup as a break from looking at the stalls, etc.

Then on **Sunday December 20<sup>th</sup> at 6.30pm** there will be a '**Carols by Candlelight**' service in the Chapel. An opportunity to come along and sing your favourite carols, old and new. This will be followed by mince pies and other refreshments served in the Chapel Kitchen.

Finally on **Christmas Day** itself, there will be a short celebration service at 10.00am. Come along and show off your new Christmas presents as well as join in the joy of the day.

Throughout the rest of December (and into the new year) the regular services will take place at 11.00am each Sunday morning (except Dec 27), other than the first Sunday of the month when the service will begin at 5.30pm with a bring-and-share tea and be followed by a time of worship.

In the New Year, the Chapel Kitchen will be opened every Monday morning from 9am until 1.30pm, where teas, coffees and other refreshments will be served during the morning, leading up to the provision of light lunches. This is in conjunction with Fiona's Farm Shop. More about this in the next edition of 'Distinctly Winkleigh'.

**Rev Graham Warmington**

[Warmington@live.co.uk](mailto:Warmington@live.co.uk)

01837 83574

Forthcoming Service Themes:

January:	Epiphany and Covenant
February:	Covenant and Lent
March:	Lent and Mothering Sunday
April:	Easter and Resurrection

## District Councillor's Report

The effectiveness (or otherwise) and conduct of our MPs is still a hot topic, particularly as many senior MPs have now begun to lobby for a substantial increase in their salaries to compensate for the loss of generous parliamentary expenses. So I thought it might be useful to look at what our MPs actually do by asking four questions –

- Have our MPs made the right fundamental choices for our country?
- How effective are our MPs behind the scenes to make changes for the better?
- To what extent do our MPs help ensure effective local government?
- What does an MP do for the everyday person?

***The Fundamentals*** – I believe we must first examine the contributions of our MPs to making the right decisions regarding sustainable economic growth, ensuring a safer world and investing for the future. It really does seem incredible that all three main parties fought the last 2005 election on the “centre ground” where it was assumed that the economy was generally in good shape and our bankers were the envy of the world. The vast majority of our MPs also supported an illegal war in Iraq that has increased tensions throughout the world and has led to our ill-conceived presence in Afghanistan, where we have made a shabby accommodation with crooks, drug dealers and warlords. Our MPs talk piously about how important it is to act on climate change but little of substance has been done. We really haven't got to grips with waste and the need to recycle and there is a very real risk of the lights going out in a few years due to lack of investment in energy. “Executive management” decision making by government and opposition parties has effectively neutered MPs, so it is difficult to give our MPs a score of more than 2 out of 10.

***Behind the Scenes*** – Many of our MPs work on select committees, which examine in detail a variety of issues and make recommendations. A lot of this work is very useful but unfortunately the recommendations have often led to a further ballooning of bureaucracy with more and more quangos. 5 out of 10.

***Ensuring Effective Local Government*** – The delivery of services is held back by considerable cost burdens imposed by central government. The biggest burdens are having to produce unnecessary “evidence” (which means highly paid consultants to provide endless reports); an ever-expanding auditing industry; and constant “initiatives” from central government. I was recently watching a parliamentary debate (Parliament TV channel) on local government where the Minister for Local Government, Rosie Winterton, was speaking about how to improve local government. Very few were in the House and she was only challenged by someone in her own party! (He described her assertions as “rubbish”, which indeed they were). 4 out of 10.

*Everyday Lives* – Our MP, Geoffrey Cox, and Nick Harvey next door in North Devon are good conscientious MPs who take up issues on behalf of individuals. However, how do we evaluate this part of their jobs? It seems to me that this element of their jobs should be on a par with teachers and social workers. Here a salary of £64k plus very generous expenses would seem very good, particularly as MPs do not have to suffer the form filling/tick box controls that parliament has put on teachers and social workers! 8 out of 10.

In conclusion, I believe that we do not get good value from our MPs. Much of this is due to the power of elites – be they bankers, “centralised” bureaucrats or quangos – which have effectively forced our political parties to look after their interests first. However, the way the majority of MPs have not stood up to be counted regarding the future of our economy, our environment and the security of the world is lamentable. Increasing MPs salaries would make our MPs even more out of touch.

### **Councillor Community Grant Scheme of £2,000**

Last year, Torridge launched the Councillor Community Grant Scheme. Each councillor at TDC has a budget of £2,000 each year to enable projects that meet local needs to quickly get off the ground. In the last financial year, I have been able to support grants for the Ashreigney Parish Plan; Ashreigney Village Hall; and the new allotments in Winkleigh. This year so far, Winkleigh’s Community Centre has received a grant for equipment to produce publicity material.

Grant money is for one-off capital expenditure or revenue items but the money cannot be used for retrospective funding. Any group – other than the parish council – based within the ward can apply. Although the pot of money that I can access is relatively small, it should also open up other match funding for groups. If you have any projects that you feel might be eligible, please get in touch – there is money available!

**David Lausen 01837 83209**

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## And finally . . . .

The Indian Summer actually happened! However, it was of relatively short duration and soon replaced by the sort of winds that might have interested record-seeking circumnavigational yachtspersons!

Despite the recent tempests, village life has continued much as in past years, but with the additional interest of the Lunch Club at the Community Centre. The ladies have now excelled themselves twice with displays of culinary expertise and presentational flair. The Lunch Team is now expanding and more gastronomic treats can doubtlessly be expected!

Having ‘blotted my copybook’ in the last issue by omitting to mention the closing date for articles for this issue, readers will now be sharpening their pencils as they read this to prepare their articles, letters, etc. so that they can reach us by **Friday, 19<sup>th</sup> February 2010**.

As usual, we are always interested to hear if there are any matters that you think need looking into or making generally known. Please contact any member of the Newsletter Team (Telephone Nos. on back page) or email to [articles@distinctlywinkleigh.org.uk](mailto:articles@distinctlywinkleigh.org.uk).

The Editorial Team takes this opportunity to wish all our readers –

*A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year*

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	<b>Philip Griffiths</b>	<b>01837 83407</b>
	<b>Alan Mulcahy</b>	<b>01837 680145</b>

The Society now has over 100 members. Membership costs £5 for a couple or £3 concession for a single person . This entitles you to vote at the Society meetings . If you would like more details, please contact Robin Coombes, our Membership Secretary, on 01837 680016.

Further information about the Society and what is going on in Winkleigh can be accessed online at: <http://www.winkleighonline.com>

## **NEWSLETTER TEAM**

<b>Peter Monkcom</b>	<b>01837 83452</b>
<b>Tim Rhodes</b>	<b>01837 83229</b>
<b>Alan Mulcahy</b>	<b>01837 680145</b>

Contributions to the newsletter can be received as follows:  
Articles are fine in printed form, but we can also accept PC disks or CDs in  
WORD format, or e-mail submissions .

Newsletter team e-mail: [articles@distinctlywinkleigh.org.uk](mailto:articles@distinctlywinkleigh.org.uk)

Postal submissions: 8 Old Barn Close, Winkleigh, EX19 8JX  
or Smythen Hill Cottage, Hollocombe, EX18 7QD

The Newsletter team is always looking for new members, please come forward if  
you would like to help in any way.

All information correct at the time of going to press . The views expressed in  
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