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Webmaster: webmaster@witheridgevoice.org.uk

Posters ONE page of A4, LARGE type/full size jpeg
Printed by Burridge Printers 01837 82386

Cover Photos:
Bluebells - Alan Horwood
Primrose - Den Buckingham

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Welcome to the Spring issue of The Witheridge Voice, and thank you to all our advertisers and contributors.

Our lead story comes from Anne MacFarlaine (née Dryer) who was the daughter of the Headmaster of the Church Primary School, and she spent the first 10 years of her life in Witheridge - Part 1 is in this issue and part 2 will be in the Summer issue. Thank you Anne for sharing these memories with us.

There is information on St John’s Fayre, which takes place 22nd to 24th June; the Children’s Holiday Club “Lighthouse”, results from the Gardening Club’s Spring Show and lots of other information and stories.

The Witheridge Voice AGM is on Thursday 17th May at 7.30pm in the Parish Hall Committee Room. You will be very welcome to join us.

My main reason for taking a full page for my Editorial this time is to highlight the amount of Dog Poo and rubbish on the Field behind the Parish Hall. Dog walkers have told me about the disgusting state in which this field is left and below are some of the photos of rubbish around the seating area. Broken glass is very evident although there is a large Litter Bin there which is mainly ignored and has been damaged. Litter can still be placed in it!!

There is no excuse for dog poo not being placed in the appropriate bins - there is one close to the playground. Most dog owners are very responsible. Apparently, a large pile of poo was deposited right in the middle of the entrance to the Parish Hall car park last week. Come on dog owners, clean up after your dog and put the bag in the dog waste bin.

It is unfair to users of the field and playground to have to come across both these types of waste - and the broken glass is particularly dangerous for children, adults and dogs. **USE THE BINS PROVIDED**

Jill Horwood,
Editor
I spent the first ten years of my life in Witheridge, so my time there made a deep and lasting impression on me. What freedom we had in those days! A freedom sadly denied to children today. We were free to wander. We had secret places to visit, unknown to grown-ups. I remember tending a ‘garden’ we created on top of a wide hedge entirely hidden by branches. Occasionally, on a summer evening, we ventured a little further to explore more ‘forbidden’ spots such as the local sewage works. One quiet Sunday afternoon, a group of us had an hilarious time jumping out of Winston Maunder’s hayloft into piles of hay outside. But later the hilarity turned to contrition when Winston, justly angered, complained to my father.

The roads were mostly free of traffic and the hedges in summertime offered a wealth of flowers to pick and fruits to eat. I particularly remember the delicate, fragrant taste of wild strawberries and the strange plant which hid its flower within a tight green covering. The flowers when revealed were either white or purple, so you had either found an angel or a devil.

I lived in Orford House on the Square, just across from the Angel. My father was Jack Dryer, Headmaster of the Church Primary School. I wanted so much to go to school that one day when visiting the school garden with my mother and others, I wandered into the classroom of that wonderfully dedicated and respected teacher, Miss Alford, and was allowed to stay. Each of the three classes was divided into standards so that each teacher taught pupils of three or so different age groups - this might seem an impossible task, but in practice because the numbers were low, it appeared to work well. School was a safe and happy place for most of us children without the pressures that burden pupils today. For some families, education was not a high priority as paid work would be available locally as soon as the child reached statutory leaving age (14 in my day) and children of farming parents were often needed to help with the harvest so did not attend school during that period and later would often become farmers themselves. The thinking that higher levels of education could be attained by the many rather than the few had to be delayed in practice for many postwar years.
There were days in the winter when heavy snow falls kept those who lived out of the village at home and the few who did reach their classroom had no formal lessons. A favourite way of passing the time was by placing postcards into a viewing frame—which transformed the scenes into magical 3-dimensional. A very simple process, but none-the-less it fascinated us.

Not far from the village was the American camp. The American soldiers showed much generosity and on one exciting day, large bags appeared in the classroom, some full of lemon sherbet powder which we ate out of paper bags and others containing chocolate powder, a real treat for children in those chocolate-deprived wartime years.

Another asset at school was the spacious school garden where pupils learnt gardening, rabbit and bee keeping, fondly recalled in the article ‘Evacuee’ which is recorded on the website “Witheridge ‘The Centuries in Words and Pictures’”. (www.witheridge-historical-archive.com/sullivan1.htm)

As an only child, I loved the company of other children at school and loathed having to stay at home when childhood sicknesses such as measles, chicken pox or whooping cough struck. But being the daughter of the Headmaster of the local Church Primary School could prove quite tricky. I was expected to behave myself and set a good example, difficult for a lively chatterbox like me. To my parent’s disgust, Reverend Castlehow banished me from Sunday School at the age of three, never to return. My crime? Persistent talking. When I entered my father’s class, protocol demanded that I addressed him as ‘Sir’ and my misdemeanours were strictly addressed, my tongue being the source of most trouble. However, my father was no gossip or tell-tale. No mention was ever made at home of whatever had happened in school that day and I was always grateful to him for that.

Anne MacFarlaine (née Dryer)
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Anniversary Congratulations to
Harold & Millie Parkhouse - 70th Anniversary
Jill & Alan Horwood - 50th Anniversary

100 YEARS OF REMEMBERING
11th November 2018 is the Centenary of the end of hostilities of World War I. All organisations in the village have been asked to knit red poppies using a very easy pattern. White or purple poppies would also be very welcome.
Knitting patterns are available at the Rest-A-While, shops and the Church. Just collect yours, free of charge. If you would like to join in with a knitting group and have a chat and a cuppa then pop into the Rest-A-While. Over 2,400 poppies have now been sewn onto a green background and the numbers grow every week. This huge display of poppies will be displayed at our Remembrance Service on the 11-11-2018. Please pop into the Rest-A-While for more details.

The outside poppy display is being organised by the Royal British Legion - 2,000 poppies will be fixed to wires running down from the top of the church tower, and it is hoped that the Press and TV will be coming along to record this occasion.
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WITHERIDGE ST JOHN’S FAYRE 2018
“Farming in Devon”  22nd – 24th June 2018

We are looking forward to seeing everyone at the Witheridge St John’s Fayre, to be held over the weekend of 22nd – 24th June 2018. Our theme this year is “Farming in Devon”. Dress up if you wish and let us know if you would like to bring your tractor to our parade! (All tractors new and old welcome). We start the fun with a tea dance on Friday afternoon in the Parish Hall, Witheridge, from 2.00 until 4.00pm. We are repeating last years success: put on your dance shoes and enjoy ballroom dancing and a delicious Devon tea.

