

Winter
2013

Beneath the Vale

Published on behalf of Upper Marshwood Vale
Parish Council

Light up Marshwood

With the expectation of a bright and colourful future for all who live in or pass through Marshwood, a 13-year series of royal events in Marshwood came to an end.

Marshwood has no village hall so events in Marshwood have centered around the Marshalsea Farm of Ann and Tony Studley.

Not only was it right in the middle of what most of us consider to be Marshwood village, it could not be nearer to the Garage or the shop, and, for much of the time, the Bottle's hall was not available.

Most useful are the various barns Tony has erected over the years and access to his fields. The barns are weatherproof and metal-clad so although usually used as a workshop and for storing Tony's tractors and vans, these could be cleared to provide enough space for villagers to enjoy a sit-down meal, or doors flung wide to give revellers access to a bonfire.

So it was Ann Studley who became hostess to the whole village for the series of millenium, silver and diamond jubilee events.

Joy McClellan retells the highlights.



2002 (June) was the start of the royal events - the Golden Jubilee.

Over 100 people attended at Ann and Tony's big barn for a Queen's 50th year celebration and BBQ. Costs for the event were supported by means of fundraising events such as:

part of the proceeds of annual Christmas pudding stir up, carol singing, a flower arranging session, and a skittles evening.

Most of the village enjoyed plenty of food and drink, children's crafts, a best crown competition and a fiery bonfire.

During 2011 a small group of volunteers was formed with plans to commemorate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in June 2012.

In July 2011 a sale of old and new objects given by villagers under the heading 'Bargains in the Barn' was held at Ann and Tony Studley's smaller barn with

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loads of stalls, a raffle and a barbeque. One particular object, a non-working but elegant vintage clock was not sold on the day but was later carefully valued and sold to clock-lover. Other locals came away with brand new power-tools generously given so that over £1,000 was raised to go towards the future events then being planned.



2011 (29 April) A BBQ and bonfire held at Ann and Tony's small barn. All were invited to this celebration of William and Kate's wedding.



Amongst other activities, there was a bouncy castle for the youngsters and a best hat competition for adults.



2012 (4 June) - Party in the Barn
 This enabled the residents of Marshwood Parish to attend a superb sit down buffet, this time in Ann and Tony's large barn. With the funds raised from the 'Bargains' event and helped by a Jubilee donation from the Parish Council of £250, entrance was free.

A celebration cake was made by the Studley family and was cut by our very own revered Very Reverend Ben and Sally Lewers.



In December 2012 a Christmas Tea Party was held in Bettiscombe Hall. Funded with money left over from the party in the barn, this was a really old fashioned event with sandwiches, cakes, jelly and ice cream, oodles of cups of tea and a Father Christmas. Both he and the hall looked fantastic.

As a finale to all the above, in June 2013 a plaque was placed in Marshwood to commemorate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and later in October the remainder of the funds was spent on daffodil bulbs, which were planted around Marshwood and also outside Bettiscombe Hall.

With an uncounted number bulbs, all the remaining money raised was spent and planted; all spare bulbs offered to residents whose homes fronted onto the road to be planted: "where they could be seen!" So the last of the jubilee events will be next spring, and the next spring, and the next spring after that

Credit and thanks must go to Ann and her team of organisers and helpers of these wonderful events - you know who you are. Without you all of these occasions would not have happened.



Not all our recent events were royalty-related. Some of the other special events that have been held during this period should be noted.

Bettiscombe Open Gardens - proceeds to the Church and hall.

In 2007 Trish and others organised a superb Christmas Fair in Bettiscombe hall with lots of home made products and Christmas themed items.

Progressive suppers at homes around Bettiscombe.

Christmas pudding stir ups have been held for many years at Ann's home. Proceeds to Church and other charities.

Harvest suppers have also been held for many years in Bettiscombe hall. Proceeds to the Church.

Last summer as it reached full bloom, Ron and Rosemary Chiverton's Marshwood garden was open to raise funds.

At last Marshwood gets its just deserts!

Our affordable homes ARE to be built on the Thane Farm site.

Full planning consent was finally promised as this issue came together, over 21 weeks after the planning application was lodged. Up to 8 weeks is the normal maximum with an agreed extension to 13 weeks available but not requested. Board members of Marshwood Community Land Trust have monitored change after change as negotiations between Hastoe Housing, their architect and West Dorset planners proceeded.

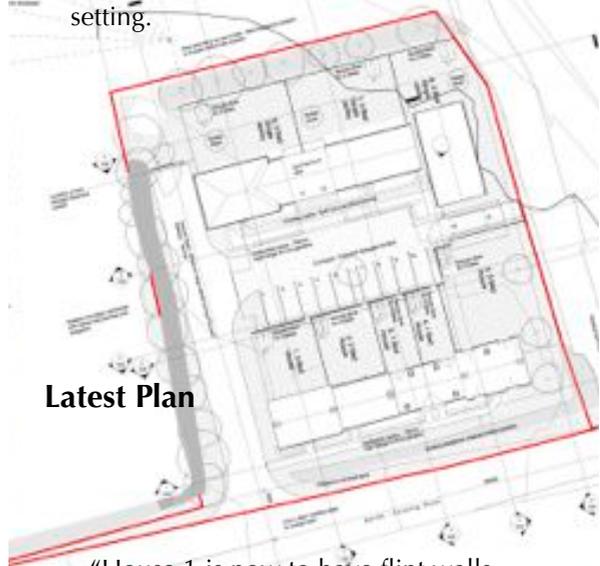
Some of the changes were purely cosmetic and a sop to the self-important officials. Others are seen as real improvements, usually as a result of more detailed thinking on the subject.

But with the ever-increasing delays, caused by planning office complications and staff sickness, a worthwhile compromise had emerged.

With the full backing of the Planning Department, Bob Burdon the planning officer would take on delegated powers to approve our homes as soon as the public had a chance to comment via the web site.

These changes are set out by CLT chairman, David Hitchcock who writes: "In the original drawing most of the dwellings were to have been built of brick

with 2 having part timber finishes to represent barn like structures in a farmyard setting.



Latest Plan

"House 1 is now to have flint walls with brick quoins and surrounds to windows and doors to make it 'a house to be proud of as you enter Marshwood.'

"Changes in the orientation and placing of the other homes provides a terrace of five houses while all have now moved closer to the road, to make the existing hedge part of the garden line."

David adds: "The car parking area has now moved to face the rear fence of houses 1 to 5 so that it cannot be seen from the main road and the entrance road to the development is to have a field gate at the far end to make it more rural in appearance from the road."

Your Parish Council had promptly renewed their approval for the updated project so planning consent will happen.

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Council and News

Remembrance Day 2013

Chairman of Upper Marshwood Vale Parish Council, Matthew Bowditch was amongst those who gathered at the Marshwood war memorial to remember the fallen from 2 world wars whose names are listed.

On a bright but cold November Sunday, he and others laid wreaths at the base of the cross in the same way that villagers have done on so many occasions.

Two differences to this years events may not have been noticed by the villagers that attended the event which this year followed a service of remembrance at Bettiscombe.

The Last Post was sounded by Elizabeth Carter who chose to play it, not on her cornet, but on the flugelhorn. This has a richer, more mellow tone that blended with the sunny day as the notes of the Reveille echoed around the centre of Marshwood.

But the most important change is the increasing involvement of youngsters from Marshwood school. As reflected by the ages of the fallen read out by the British Legion President, some were hardly older than today's young people present and taking part.

Headmistress Helen Whitehead carried a unique wreath put together by the school pupils and made up of individual poppy petals drawn by the children.

This wreath alone links across almost a century and acts as a poignant reminder of those we still miss.

It is also a welcome reflection of the changed public attitude now today's soldiers die in a very different war.

Lest we forget.

A video of the event can be seen on the parish council website

www.uppermarshwoodcouncil.org

The first week of October seemed a good week for Marshwood Vale or didn't you notice? Not only did the affordable homes debacle appear to be resolved, but a broadband lifeline was thrown us. But neither was what it seemed; the how and why of these very welcome efforts is worth telling as a story of self-help in the face of official silliness

A Good Week for Marshwood?

It was DEFRA who came up trumps on the Monday when BTV heard that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs would help Marshwood Vale with their Broadband. Well we heard this at a major broadband meeting in Dorchester for 'digital champions' and other interested parties - and was then asked to keep quiet as it was not yet official!

This relates to the way Broadband is being funded. Some claim that BT have pulled a fast one on the government, will grow fat on a huge handout *and* will own the new Superfast network.

A fairer position is that it was realised that most of UK users would get superfast from competing networks such as BT and Virgin. It was their investment that would pay for the fibre links, green street boxes and microwave towers to carry their users broadband at high speed and heavy volumes. But some areas - towns and urban areas were not

worth competing for, while it would be commercial sense for one company to invest. Finally and reluctantly it was accepted that large areas of the county would never get any improvements there were just too few people

for the distances involved.

Yes the rural areas. Us.

So when technical developments let the BBC and TV transmitter authorities come in way under budget for digital switchover, that spare cash, some £600m,

was grabbed and fast. Broadband UK, in charge of wiring us up for broadband improvements was then tasked with putting the money into those rural areas to ensure we all got a fair chance and a decent service.

Many organisations showed interest in this huge job, including BT and even some local enterprises set up for the purpose. Local Authorities, usually counties, were told to stump up extra cash to go with the BDUK funds and the installing contractors were asked to pay towards the costs of what they would then operate and profit from



Will Marshwood get a green box from BT?

That knocked out many contenders.