On Saturday 23rd June Witheridge Parish Hall will be lined with food stalls, craft stalls, delicious homemade goodies and plenty of entertainment. There are still a few stall places, so do contact us if you want to exhibit. We are pleased to confirm that Mama Johns is part of our food extravaganza - a new addition to the Fayre. With the Grand Parade coming through the village at 11.15am, make sure you are there in good time. Crediton Town Band will lead the way followed by majorettes, Shire Horses, Hounds, tractors and so much more. The Fayre will be declared open by Richard Howe, former BBC Devon Farming Correspondent, and our local primary school children dressed for farming will entertain.

There are plenty of activities for children with Punch and Judy and Paul Zee Entertainment, maypole dancing, children’s races, children’s colouring competition and plenty of outdoor entertainment and activities. Our very popular Dog Show, run expertly by Liz Morris, welcomes dogs of all shapes and sizes for a fun competition. Plenty of prizes to be had. These start at 12 noon, on the Witheridge tennis court.

Don’t forget this year’s Bake-Off Competition. Please bring all entries to the Parish Hall by 10am on Saturday. We are thrilled to have Anita and Caroline from La Petite Bouchee, as our judges.

If you are here for the whole weekend, do join us for the Service, to be held in the village square on Sunday morning, to celebrate St John’s Day.

Continued on page 13
Witheridge Parish Hall

What would you like to do in the Parish Hall

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Chris Kershaw on 01884 860208
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The Parish Hall continues to provide a wonderful venue for all kinds of entertainment and events for the village. As I write this we have just had a brilliant evening with Circus Berzercus. The week before saw the first film evening with a showing of the fantastic Paddington 2, followed by a fund raising evening for Seamus’s trip to the BMX world championships in Azerbaijan.

I sometimes wonder if people are aware of how much work the Parish Hall committee put into ensuring that the hall is used to its full potential. An example - for the film evening Margie and Paul had to research film providers, design and print the posters, do the publicity, get the refreshments, print price lists, order cups, organise the raffle, get the hall set up and put everything away at the end of the evening. On top of all this, they had the constant worry that no one may turn up!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the committee for all for their time, knowledge and interest, without which our village would be a much poorer place.

If anyone would be prepared to help with any events or just be notified when they are on - drop me an email.
Clare Spicer
spicerclare@gmail.com

St John’s Fayre

Sticking to this year’s theme is The Farming Quiz, with Tiverton Museum in attendance to lend us a hand. The photographic exhibition is “Farming Past and Present”, please let us have any photos we can borrow for the display. For our teenagers, Funlands will reside on the Sports Field carpark from Thursday to Sunday. Hamburgers and thrills galore. Lots of activities at the Parish Hall fields for all with a competitive streak or just in for some fun. Why not try our Egg Throwing Competition?

On Saturday evening, and free for all, we are pleased to announce that the Mangled Worzels will be carrying us in to the night with great music and dancing. The bar will be run by Witheridge Sports Club. The Marquee by the Village Hall is where it is all at this year!

Lise Martin
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Registered charity No: 1102489
M ONDAY C LUB.

Due to the very good speakers we have had at our club this year, our membership numbers have gone up and up, and we have had to bring back the dreaded waiting list again. So if you would like to join this successful, young at heart club, you will need to apply for a membership waiting form as this is not a walk-in club. You need to be a fully paid up member to attend our meetings, but our Coach outings will still be open to anyone who would like a day out with us - these seats will only be offered after the members have booked their seats.

We have many more exciting speakers booked as well as our much looked-forward to Coach outings - look out for posters.

Please phone Val 860709 for a membership form, remember the quicker you are on the list the sooner you will be a member, avoid disappointment and call soon. I will look forward to hearing from you.

Val Dickinson

F ILM N I GHT

As most of you know we put on the Paddington 2 film as our first foray into film nights and it was a great success. Thank you everybody who came. We hope to have a regular night at the Parish Hall to show films that you all might be interested in seeing. The provisional night for the next film is Saturday June 2nd.

Please continue to support us as that is the only way we can continue to do this.

Margie Cosker
We have had an enjoyable few months with people coming in for teas and coffees and bringing with them their knitted poppies or to collect patterns or to donate wool.

We originally set out to knit two thousand poppies but the number keeps growing and is now well on its way to the three thousand mark. A fantastic effort by all concerned! They are being sown onto a green back cloth material which will look stunning when it is finished and displayed in church as part of the Remembrance commemorations in November.

We are extremely grateful to everyone who has taken part in this village wide project to pay our respects to those who paid the ultimate sacrifice in two world wars and in other conflicts.

If you have not yet got involved but would like to do so please feel free to call in to the Rest a While for more information. We are open from 10.00 am until noon Monday to Saturday where you can be sure you will receive a warm welcome.

June Turner, Secretary
Arranged and funded by members of Mid-Devon churches working together
with leading support from www.pulseministries.co.uk

Exciting games, Fun songs, Competitions & Crafts for Primary Age
school children
at Morchard Bishop Playing Fields. This year’s theme In the Jungle!

Wednesday 30th May & Thursday 31st May - 10am to 3pm
and
Friday 1st June 10am to 3.30pm,
then Family Safari from 3.30pm-4.30pm for parents to join their children
for a buffet tea

Registration forms at www.thelighthouseclub.org.uk
Children will need to bring a packed lunch each day and a refillable
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Enquiries : Sylvia Grant 01363 877400

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**HEDGEHOGS**

Hedgehogs are coming out of hibernation and going on their nightly forays for food. If you are driving at night, please look out for them and let them cross the road safely. They could well be hunting for slugs in your garden!

Ray Thorne

Drawing by Dave Dickinson
Would you like to reduce the price you pay for your heating oil?

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- or telephone for a friendly chat: 01884 861186
**CHARITY KNITTING**

It is good to know that the blankets and quilts for the Linus project are being used and appreciated. Other ongoing projects are still with us, i.e. the Baby Bear Project, items for the premature babies, and jumpers for Eastern Europe needy children, and more. We have been lucky to have received a large quantity of wool from a lady in the village who is relocating. This will help keep our needles busy!

Eileen Haynes  
860212

**WITHERIDGE IN BLOOM.**

Thank you to Mole Valley Farmers who have been kind enough to sponsor us with new planters this year. This is very much appreciated and we will be planting them up for the summer very soon.

Thank you also to Kaye Woollacott who has donated two flower pots, one of which is located at the old school site and contains a spindle tree (Euonymus) – we look forward to seeing it grow in the years to come.