With BDUK setting common technical standards and the rules ensuring the new rural network would be open to all broadband suppliers, the game was changing. In the end only British Telecom was left in contention; but they had made an early decision to become the internet equivalent of Network Rail and wanted to be the nation's network suppliers.



**Fibre optics: 50 of them
in this tube**

Another analogy: the way the national grid supplies power to our homes but the energy companies provide electricity to the network and charge users. BT wanted to wholesale the connections to the internet and carry your broadband to and from your chosen ISP such as Talktalk, Virgin etc; and of course their own BT internet. So they have done all the rural broadband deals countrywide, including with Dorset County Council.

With the funds in place and Eurocrats finally accepting this was not a state subsidy, work can now proceed.

BUT as money is limited, some areas remain expensive to cover - on a cost per home basis; Marshwood Vale is one such area, and this could mean concentrating resources away from areas such as Marshwood village some of which gets adequate broadband to areas that get none or poor services. Which is why DEFRA has 'stepped' in.

Local Leader #1

Charles Somers, who has led the Marshwood broadband team set up after our Parish Plan, realised that, as other areas would be easier and cheaper to wire up, our residents could be lumped with the small percentage of homes which the BDUK plan will not help. He also discovered that DEFRA funds could help farmers and indeed the whole community. Other parishes were consulted with little interest being shown by most, but our broadband team decided to apply and a positive meeting in DEFRA, Exeter helped us on our way.

Charles undertook most of the detailed work so it was realised that that it would be better to have DEFRA funding handled and integrated into the main DCC broadband team now working with BT; it was also realised that we could link up with our Char Valley PC neighbours, who seemed keen, to present a combined Vale approach.

Charles therefore handed over the DEFRA application to DCC's Dugald Lockhart and his broadband team and was closely involved in their work in submitting an 'Expression of Interest' to DEFRA last May. And so it was Charles who received the good

news that DEFRA has now asked us to move on to prepare the 'Full

Application' business plan for this additional investment.

Broadband update

Under DCC's recently-signed contract with BT it became clear that a good part of Char Valley's patch is already due to get a good broadband service (part of establishing the link from Bridport to Lyme Regis) whilst other neighbouring parish areas will run the same risk as we do of not getting a good upgrade. In agreement with DEFRA, it has now been decided to include other neighbouring parish areas within our final application to DEFRA, mainly Thorncombe and Broadwindsor.



During November, Charles Somers and your editor met with all of the neighbouring parish councils concerned and asked for their support by nominating local coordinators who would seek 'letters of support' from their communities, something we already did last May here in the Upper Marshwood Vale and Char Valley. We have had a great response in a very short time from a wide variety of people, these including many home workers and businesses. Clearly there is a strong need for better broadband across our area and a willingness to take up a new superfast broadband service if it could be provided.

All of these support letters, together with those from our Parish Councils, district and county councillors and from our local MP Oliver Letwin, will be passed to DCC for them to add to their Full Application document, due to be sent to DEFRA within December, this as evidence of strong community involvement and demand for a much better broadband service.

Discussions are ongoing between DCC and BT to determine the cost of these additional works with the intention of adding these into the main BT contract.

Costs are likely to be high in our very rural area and much will depend on efforts to minimise the actual cost of investment (e.g. by looking at alternative technical solutions) as well as on how quickly we can get local people and businesses to connect to the new service, i.e. to achieve a high take-up rate for the network operator. Only when DEFRA has given us a go-ahead on their grant funding will DCC be able to move on to adding these works to their existing contract with BT.

So many thanks to all of you who have given us your support over the past months.

We should hear back from DEFRA early in 2014 - **wish us luck!**

How Marshwood got the Affordable Homes

Our other big UMV project is the Affordable Homes at Thane Farm. Progress has been even more chaotic than the usual one step forward and two steps back.... or should that be two steps forward followed by one step back??

West Dorset District Council's planning folk

have taken a lot of time to consider what was already discussed and fully agreed prior to the application.

With the Dorset for You website comments from the public closing on August 16th, Mark Van de Weyer submitted his 6 pages of alternatives at the last minute, asking for a medical centre on the area of land purchased instead of the homes residents wanted to be constructed. But the closing date for comments was left open and to allow WDDC Cllr. Mike Robinson to defended himself against defamatory comments repeated by Van de Weyer, as others added their thoughts with a detailed destruction of his comments was set out by others.

But all this is irrelevant, as the planning decision would be made only on the plans actually submitted by Hastoe our Housing Association, not on third party ideas.

What was more important were two 'expert opinions' that shocked all who read them; submitted 6 weeks late, these were clearly pre-determined opinions dressed up as facts or policy.



Jennifer Clarke, who writes as Dorset AONB Landscape Planning Officer puts her views before our homes:

'The pressure for affordable homes is acknowledged within the Dorset AONB Management Plan however there is strong concern that it should be located appropriately, in line with local policy to ensure that it does not compromise the landscape and scenic beauty of the Dorset AONB designation.'