Thanks also to Andrew Clark who has offered space in his greenhouse for us to grow on our plug plants.

Look out for our planters now on Chapple Corner which we trust will give a good display during the coming season.

Carol Northam  
[carol.northam1@pobroadband.co.uk](mailto:carol.northam1@pobroadband.co.uk)
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**Witheridge Ladies Club**

In January, due to our booked speaker having to cancel her talk, Mary had managed to obtain a substitute (Fred and Mike) from the Knights of Witheridge. The charity the Knights of Witheridge ‘were formed in 2008 by a small group of like-minded individuals who wanted to have some fun by organising different money-making events for the benefit of our local community’. The organisation raises money through various means: clay pigeon shoots; sponsored walks; panto; events at St John’s Fair etc etc. What a wonderful organisation, benefiting many local groups and individuals. In February our speaker David Cole gave a very educational and humorous illustrated talk on the Eddystone lighthouses. We enjoyed his visit immensely. What foresight and courage those lighthouse builders had.

In March we welcomed Sally Steele from Trelawn Boarding Kennels, South Molton. Sally told us how she and her partner George have transformed the kennels, and gave accounts of some of the dogs they have looked after, some very poignant stories. Tel: 01769 550192. There is also the Trelawn Wet Dogs Salon!

The Ladies’ Club also has a book club and luncheon club. Why not come along to see what we are up to! A warm welcome awaits you.

2nd Tuesday in the month. Parish Hall 2 - 4 pm.

Coral Simmonds

**Art Group**

If you would like to join us, we meet in the parish hall committee room with wonderful lighting. We are a small group of people who have painting and drawing as a hobby and find meeting with friends a happy and productive experience. We have facilities for disabled people, tea and coffee are available, and a cupboard full of materials if you would like to try us out without spending too much. The subscription is £1.50 per week and £5 annual membership. If you would like to join us ring 860564 or 860709
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Witheridge Historical Archives

When Tony and I came to live in the Village in 1993, we knew little of its ancient history with many local farms being listed in the Doomsday Book of 1086, etc., etc.

We soon discovered that there were people dedicated to actively spending hour upon hour collecting information and data to put history into book form for prosperity. They also used to put on exhibitions in the Parish Hall for all to understand and enjoy what went before us.

Time, as it does, has moved on. Freda Tout and John Usmar have passed on, and Peter Tout decided to move closer to his family. That’s the time I became a little involved with the Archives because, for now, they didn’t have a home.

The Parish Hall shed was used on a temporary basis; the Parish Council were unable to find interested people to take over the problem, then out of the blue George Haynes kindly made contact with Devon Archive, who agreed to take them on a long term loan. It means we still own the records, but the South West Heritage Trust is the custodian – they can be borrowed back at anytime.

So after two trips to Barnstaple, (there were many heavy folders and boxes) they are in safe hands at the North Devon Record Office, and the archivist responsible for them is Gary Knages.

Our Newsagents, however, do have a few copies of the “Parish Through the Centuries” left for sale. This is a very informative book; the Rest-a-While also have a copy and some old photos, so if you are interested, pop in for a coffee and chat and a read!

The Parish Hall are going to frame spare photos of past Village life, so some history will still remain with us.

Chris Kershaw

Community Information N Devon

Library 2018
Mondays Witheridge
Dates: May 14; June 11; July 9; Aug 6
Witheridge, The Square 14:00-15:00
Witheridge School 15:05 - 15:50

WRVS Home Library Service. For anyone physically unable to reach a library.
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Citizens Advice Bureau 01884 234926
North Devon Council www.northdevon.gov.uk 01271 374 776

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DO YOU HAVE A FAVOURITE PLACE?

I have always loved the sea – anywhere! There’s nothing I find more relaxing than sitting down looking out at the sea in all its vastness. Somehow, even when the sea is rough, I feel at peace when I do so. It reminds me of the vastness, the immensity, the power and the love of God.

A couple of Christian songs sum it up:

“Here is love vast as the ocean,
loving kindness as the flood,
when the Prince of life, our ransom,
shed for us his precious blood ....”

“Oh the deep, deep love of Jesus!
Vast, unmeasured, boundless free;
Rolling as a mighty ocean
In its fullness over me.
Underneath me, all around me,
Is the current of Thy love;
Leading onward, leading homeward,
To my glorious rest above.”

The Christian’s God, revealed in the Bible, is no small God. He is vaster than the vastest ocean and he is personal – made known in Jesus. The Bible says the winds and waves obey him – thus he is more than able to take care of me and my concerns – sometimes we need to be reminded of that – for me a good dose of sea watching does just that!

With all best wishes and love in Christ

John Wiltshire, Minister, Witheridge Methodist Church
Methodist Chapel
Rev John Wiltshire 01363 877281
Sunday Services 11am
(Except Churches Together service -see noticeboards)

Women's Fellowship
❖ 1st Thurs in month from March - December 2:30pm

Events at The Chapel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thurs 7th June</td>
<td>Ad Lib and Cream tea raising funds for Devon Air Ambulance</td>
<td>2.30pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun 29th July</td>
<td>Churches Together at Parish Church</td>
<td>9.30am</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

St John the Baptist Parish Church
Rev Adrian Wells
Morning Worship and Communion Services start at 9:30am

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tues 1st May</td>
<td>United Churches Luncheon Club</td>
<td>Parish Hall</td>
<td>12 for 12.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sat 12th May</td>
<td>Sale &amp; Coffee Morning (Provisional)</td>
<td>Parish Church</td>
<td>10am - 12 noon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 5th June</td>
<td>United Churches Luncheon Club</td>
<td>Parish Hall</td>
<td>12 for 12.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun 24th June</td>
<td>St John’s Fayre Weekend. Open Air Service</td>
<td>Parish Church</td>
<td>9.30am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 3rd July</td>
<td>United Churches Luncheon Club</td>
<td>Parish Hall</td>
<td>12 for 12.30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sun 29th July</td>
<td>5th Sunday Ecumenical Service</td>
<td>Parish Church</td>
<td>9.30am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tues 7th August</td>
<td>United Churches Luncheon Club</td>
<td>Parish Hall</td>
<td>12 for 12.30</td>
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Note: All dates are subject to change. Please check the church notice board.

Witheridge Church Rooms - small functions, classes or meetings. Kitchen and toilet. £10 per am/pm/evening. Contact Andrew Clark on 01884 860612
As many of you may already know, a new family has taken over Thelbridge Cross Inn. We’ve given the front a bit of a re-vamp, which we feel is light and fresh yet also very welcoming.

We’ve got a new chef in as well, Sukh, who is classically French trained with a background in many London restaurants, but don’t fear! We’ve still got the classics on our specials board, but if you fancy something a bit different and daring, then a meal off the A La Carte menu is the choice for you.

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UNITED CHURCHES OF WITHERIDGE
LUNCHEON CLUB

Unfortunately we had to cancel our meal on 6th March because of the heavy snow all but from now on it’s all systems go for the rest of the year.
We are a very happy little group of helpers and guests who all enjoy a home cooked meal in the company of others. If you live on your own, why not come along and give us a try?
We meet in the Parish Hall on the 1st Tuesday of the month at 12 noon for 12.30 pm. If you would like to book a place, please ring Annis Stone on 860398 or Val Dickinson on 860709

Sue Henderson  Hon Sec

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Our specials board for the spring and summer will reflect lighter menu choices to accompany, hopefully, the warmer weather, featuring regularly changing fresh fish dishes. Fingers crossed re the weather! Of course, we will always have our very popular Exmoor steaks and homemade Exmoor beefburgers.

Every Tuesday is Curry Night with a great choice of curries, all accompanied with a poppadom, naan bread, onion bhaji, vegetable samosa and mango chutney. 1 x curry for only £10.50 or any 2 for £19.50

The en-suite family room, which can sleep up to 4, has recently been refurbished for bed and breakfast, for families or as a twin room.

Don't forget to follow us on Facebook and instagram for updates Spring and Summer offers.

To book a table, room or for any other enquiry please telephone 01884 861263 or email us at: the.mitreinn@mail.com www.themitreinn-witheridge.co.uk

Like us on Facebook to catch us early when we post special offers and events.
Well, a new year and now a new Chairman for the Knights of Witheridge…. I have stepped aside from the role of Chairman due to work commitments and Keith Greenwood has taken over. Can we help you or your organisation? We have limited financial funds to give away to individuals and organisations within the Parish of Witheridge. If you would like to apply for financial help then you need to complete a Funding Application Form and return it by the closing date Sunday 6th May 2018. Forms can be obtained by going onto our web site: www.knightsofwitheridge.org.uk or by collection from the Newsagents. We have just held a successful and enjoyable ‘Puddings Quiz’ at the Parish hall and have several other events planned this year including: 23rd June – Stall at the St Johns Fayre 16th September – Charity Clay Pigeon Shoot 24th November – Puddings Quiz 1st December - Panto Thank you everyone for your support and we look forward to seeing you at our functions this year. Laurie White Outgoing Chairman email: knightschair@gmail.com

Please Note: Our meetings are usually on the 1st Monday in the month (except bank holidays) at 8:30pm.

CHARITY BINGO

Dates for the next four months:

- May: 1st, 15th and 29th
- June: 12th and 26th
- July: 10th and 24th
- August: 7th and 21st

Alternate Tuesdays at 7.30pm at The Rest-A-While

Marion Crane
Witheridge Brownies and Guides

We meet at Witheridge School from 6.30 pm until 8.00 pm on a Tuesday during the term time, Brownies are for girls aged 7 – 10, and Guides are for girls aged 10 – 15. Currently meeting every week and at the same time, just different activities, we also run a senior section for 15 + once a month. If you are interested in helping as a leader we are always looking for extra help. We would like to have a few more girls joining us. If you are interested in either joining or helping, please contact me - Carole Chapple on 01884 855329 - or you can register on the Girlguiding website and I will then contact you. We do a variety of activities and here are a couple of the recent activities done prior to Easter.

Carole Chapple

Witheridge Tae Kwon Do

Welcome to all our new members, it is lovely to see the club continuing to grow.

In competition news we had a fantastic turnout to the South West Championships with great performances all round. Congratulations to Joe Webber and Jake Curtis both winning bronze in their weight division of Black belt sparring. For both of them this was their first time competing as black belts so this is a fantastic achievement- well done to you both. We are now gearing up for the World Champs this summer.

In grading news well done for all your new belts- blue stripes: Millie Phelan and Joe Phelan; green stripes: Rob Curtis, Nicola Perera and Angie Lunn with a plus pass; yellow belt: James Reid.

Witheridge TKD
The Youth Club Football League matches have been postponed the last couple of times, due to bad weather, but the matches in February resulted in 1 win and 1 draw for Witheridge. Well done guys.

The Youth Alpha course is going well, with 4 young people attending from Witheridge, 3 from Hele Lane and 3 from Copplestone exploring what Christianity is all about. There have also been some great games, and some fantastic food. Some of us will be going on a weekend away, as a part of the course, at the end of April.

Heather, Beckey and I took 11 young people to United Generation, a youth event held at Grosvenor Church, Barnstaple on 24th March. There were inflatables, pool, air hockey, table tennis and various computer and playstation games available to play, followed by a live worship band in the evening and various people talking about how God has changed their lives.

SPREE is coming up fast and I have already had some forms back. If you want to know more then speak to Heather or myself. Check out the Facebook video of last year's camp.

Witheridge Rocks is open to young people from Year 6 upwards. We regularly have 25+ in attendance, and we are very grateful to those who help us to make it happen. However, we can never have too much help, so if you would like to volunteer to help us in any way, as a one off, or on a regular basis, then please speak to Heather or myself.

Andrea Court
Our first meeting of 2018, when 19 brave souls battled against the bitter wind and cold, was a very entertaining and informative talk on the “Healing Garden” by Dr Gavin Haig. Dr Haig had been a member of the Rotary Club, which celebrated its Centenary in 2005, and to mark this occasion, he was instrumental in putting a Wildlife Garden in Tiverton Hospital. The garden was entered into a National Competition and was awarded First Prize – the awards were made at the beginning of April 2018.

For over 3000 years, plants have been used for their healing properties – marjoram is a wound healer and antiseptic; ginko leaf is excellent for circulation and particularly cerebral circulation – just a couple of examples. Wildlife also use plants for healing, and ivy is a particularly good one – it also provides shelter for birds and insects.

In March we had a visit from Derek from Eggesford Garden & Country Centre, who spoke to us about Gardening for Wildlife. It is up to us to help wildlife in our gardens by creating habitats such as log piles, leaf matter, leaving some grass long to provide shelter, putting out food and water – all year round, not just through the winter – and using as few chemicals as possible. If you have hedgehogs in your garden, consider cutting a small hole – 13cm x 13cm in the bottom of a fence to allow them to wander more freely.