However this lady does not seem to know her Dorset from her Devon since she then confuses the Axe Valley Hills with Pilsdon Pen from where the whole Thane Farm site will be visible alongside with two other existing and nearby farms. She is also rather lax in her logic, accepting the grouping of the homes like a farmstead is typical of the area but arguing that is not a reason to allow such an arrangement at Thane Farm!

Her grasp of history is also junior grade claiming local family farms were created for 'commercial' reasons alone. If this is the standard of comment from Dorset AONB, that organization requires

radical surgery and competent staff.

Contrast this with Sally Lloyd-Jacob, Planning and Urban Design Officer, West Dorset District Council who writes 'this is an open site, prominent in local views, that is set apart from the established linear groupings of development that characterise the settlement of Marshwood. It will therefore introduce a sporadic form of development that will be out of keeping with the area.'

More telling is her admission of predetermination: 'My pre-existing concerns still stand with regard to the isolated location.... 'We were given to understand that council officers are without such biases.

But Ms Jacobs goes on to argue that the grouping of the homes needs to be even tighter, contradicting her esteemed colleague. She also is factually flawed in several of her claims and does not recognise that Marshwood is a strip village and there is nothing she can do to change that.

Local Leader #2

Now step forward our other Marshwood advocate.

David Hitchcock took over as chairman of Marshwood Community Land Trust after a troubled period of disagreements and sackings which once threatened the whole project. Since then he has led his team towards wide community approval,



David Hitchcock with our Community Land Trust

funding by Hastoe Housing, agreement with local authorities and effective local influence on the homes themselves. His calm and authoritative leadership defused and marginalised any opposition to the very idea of affordable homes in Marshwood.

These 'Medical Centre' proposals set out to oppose the Thane Farm plans and are clearly not a serious project; as they have no land deal, are not approved by the community nor are proposed by Hastoe so cannot be considered by planners.

But 'proper' opposition working within the planning system represented a very real problem even though democratically debatable. Dorset AONB and WDDC's own Urban Planner should have a say on landscape matters but these should be balanced and accurate which was not the case.

All such delays are important as funding could run out, tactics used covertly by the opposition from the outset. So along with Matthew Richardson the architect and Rob Aspray, Hastoes Head of Regional Development, David Hitchcock promptly met with planning officer Bob Burden. 2½ hours later, some cosmetic changes - colour of paint, wood trim etc., and the plans were back on track. Not described as a sop to those earnest ladies, cosmetic and hence unimportant changes are being agreed along with small changes of layout.

Better still Bob Burden proposed to list the changes on the website, provide sufficient time for comments and unless opposed, to take delegated authority to approve the application.

So, unlike Whitchurch residents who had to turn out in person to persuade the planning committee councilors of their need for affordable homes, we would get immediate approval for our homes. Our thanks are due to David and his prompt actions to deal with these 'experts' - and their anti-democratic agendas.

More practically Mark Van de Weyer will have no public platform for his anti-Thane Farm campaign.

But that was not to stop him. In a third massive missive to the beleaguered planning officer he

now seems to want the new homes to be built on land at the Bottle!

It also sought to mislead the public and re-writing history by claiming that the newly discovered Bottle site was listed over two years ago, by Hastoe, the CLT and the District Councillor all of whom forcefully deny this. Mike Robinson dismissed the claim as 'absolute rubbish' and your editor can also confirm that Van de Weyer did not mention the 'Bottle Site' either in the public meeting where he led the steering committee's proposals nor in the list he published in the Bridport News.

David Hitchcock wrote back to the planning officer to state: 'The Marshwood CLT was formally approved by the FSA in August 2012 and at no time since it's formation has it discussed or recorded any debate regarding building sites at or close to the Bottle Inn.

'I have further consulted with long-standing members of the Affordable Houses steering committee ... and I have been unable to find anyone who can recall ever talking about a possible site at or near the Bottle Inn.'

He goes on to stand the claims on their head: 'However if these sites should become available and feasible on which to build affordable houses, then the CLT would be happy to consider them as future development sites in a few years time.'

Now to be built on the Thane Farm site, these homes will need an appropriate name when they are ready for occupation.

Beneath the Vale readers are invited to suggest their ideas.

Forward your choices to CLT chairman David Hitchcock or to your editor; our email addresses and phone numbers are to be found on p21

Affordable Homes; the Whitchurch experience

In Whitchurch the parish council took the lead when suitable land became available to the community. But some disliked the whole concept and continued their battle against the building. Trevor Chambers who edits Char Chat brings us up to date.

Planning permission was granted (unanimously) by WDCC in August last year. I was there and it was a very emotional meeting, I can tell you.