Saturday 12th May is our Plant Sale, and the Community Gardening Competition is 5th July for Vegetable Gardens and Allotments, and 12th July for flower gardens, tubs, hanging baskets etc. Ring Doreen Leat on 01884 860936 for details and entry forms.

In spite of the extreme weather conditions recently, the entries for the Spring Show were very good – daffodils were in abundance, a tribute to the gardeners who grew them, other plants and flowers also made a good show, and we had a steady flow of people throughout the afternoon.

Spring Show Winners:
Witheridge Gardening Show Cup – most points in show: joint winners Ros Knight and Elaine Kelly
Witheridge Gardening Club Shield – most points runner-up: Cyril Leat
Rosette for Best Exhibit in classes 1-4 – Table Centre Arrangement Ann Webber
Rosette for Best Exhibit in classes 5-20 – 3 Trumpet Daffodils Elaine Kelly
Rosette for Best Exhibit in classes 21-43 – Needlecraft Bag Jill Horwood
Rosette for Best Exhibit in Children’s classes – Cake in a Mug Lucy Kelly
Rose Bowl for Best Exhibit in the Show – Needlecraft Bag Jill Horwood

Congratulations to everyone who entered and helped make the show a success.
Jill Horwood
Spring Show Winners

Ros Knight, Ann Webber, Cyril Leat, Paul Kelly (Show Secretary) Elaine Kelly, Lucy Kelly, Jill Horwood

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**ALLOTMENTS**

Spring is here and we are at the start of another growing season. We have two half allotments to let, so come and join us and enjoy growing your own fruit and veg, and then the pleasure of harvesting and eating your home grown produce.

Ring 01884 860630 for details

---

**LITTLE DART SINGERS**

We are a singing group based in Witheridge. We need members who enjoy singing and can commit to one evening a week and to the 3rd Sunday each month. We occasionally sing with other local churches.

John Harris.  
Practice Tuesdays 7.20pm  Witheridge Parish Church

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**BELL RINGERS**

St John The Baptist Church, Witheridge  
New ringers always welcome, we meet at 8.30 am in the belfry on Sunday mornings.

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**WITHERIDGE GOLF SOCIETY**

For the first time recently, a wet golf course and rainy conditions faced the 17 players who contested the John Kemp Spring Trophy at Waterbridge on 14th March. The game was reduced to 9 holes because of the conditions. On the winning team were Brian Burgess, Rob Peck and Colin Gunn. The wooden spoon trophy was won by the Witheridge players Greg Henderson, Dave Owen and Ken Ramsbotham.

The dates of future meetings at Waterbridge are the May Trophy on Wednesday 9th May and the Summer Trophy on 4th July.  
New members are always welcome. The emphasis will be on enjoyment through a team game. Contact Andrew Clark on 01884 860612 or e-mail at astonguy@tring92.f2s.com.

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It is hard to believe that we've already reached the end of another term!

The children fully embraced our topic, Ni Hao, China! throughout the Spring Term. The students enjoyed a fantastic Chinese themed day, with all of the children taking part in a 'Sounds Chinese' workshop, which involved two 15 metre dragons and a beautiful southern lion costume whilst the children had the opportunity to play a range of Chinese musical instruments, including highly decorated drums, cymbals and gongs. During Arts’ week the children created their own Chinese Shadow Puppets and then performed some traditional Chinese stories to the rest of the school using the puppets.

Class 1 and 2 had a visit to High Bickington School for a special Chinese New Year celebration day with all the other schools in TEAM academy trust. Class 1 brilliantly acted out a retelling of the first Chinese New Year and Class 2 performed a traditional Chinese Dragon Dance.

Continued on page 41
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Classes 2, 3 and 4 have all been Rock Climbing at Rock and Rapid, every Tuesday afternoon since Christmas. All the children have been developing their team working skills by practising belaying for each other in groups of 6. Well done to all the children who demonstrated excellent perseverance and determination to improve, everyone has worked hard to challenge themselves to climb a little bit higher each week.

On Monday 26\(^{th}\) March, we had our Easter Service at the School. We enjoyed listening to the Easter Story in the form of a poem read by some children in class 4.

As always, if you would like any more information about any of the things we do here at Witheridge Primary Academy or have any ideas you would like to discuss, then please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Mr. C. Holding Head of school

**WITHERIDGE CHILDCARE @ THE HIVE – SPRING TERM**

At the end of last year we said a sad farewell to our Pre-School Committee and our Chair Person Amanda Martin-Smith. We would like to say a huge thank you for all your hard work and support, during the transition over to the School. And a big thank you to you Amanda, Daisy and Rory from all the Pre-School children for your lovely leaving gift!

We have now officially joined TEAM Multi Academy Trust, the children and staff have all embraced the changes that took place, one of the biggest being the Pre-Schoolers joining the 74 students of Witheridge Primary School for lunch within the dining hall – which they all now enjoy. The children have been up to lots of exciting things this Spring Term celebrating the new topic ‘Ni Hao, China!’

We changed the playhouse outside to be a Chinese themed room, we all cooked and tried different Chinese foods and discovered which animals we were in the Chinese New Year.

*Continued on page 43*
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The children all had great fun dressing up for World Book Day and talking about their characters and favourite books and we’ve been boogieing to our disco music, in aid of Sport Relief.

As well as the many different craft and cooking activities that have taken place whilst celebrating our ‘Ni Hao, China!’ we have also celebrated St Patrick’s Day and Easter – making Easter cards and cakes, reading the Easter Story and inviting families into the setting for our mini Easter Egg Hunt.

In the nicer weather, the Children had fun visiting and exploring the wildlife area, developing an understanding of growth, decay and changes over time for living things and the environment. The children were also thinking about safety following the boundaries when walking around the pond.

The setting is open 7.45am to 6.00pm for 2 to 11 year olds - Please do give Jayne Elston (Setting Manager) a call on 01884 860518 for more information or email preschool@witheridge.devon.sch.uk

---

**WITHERIDGE GARDEN CLUB**

**PLANT SALE**

**2.30PM SATURDAY 12TH MAY**

**WITHERIDGE PARISH HALL**

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon</td>
<td>7.00 - 11.00 pm (skittles at home)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues</td>
<td>7.00 - 11.00 pm</td>
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<td>Wed</td>
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<td>Sat</td>
<td>12.00 - 9.30 pm</td>
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<td>Sun</td>
<td>12.00 - 7.00 pm</td>
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**SHORT MAT BOWLS**

We meet in the Parish Hall twice a week throughout the year. Club shoes and woods are available for those who have not played before. The first three evenings are free, then a green fee of £2.50 per session and a subscription of £20.00 per year. Short mat bowls is open to residents of Witheridge and surrounding villages. Children over 10 and under 16 must be accompanied by an adult at all times.