WDCC's own site officer recommended refusal, but the committee said 'yes' and there was much joy as well as gnashing of teeth. There were many constraints to be satisfied by Hastoe, and permission was not formally given until these had been met. That was in March of this year.

Shortly after that, just when they were about to start digging, the whole thing was stopped because a few of the opponents of the project applied for a judicial review, apparently on the grounds that WDDC had not established sufficient need for the housing.

The time-scales for the judicial review to be heard were likely to be long enough to threaten the availability of the funding for the project.

Some believe that this was the intention of the opponents in leaving their application until the very last minute i.e. just as digging was about to start.

The weeks went by with nothing apparently happening, and it seemed that the cause was lost. There was much gloom and a lot of anger that just a few people could prevent what the majority of people in Whitchurch supported.

Then news came through a couple of months ago that at the preliminary hearing of the opponents' case (I think many people, like me, did not know there would be such a hearing), the judge dismissed it and granted costs to WDDC.

These costs, to be found entirely from the opponents' pockets, amount to about £26,000.

So, with a lot of deep sighs from the village of Whitchurch Canonicorum, the building has started and is estimated to take about 40 weeks.



Bottle Inn Real-ly is best

When the Bottle Inn reopened in the summer of 2012,

Nigel Blake the new landlord, decided to stock real and local ales. Starting with a good range at the bar and a beer tent in the garden featuring 12 extra racks of real ales, he has maintained and extended the range of real ales almost all brewed within a 30-mile radius. Indeed many come from the new generation of microbreweries that have bought taste and flavour back into pubs throughout Dorset.



Real Ale man: Nigel Blake

Real ale drinkers soon noticed the Bottle's brews when his selection and range started to attract the serious ale males. In 15 months over 200 different ales have been stocked obviously not all at the same time. At a recent visit 6 contrasting brews had been chosen and were on-tap. No doubt a different set of ales will be on the pump a week later.

Nigel and the Campaign for Real Ales CAMRA, are natural partners, the members like his beers and he enjoys their support. And CAMRA members get a discount on their pints.

CAMRA also support micro and local breweries through their CAMRA LocAle campaign. This is exactly what Nigel wants for the pub and its customers and he far exceeds their requirements for a LocAle.

Also, with 12 'proper' ciders available, he also gets their Real Cider support as well.

Before they are recommended in the CAMRA yearbook a start-up or revival pub is always monitored by the CAMRA crew to see that the quality of their ale is maintained.

Landlords have to allow at least a couple of years to get listed so in June when Nigel was told that the Bottle will be listed in next years book he could not believe it.

"Don't be so daft, no way, less than a year!!" he recalls telling his informant.

So the speciality of the house has become a wide range of brews all local and all real.

Local History - the Pinneys and Bettiscombe Manor

Bettiscombe Manor or the various buildings that stood on the same ground before the present house have been the home of the Pinney family for centuries. But for most of their time at this lovely home they were only tenants.

Given the many century-long

Association between the Pinney family and their Bettiscombe Manor home, it is surprising that they were tenants and not the owners, that they left during the 19th century and returned in 1934 when the Michael Pinney at last bought the freehold. But for most of the Manors long life it was owned by others

In fact the first record of the estate in private hands during the chaos of the reformation when it came as part of the Frampton estates to a favourite of Queen Elizabeth, Sir Christopher Hatton.

A family of Brownes were installed as bailiffs of Frampton Manor where they remained as squire and owners until the 20th century.

It was the Brownes in their turn who installed a Pinney at Bettiscombe as a sub-tenant and bailiff.

This was Robert Pinney, a lowly functionary, little more than a clerk.

But by 1699 the Pinneys were sufficiently well established in the manor - no doubt with Hestor Pinney's money - for Nathaniel Pinney to rebuild the burnt-down Tudor manor house that had itself replaced an earlier medieval structure.

Today's Bettiscombe Manor was the result.

However the Pinneys did own nearby, newer Racedown Lodge a couple of miles across the fields on the Crewkerne to Lyme Regis toll road north of Birdsmoorgate. A much grander house, it was there that the family made their base when they moved out of the Manor.

According to Reginald Pinney, descendant of John Pretor Pinney his grandfather lost Bettiscombe in a fit of pique. At that time the lease from the Brownes of Frampton was for life

(lifehold tenancy) in the name of John Frederick Pinney, Anna's father.

However John Frederick, in a dispute with the landowner, would not renew the lease by naming the successor.

When he died the manor reverted to the control but not the home of Brownes and was leased more

conventionally to local farmers. Reginald and the rest of the family were comfortably provided for in an expanded Racedown House. However the Pinney family at large deeply regretted the loss of their ancient manor home.



Sir John Browne

A series of tenants occupied the house in late Victorian times and it slowly deteriorated until Michael and Betsy Pinney were able to buy the manor outright so fulfilling the long-held family objective.