**ACTIVELY SEEKING NEW MEMBERS**

We meet Tuesday evenings at 6.30pm for a 6.45pm start, and Thursday afternoons 2.00pm for 2.15pm start.

Greg Henderson

**BADMINTON**

The Badminton Club meets in the Parish Hall on **Mondays from 2-3pm**, £2.50 per session.

We can provide rackets if needed. We welcome all ages and abilities. For safety reasons children are not allowed.

Greg Henderson

**TABLE TENNIS**

Come and join our friendly small group for adults aged 16 or over. All equipment is supplied and we offer tea and coffee too. Come along and pass an enjoyable hour. All levels of ability, from beginners to Olympic contenders, are most welcome.

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This half term at East Worlington preschool we have been learning about fire, fire fighters and fire engines. We were very lucky to visit Witheridge fire station and sit in a fire engine and listen to the siren!

We have also been learning about the three little pigs, dressing up as the pigs and big bad wolf and building ourselves some strong houses using bricks.

Currently we are learning about Dinosaurs, It’s been great fun exploring our room which has a dinosaur museum full of fossils made by the children, our sand pit has some dinosaur teeth to be found and we have been learning all about the different dinosaur names! We have also been enjoying music and literacy with dinosaur poems and dancing to the dino rap. We are looking forward to going on some Dinosaur egg hunts in the school grounds and lots of Easter crafts before Easter holiday.

Our sessions currently run all day Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9am – 3.30pm

On Tuesday afternoons the toddler group meet in the PFSU classroom from 2pm-3.30pm with self-weighing for babies, a lovely safe area for your children to explore with an undercover outdoor area. The toddler parents provide a welcoming and proactive environment for you and your children to come along for a chat, cuppa and cake!

Please do give Chanelle Busby a call on 01884 861680 for more information.

Further information about the preschool can be found on the Chulmleigh Academy website, Or search for East Worlington primary school on Facebook or call Lydia Roberts on 01884 861722.
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At East Worlington we have had a very busy end to the term. Our Acorn class have been on a trip to the Dinosaur World which they thoroughly enjoyed. The children were amazing! They had fun sitting on the dinosaur and finding out all about fossils and different types of dinosaurs. Luckily nobody got eaten by the T-Rex head! The Acorns have also been on trips to the Witheridge fire station and our local farm to feed the lambs and find out about the local wildlife.

Years 2-5 went had a wonderful time at the production of Awful Auntie at the Northcott, Exeter. The production has been touring the UK so was professionally staged and produced, which meant that it was not only a very good story, which was entertaining but also the moving scenery created the feeling you were really inside the story. Thank you to the PTFA for funding this lovely experience. The Oaks have started to write their own versions of the David Walliams book Awful Auntie about their own revolting relatives.

We have also had our annual events such as the Easter Crafts where the children made bunting for the garden, Easter cards, chocolate Easter nests and hammer beads – it was lovely to have year 6 back for this event. On the last day of term we had ‘East Worlington has talent’ where we were bowled over by the range of talents that our children shared from puppet shows to singing and dancing, to jokes and show and tell.

We have finished off a very active term with our sports relief event. The children have been sponsored to run a mile or more a day for a week, the Oaks added this to their totals for their daily mile and have run nearly 800 miles in half a year. The sponsorship money will be split between Sport Relief and funding for our garden project.

We also took part in an interschool football tournament at Lapford primary school which was great fun to meet up with children from other schools including Witheridge, Lapford, Winkleigh, Copplestone and Chulmleigh.

Continued on page 50
In our sports lessons this year we have had football, gymnastics, multi-sports, invasion games and archery. Next term the children will be going swimming – thank you to Yeatheridge holiday park for the provision of their pool.

Finally we have had visits from Professor Anderson who talked to the children about the tropical rainforests. He shared an amazing range of artefacts. We also had a visit from the fire brigade teaching the children how to stay safe, in the event of a fire.

As you can see it has been a very busy month finishing off with a lovely range of activities and events that the children have greatly enjoyed. The Oaks are looking forward to their residential early next term.

We are thrilled to be able to announce that we will be starting a before and after school club which will provide child care from 8.00pm to 6.00pm, wrapping out our school provision. For further information please contact spinn@chulmleigh.devon.sch.uk. We are also in the process of applying for grants to develop our garden area so that this can become usable area all year round.

**HISTORY MAKER**

Following the success of Paul Roberts’ talk on his great grandfather, John Roberts, Paul’s book “History Maker” is available from me at £9.99. All the money raised from the sale of the book in Witheridge will be split between 3 charities—St Margaret’s Hospice, where Paul’s late wife Jenny was cared for; Devon Air Ambulance Trust, and the Devon Freewheelers.

Ring me on 01884 861323 if you would like a copy.

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**TENNIS CLUB**

This year sees Witheridge Tennis Club celebrating its 120th anniversary since it was founded in 1898 and the 50th anniversary (1968) of the club being in its current location next to the Parish Hall. We think that is something well worth celebrating!

We have arranged four special tournaments throughout the summer and an Open Afternoon at the beginning of June to encourage players of all standards, including complete beginners, to come and join in. Please check our website – witheridgetennisclub.com for the latest details.

**TOURNAMENTS**
Saturday, 19th May  
Saturday, 16th June  
Saturday, 14th July (PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE)  
Saturday, 15th September

**OPEN AFTERNOON**
Sunday, 3rd June from 2.30-4.30

We look forward to welcoming new members of all ages.

**COACHING:** There will be children’s coaching at half-term and during the holidays with Rachael and we are running adult coaching sessions with Nigel on Monday mornings. Call Caroline for information on 01884 860363 or email her at cmwilsoni@hotmail.com

Sarah Vertigan  
sarahvertigan@aol.com

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As we look forward to the summer term and (hopefully) warmer weather I am already thinking ahead to the autumn as it will be time for my youngest child to go to school and that will mean some new faces running our toddler group in my place. Having only moved to Witheridge a few years ago, I found this group to be a real lifeline as a parent with a young child and am really grateful for the weekly support this group provided for us and all the friends we have made along the way! If you have been regularly involved in the group and would like to help out as I seek to hand the various tasks over, please do let me know. If you are new to the area or have yet to try the group out you will be assured of a warm welcome! I hope you will find it as great a support and as much fun as we always have and thanks to all the Mums already involved in running the group.