This family connection with Bettiscombe along with their wish to own the Manor was rekindled when, in 1933, "they came to Racedown on their honeymoon and they walked over the hill and found Bettiscombe - and that was it, they fell in love with it." - Aza Pinney.

With adequate funds at least initially, repairs were made and the manor once more became a comfortable home. With little business or financial flair, Michael's funds inevitably ran low, and the 2nd world war intervened leaving Betty in charge. For a time the house was divided in two with a local farmer occupying one half

- as did a very long-term tenant, the Screaming Skull.

Michael and Betsy gained a reputation for living above their means in the fading elegance that the house provided: bills

were seldom paid but tradesmen still called and delivered. Occasionally furniture was sold and litigation over the family estates run by solicitors was started, to no avail.

In spite of all this - or perhaps because of the same factors - the Pinneys, their children, their servants and others who worked at the Manor, at the end of the track there existed a lively and lovely community, but one which would inevitably eventually fail financially.

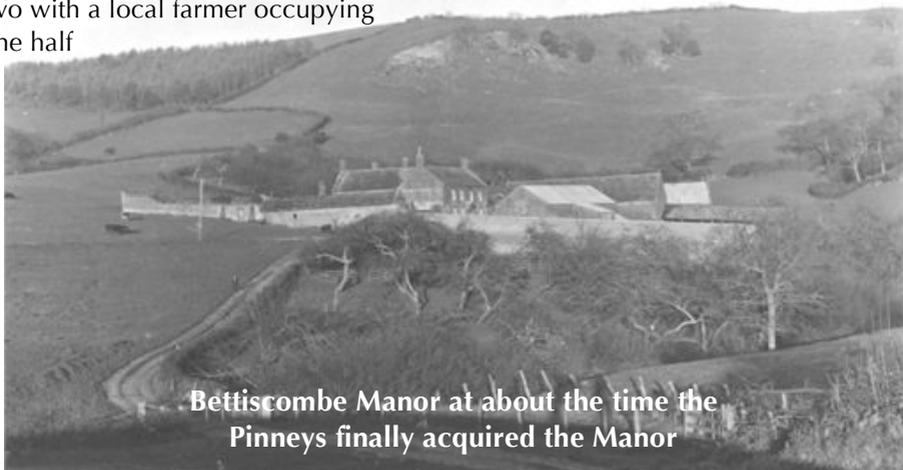
So fail it did, the house deteriorated once more as the money ran out.

Michael did many things - poet, printer, archaeology and was much-loved by his complex family some of whom still live locally but finally the time of the Pinneys at Bettiscombe had

passed. Fortunately the new owner was able to effect the necessary repairs and lives there to this day.



The Pinney Coat of Arms



Bettiscombe Manor at about the time the Pinneys finally acquired the Manor

November and December in the Farming Year

*Vet and Upper Marshwood Vale Parish Council chairman
Matthew Bowditch on ploughing time of year*

The frantic energy of the farming activities of September and October are completed. The gales and rain are now with us before the frosts and snow. This restricts field work to feeding any livestock still outside. Daylight is short making most work like hedging and fencing slow progress.

There are two main times for ploughing, the spring and the autumn. The autumn has been finished by now.

The ploughing now is a rapid procedure which tends to follow contours of the land rather than the straight lines of the past. Its purpose is to turn over the surface of the soil, burying the surface materials to provide humus, and to bury weeds and their seeds.

Depending on the soil type (e.g. clays) it was traditional to allow the furrow to weather in the frost before working the soil to plant in the spring. It is common now to reseed almost immediately. On our lighter soils the prospect of erosion is so likely that grass seed and winter corn crops are put in as soon as is practicable.



In the past when ploughing was done by horse this would have taken a lot of people a long time to achieve.

A number of the definitions used in ploughing are based on the practice of strip farming which was out dated by the mid 18th century. The traditional terms remained. The strip was a Furlong - a furrow length - which was 220 yards (200M). The width was a Chain -22yards(20M).

This enclosed an acre of land. A good team of horses and a ploughman could do an acre a day. I will leave you to work out how far the ploughman walked to and fro to do that acre.



So the brown fields that you see are turning green in their lines. This is to bind the soil together and get sufficiently strong to over winter the hard times to come.

This is a time for hedge laying. An awful lot of the hedges in our area have been neglected and respond to being laid by sprouting fresh vigorous growth which will be impossible for stock to cross.

Because the laid branches are living it is not possible to lay a hedge in a freezing spell as they snap off instead of bending to the hedgers' will.

Even machine-trimmed hedges need proper laying once or twice a lifetime!

This is an opportunity to remind all walkers in the UMVPC area that the council has the lease on Stoke Abbott Millennium wood down Barrow lane. This has over grown hedges that will benefit from attention.

The walk from Netherbury via the Wood to Stoke Abbott 's New Inn is a great day out.