We certainly started the year off well with some music sessions provided by Moo Music and finished off the term with a morning of making Easter crackers and a mini egg hunt. It has been lovely to welcome some new families too. During the summer term we are looking forward to visiting the preschool a couple of times and enjoying some of their activities when they join us in the parish hall.

Bumps and Beyond is a member led group for parents and carers of children under five and babies. We also welcome expectant mothers. Please do join our Facebook group if you are a local parent or carer of children under 5 to keep up to date with our upcoming events. You can find us listed as “Witheridge parent and toddler group”.

We meet at the Parish Hall in Witheridge every Wednesday from 9:30-11:30am and the cost is £1.50 per session per family to include healthy snacks and drinks for children, hot drinks and biscuits for adults and sometimes cake!

Please do contact Denise on 01884 861 365 or denisehenson@icloud.com for more information. We would love you to come and join us when you can.
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SPRING AT LAST!

Wildlife is full of unexpected surprises. The other day, on returning home from my early dog-walk with Sonny, I was filling the bird feeders in the shed. I put the first two up then returned to pick up the seed and fatball baskets and walk out of the shed again. In amazement I stopped in my tracks. There were ten Long-tailed Tits a few feet away, on the peanuts that I had just hung up on the old post. I froze. They continued feeding fearlessly (!) until they spotted me, (or rather the fatball basket!), hanging loose in my left hand. So in an orderly fashion they flew directly over to me, in two’s and three’s, landing on the food basket and picking away at the fat. The feeder swung this way, and that way from my cold fingers, as the delicate little birds fluttered around my hand, brushing my fingers with their soft wings, scrabbling for a foothold on my old jacket. Each little group replaced by another, all taking a turn. Apparently bored with entertaining me, they flew off on their morning feeding route, calling to each other with that typical 4-note “deedle-ee-dee”. For once Sonny had stood still, fascinated. I think neither of us quite grasped what had just happened! What a treat!

All Fools Day begins this next period from April thro’ June. As the temperature gently rises and the ground starts to warm up we see a wonderful unfurling of life. Slowly at first, then a riot of energy as the race to reproduce, to blossom, to bring forth fruit and to mature, happens before our very eyes. Do try an early morning walk. You would be surprised at what you may see and hear, or just enjoy the fresh early peace around you, as your day begins. The dawn chorus of birdsong peaks in pure joy during May and June; you might even see a Fox or grazing Roe Deer. Mid-morning is a good time on sunny days for early season Butterflies and Bees. Dusk is another option - Song Thrush with his repetitive song or Blackbirds’ melodious warble are enchanting in the evening stillness. Bats are flitting about hawking insects and moths. The little Pipistrelle Bat in the lane will come down to inspect you, don’t worry they are only curious! You may even work the magic and see a Barn Owl drift on soft, soundless wings, quartering field or hedge. These walks can be in your own town, village or out in your local countryside.

Continued on page 59
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Each habitat will give a sight of wildlife. If your stroll becomes a regular habit, make note of all you see and hear, you will soon start to build an interesting picture of your own ‘patch’, and like me, learn something new every day. One thing’s for sure - you never know it all! I hope you enjoy it, as I do.

Birds are nesting. Residents like Chaffinch sing a tumbling flourish; Great Spotted Woodpecker has been drumming for some time now. The migrant Summer visitors are here! To name a few, Chiffchaff is singing its name in woodland; Wheatear is now on Moor and farmland; Blackcap and Willow Warbler adding their song and finding nesting places; the Swallows’ return always brings the sun.

On Lundy the comic Puffin has returned to raise chicks in burrows; Razorbill and Guillemot perch on those precipitous over-populated granite rookeries. Early Spring gave us boxing Hares and that burning sulphurous star – the Brimstone. They do say that this is the origin of the name Butterfly – a “butter-coloured fly” – it certainly sets Spring on fire, dancing along lanes and woodland margins, mirror to the Daffodils still in flower. The warming earth will have awoken hibernating creatures, Bats, Dormice, Hedgehog; Toads, Frogs, Slowworms, Adders and Grass Snakes. Having dozed their Winter away, Badgers are as active as the Foxes, rearing their young, which are still tiny at this stage.

In May, woodland will thrill with that silent haze of Bluebells; Church towers will echo to the scream of Swifts in noisy groups at breakneck speed; Tawny Owl chicks, leaving nest holes, ‘branching’, with flight feathers not yet fully formed in a mass of down, edging along the tree branches using talon and beak to grip twigs as they shuffle about. Tawnies are really early nesters. Early Purple Orchid grace road verge and hedgebank, as Celandine and Primrose start to fade out and the white stars of Stitchwort and ruby-red Campion come into their own. Our own special Devon landscape, the Culm Measures, will be awash in purple Moor Grass, the blue of Devils-bit Scabious and Marsh and Heath Spotted Orchid looking like a blackcurrant ripple ice cream - doing the ‘can-can’.

And here’s a Spring treat for you – a stunning photographic exhibition of some of our birds found in Devon, offered by Devon Birds and hosted by our local South Molton Museum. Don’t miss it – on until the end of April!

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Witheridge Young Farmers

On Sunday 21st January we took part in Exe Valley Group round of entertainments competition, and this year it was Pantomime. After lots of practising we performed ‘All at Sea’ with 11 members taking roles and other members helping backstage. Florence Bradley sang ‘I have a dream’ by ABBA, and she has now been selected by Rose Chanin to sing at her Variety Show in the summer which is a great achievement. After a very tight competition with four very good pantomimes the results were: 1st Cruwys Morchard YFC, 2nd Withleigh YFC, 3rd Witheridge YFC and 4th Bampton YFC. The following Sunday 28th we did a re-run in Witheridge Hall which everyone was welcome to watch. It was very well supported by the village with almost 100 people there. We hope you all enjoyed the pantomime and thank you for your support.

Following into February we had a club bowling trip to Hollywood Bowl and then a team took part in the county competition in Exeter. We were asked to attend and do readings at three different Plough Service Sunday Services which began with Chulmleigh Church, Witheridge and East Worlington. We had members take part in the Group team for Dodgeball at the County Competition in Exeter, they won and will be playing at the South West Area round in Weston Super Mare on 15th April.

Our Charity Dung Sale this year was in aid of Farming Community Network, we sold it in the village on Saturday 10th March. Even though it was a very wet day we sold around 80 bags and made £136. Thank you to everyone who bought it and supported it. Thank you to Steve Perry at West Burrow for donating the dung.

We held an Easter Bingo at Thelbridge Hall on Wednesday 28th March which was very well supported by a variety of ages and making over £250.
We are also having a Clay Shoot on Sunday 20th May at East Middlewick Farm.