URGENT

Bridleway - Brimley Mill to Beech Lane Bridleway

Anyone who has used this historical right of way in the past, please e-mail Roger Bell, Rights of Way Officer, Dorset County Council, who seeks evidence to be considered for application ref T.471.

r.bell@dorsetcc.gov.uk. & copy to gillperrott@googlemail.com

Editorial

In theory Upper Marshwood Vale is well represented as we have two county and two district councillors, a quality Parish Council that demonstrates that size is not everything and a Community Land Trust that delivers the goods. All our councillors work hard on our behalf and as effectively as the system permits but they are still outsiders looking in, tolerated courtiers able to endorse but not to decide.

We have others that can and do represent us in important matters as we set out; unofficial representatives who do not hesitate to tell officials what our Vale residents need and want. And at least 2 active scribes set down their thoughts or even ideas for residents to consider or reject.

So what is it that places such a distance between those who inhabit these two sets of corridors of power described recently as ancient and modern and our functioning democracy?

Put another way what is the roman town of Dorchester doing for us?

Are the wild and untamed ridges, hills, valleys and woods and a few people too far away to take notice or even take care.

Should rural reality be outweighed by academic attitudes and socially sensitive dogma?

And who does really represent us as our formal representatives are corralled into small cabinets easily controlled or ignored by skilled officials and politically minded apparatchiks?

In a previous incarnation your editor was approached by a councillor who listed the tricks and tradecraft used by council officials to bamboozle him and his colleagues. My then editor declined it but perhaps I should dig it out.

With the recent failures of officials to deliver our legal entitlements, many now challenge the bias towards the urban and hence against the rural. And even after pouring money into Rural Broadband, it is not the council and officials that support really rural broadband but DEFRA.

So what do we get for our rates - certainly a lot less than our urban friends and relations? We get roads but few are cleared of snow or ever cleaned, we get potholes enjoying annual birthdays, we get rubbish collected and recycled, too often straight onto the drive.



What do you think of the services so far?

Greater Marshwood

Marshwood has moved in the past.

From the remains of Marshwood Castle in the middle of the vale to a strip village centred around the Shop and Garage, the effective centre of the village has moved as national battles and local people have decreed.

But in a harbinger for future changes to our community, we are to gain vast new territories to the north - Thorncombe, Drimpton, Seaborough Burstock and Broadwindsor and lose the Stoke Abbott which will not be rewelded to Beaminster., but squeezed into Netherbury.

This change only applies to the District Council wards and hardly affects even the two councillors concerned. Fortunately our parish boundaries are unchanged.

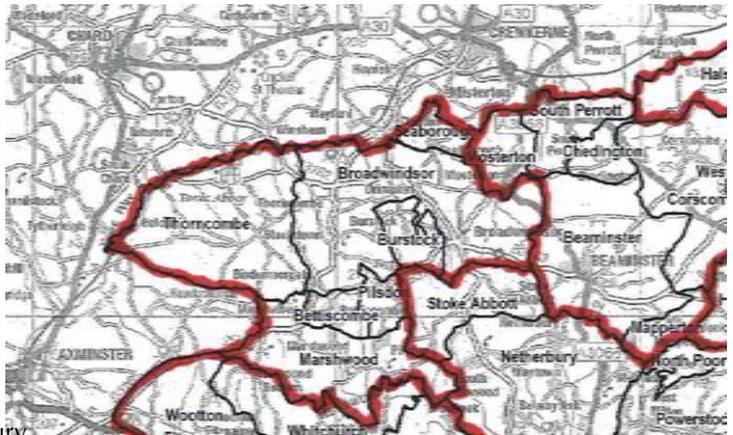
In May 2015, these new boundaries are to come into effect but what will this huge new grouping be called?

It cannot be called Marshwood Vale any longer and the alphabetically acceptable 'Broadwindsor, Marshwood and Thorncombe' is clumsy if accurate.

By area it could be 'Broadwindsor and parishes'.

Logically we should be joined back with some of Char Valley to become Marshwood Vale once more. But UMVP is the largest component of the changes so why not call us Greater Marshwood?

However district and county council boundaries already divide



Upper Marshwood Vale parish.

In practice this means our 4 parishes have 2 county and 2 district councillors working together on our behalf.

Also there is no rule that means parish councils have to match these other boundaries.

Practically, some community projects already ignore existing boundaries - Marshwood School and Marshwood CLT share a catchment area which extends well to the north.

We understand that District officials need to justify themselves by making what amounts to irrelevant changes but please leave Upper Marshwood Vale Parish Council to do our own Quality thing.