Hannah Perry
Wetheridge Short Mat Bowls Club

We meet in the Parish Hall every Tuesday evening at 6.30pm for a 6.45pm start, and Thursday afternoons at 2.00pm for 2.15pm start.

New Members welcome.

First three sessions FREE. Woods and shoes available to use for those who would like to give it a try.

Membership is £20.00 per year, plus £2.50 per session, including refreshments.

For more information, ring Harry Richardson, Secretary, on 01884 860522

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CAT Preschools is a director-led organisation incorporating Chulmleigh Preschool, East Worlington Preschool and Lapford Preschool.

Chulmleigh Preschool (PFSU)
- We offer wrap around care from 8am – 6pm for 2-5 year olds
  - Monday – Thursday 8.00am – 6.00pm
  - Friday 8.00am – 1.00pm

  Please call Gina Randall on 01769 580535 or email grandall@chulmleigh.devon.sch.uk for further information and to arrange a visit

East Worlington Preschool (PFSU)
- Care for 2-5 year olds
  - Monday, Wednesday & Friday 9.00am – 3.30pm

  Please call Lydia Roberts on 01884 861722 or email LRoberts@catpreschools.co.uk for further information and to arrange a visit

Lapford Preschool
- Care for 2-5 year olds
  - Monday, Wednesday & Friday 9.15am – 3.15pm

  Please call Lorraine Kigongo on 01363 83162 or email lkigongo@catpreschools.co.uk for further information and to arrange a visit

We are registered to take 2yr old and 3 / 4 year old funded children at all of our settings.

We are open term time only.
Witheridge AFC Update

Well I’m sat here on Easter Monday ready to tell everyone how the 3 teams have been getting on since December and that’s where I run into trouble.

With the ever constant rain then snow then rain and more snow and rain since the 1st of December only 4 games between all 3 teams have been played meaning a huge fixture backlog for a start and teams having to play 3-4 games a week during April and May (weather permitting) but it will also mean I will have a lot to update on in the next issue.

On a side note I’d like to make people aware of an event being held at Witheridge AFC on May 19th which has been solely organised by Sarah Bragg who has put a lot of time and effort into this event so please have a look at the poster and come along and join in the fun !!.

Paul Rich

Village Fun Day
With a Royal Twist
Sat 19th May from 12pm

Witheridge Social Club would like to invite all families & friends from Witheridge & beyond to an afternoon of fun & games to help celebrate the Royal Wedding & later the FA Cup Final!

BBQ, bar, tea/coffee, Pimms, bouncy castle & inflatable slide, popcorn machine along with candy floss, ice-cream & slush (£1 each), swing boats (£1 per rider), fancy dress competition with a royal theme, obstacle course & a raffle
Annual Parish Meeting 2018 – Chairman’s Report

This has been another very productive year for the parish council with lots of our plans coming to fruition including the proposed new housing development and the refurbishment of our public toilets. Annual funding from the parish precept, the Parish support grant and the Council support grant totalled approximately £33000.

Housing Development

In January the council met with Larkfleet Homes Southwest Ltd who intend to build on the site south of Butts Close. They are a small developer who have built properties at Taunton Dean and Creek St. Michael but only look to build some 200 properties a year. They propose a mix of semi-detached and detached three to four bed roomed houses and two to three bed roomed bungalows, including the required amount of affordable housing. They are all intended to have garages and offroad parking. Homes will sell for £200-£400 thousand. All will be heated by underground gas tanks. Also discussed were the Parish wishes for the open space that will be provided with this development. The land contribution of 1870 sq metres should be immediately adjacent to the existing adventure playground. They have suggested a banked seating area close to a new small children’s play area. The financial contribution for this re-development of both the play area and the adventure playground should be paid to the Parish Council who will commission the said works. A path will be developed to link the new houses with Butts Close which will be adopted by Devon County Council Highways as part of the roads and pathways created within the development for future maintenance. The parish council have spent a considerable amount of money on the skate park this year as the equipment is reaching the end of its life, the ramps and the fun box and the grid rail are all rusting so new pieces had to be welded in and painted. We also have had to install FLZ signage which explains to users of the outdoor gym equipment their height requirements and the dangers of physical exercise! This was a requirement insisted upon by our playground inspector. North Devon Council have approved that the redundant allotment land at Merryside villas will be released for the building of new council houses.

Village Trees

The trees were all surveyed prior to the Parish council taking over the responsibility for them at a cost of £713.52. Consequently the Chapple corner trees were pruned and the conifer removed by tree surgeons. The prunus outside the vicarage was removed as it was diseased and could have been a potential danger.

Parish Clock

Our church clock is still in full working order and still chiming on the hour and the quarter, plus keeping good time! As a body we have approved a lot of repairs, a Regulator, a fly vane and service £847.20. Mounting costs have caused the council to consider asking the Exeter Diocese for a faculty to enable the clock mechanism to be altered to electric. At the present time with the clock working correctly it’s a case of “letting sleeping dogs lie,” however should massive repair costs arise, it will become an option. A new bench has also been erected outside the church replacing the old damaged one.

Historical Archive

Witheridge historical archive has been moved to The South West Heritage trust in Barnstaple. The council were concerned that the documents would become damaged in our storage, so by moving them to Barnstaple they will be cared for in a suitable environment and be available for reference. Thanks go to councillor Kershaw for her considerable help in this matter.
Christmas tree
The Parish council were in agreement that the tree provided by our grounds contractor was inadequate and some ten foot smaller than the one specified. It was too late to cancel the contract as Christmas ceremonies had been arranged around it. Consequently the council have decided to identify a tree themselves this year and our new ground maintenance contractors Hooper’s of Crediton will erect it. KJT Ltd did reduce their bill by 50% after council complaints.

Toilet Block
The original facilities were some 13 years old, in desperate need of refurbishment and as you can see our program is actually happening. It commenced on February 19\textsuperscript{th} and should be completed in some two weeks. The new toilet area at one end has been gutted, re-plastered, re-tiled, fitted out with resin vandal proof sanitary ware with a Wallgate hand washing facility, hand rails and a fold down baby changer. The rest of the building has also been re-plastered and insulated creating a small storage space at one end with a new office /storage space in the centre. This will be available for rent. The cost is approximately £30,000 and the council will claim back a proportion of the VAT. We have also received a grant of £1,000.00 from the district council.

I will finish by encouraging all residents to report via the Parish Council website, any potholes or road subsidence caused by the latest bad weather. The more reports the highways receive the better.

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