The Silly Page

Classic one liners from the witty

"Life is full of misery, loneliness, and suffering - and it's all over much too soon."
- **Woody Allen**

"I saw that show, 50 Things To Do Before You Die. I would have thought the obvious one was "Shout For Help". - **Jimmy Carr**

"I'm on a whiskey diet. I've lost three days already." - **Tommy Cooper**

"Never trust a man with short legs... his brain's too near his bottom."
- **Noel Coward**

"My wife sent her photograph to the Lonely Hearts Club. They sent it back saying they weren't that lonely." - **Les Dawson**

The film industry is like Anne Robinson - always on the lookout for a new face. -
Jack Dee

"I have kleptomania. But when it gets bad, I take something for it." - **Ken Dodd**

"Start every day off with a smile and get it over with." - **W.C Fields**

"Politics is just show business for ugly people." - **Jay Leno**

"I never forget a face, but in your case I'd be glad to make an exception."
- **Groucho Marx**

"Chopsticks are one of the reasons the Chinese never invented custard."
- **Spike Milligan**

"I think football would become an even better game if someone could invent a ball that kicks back." **Eric Morecambe**

"If you want to know what God thinks of money, just look at the people he gave it to." - **Dorothy Parker**

"The first time I see a jogger smiling, I'll consider it." - **Joan Rivers**

Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it doesn't matter."-
Mark Twain

"Every time a friend succeeds, I die a little." - **Gore Vidal**

"I used to be Snow White, but I drifted."- **Mae West**

"The English country gentleman galloping after a fox is the unspeakable in full pursuit of the uneatable." - **Oscar Wilde**

Your Community Land Trust: Officers

Chairman	David Hitchcock	01297 678257 threecountiesnurseries@live.co.uk
Secretary	Emma Turner	01297 678786 emt74@live.co.uk
Treasurer	Ali Edwards	01297 678382 aliedwards@onetel.net
Directors	Fred Bailey	01308 868015 fhpb@aol.com
	Anne Marie Chapman	coweyehawkins@yahoo.co.uk
	Rob England	01297 678548 rob@thequester.co.uk
	Charles Somers	01297 678178 somers984@btinternet.com

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

Facebook page:

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

Your District Councillors

Marshwood Vale	Mike Robinson	01308 868979 cllm.robinson@westdorset-dc.gov.uk
Broadwindsor	Jacqui Sewell	01308 867145 cllrj.sewell@westdorset-dc.gov.uk

Your County Councillors

Marshwood Vale	Daryl Turner	01297 444195 d.turner@dorsetcc.gov.uk
Beaminster	Rebecca Knox	01308 863365 r.knox@dorsetcc.gov.uk

Beneath the Vale: Editorial Board

Pauline Bailey	fhpb@hotmail.co.uk	01308 868015
Matthew Bowditch	m1bowditch.vets@virgin.net	01308 862758
David Corneloues	davidcorneloues@tiscali.co.uk	01308 868094
Joy McClellan	joy.mcclellan@sky.com	01308 867410
Newsletter Editor	Ali Cameron	01297 678546 ali.cameron@talktalk.net

Your Parish Council website: www.uppermarshwoodcouncil.org

Chairman

Matthew Bowditch 01308 862758
Stokewater Farm, Stoke Abbott
DT8 3JL
m1bowditch.vets@virgin.net
Stoke Abbott

Councillors

Fred Bailey, 01308 868015
Meadowrise, Bettiscombe DT6 6HP
fhpb@aol.com
Marshwood

Roland Bugler 01308 868649
Vale End, Lower House Farm,
Bettiscombe DT6 5NT
hebugler@hotmail.co.uk
Bettiscombe

Ali Cameron 01297 678546
Blue Haze, Marshwood, DT6 5QB
ali.cameron@talktalk.net
Marshwood

Alison Edwards 01297 678382
3 Marshalsea DT6 5QD
Marshwood

Jane Gillingham 01308 867197
Mabeys Cottage, Pilsdon DT6 5NY
janie.gillingham@btinternet.com
Pilsdon

Cassian Gray 01308862448
Horsehill Cottage, Stoke Abbott DT3JL
cassian@montmeru.com
Stoke Abbott

Clerk

John Vanderwolfe 01297 34444
Newenham, 5 Halletts Way, Axminster,
EX13 5NB
johnvw@tiscali.co.uk

Councillors

Christopher Rabbetts 01308 867474
Gerrards Farm, Pilsdon DT6 5PA
chrisrabbetts@btinternet.com
Pilsdon

Trevor Richards 01308 868848
Deer Park Farm, Marshwood Vale,
DT6 5PZ,
info@rochestershire.co.uk
Marshwood

Eddie Rowe 01308 868334
Courtwood Farm, Broadwindsor
edwardrowe3lb@btinternet.com
Bettiscombe

Roy Warburton 01308 868358
Shave Cross Inn, Shave Cross, DT6 6HW
roy.warburton@virgin.net
Marshwood

Robert Wyatt 01308 868249
Blackney Farm, Blackney, DT6 5PB
bob.j.wyatt@googlemail.com
Stoke Abbott



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