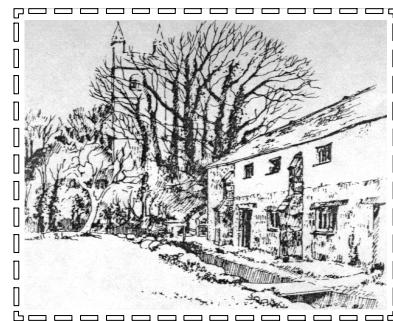




THE POUNDSTOCK PACKET

KERNOW BYS VYKEN !



Bangors Chapel Hall was packed to full capacity for a Harvest Lunch on Sunday 10th October. The delicious meal was followed by a hearty Songs of Praise, led by Rev. Neal Street. Harvest celebrations were rounded off with an auction of produce on Monday evening, when there was a magnificent response. All goods were sold, raising £156 for Chapel funds and £90 for Tear Fund. Thanks to all who made our harvest such a success.

There was a good number of entries to the carved pumpkin competition at this year's Craft Fair, and visitors to the churchyard were confronted with a scary spectacle. Winners were Caitlin Jefferies (junior section) and Chris Spettigue (senior). For a full report, see page 5.



2nd Lieutenant Lucy Morwood laid a wreath at Poundstock War Memorial during the Act of Remembrance on Sunday 14 November. Her father, Dr Charlie Morwood, played Reveille and The Last Post during the ceremony and at the service that followed in the parish church, where Colin Gilbert, chairman of Poundstock Parish Council, laid a wreath at the Roll of Honour.

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No. 46 December 2010/January 2011

December

2 Bude Community Cinema AGM and film, *Julie & Julia*, 7 pm
 2 Crackington Local Produce Fair, Crackington Institute, 2–5 pm
 3/4/5 The Glory of Christmas by Bude Circuit Singers, see p. 5
 6 Poundstock Carol Singers meet, Bangors Chapel 6 pm.
 9 Widemouth Community Fish and Chips Evening, see p.19
 9 Jacobstow WI Christmas Party
 10 Carol Service, St Anne's Church, Widemouth Bay, 2 pm
 14 Marhamchurch WI Christmas Party
 17 Bude Community Cinema, *White Christmas*, 7.30 pm
 19 Carol Service Bangors Chapel 11 am
 19 Christmas at the Gildhouse 4 pm
 25 Christmas Day services: Quiet Communion at Widemouth Bay,
 8.15 am, Family Communion at St Winwaloe's, 9.45 am

January

7 Bude Community Cinema, *Made in Dagenham*, 7.30 pm
 11 Marhamchurch WI Beekeeping, talk by Graham Jones
 13 Jacobstow WI Furniture Design, talk by Mr. A. Zoefitg

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LOCAL CONTACTS

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 Parish council chairman: Colin Gilbert 01288 361894
 Parish council clerk: Lynn Pluess 01288 361368
 County Councillor: Phil Tucker 01288 341617
 Jacobstow WI president: Mrs. J. Spettigue 01288 361525
 Marhamchurch WI president: Mrs. K. Reed 01288 361160
 Poundstock Ladies Skittles: W. Orchard 01288 361653
 Tilley's coaches: 01840 230244
 Hookways Jennings coaches: 01288 352259
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 Police—non emergency 08452 777 444
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December 13, 27

January 3, 17, 31

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Wednesday: 5.0–6.0 pm RAINBOWS (Geraldine Skinner

6.0–7.30 pm BROWNIES 01566 781234)

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Meetings

14 December 2010

CHRISTMAS PARTY

11 January 2011

"BEEKEEPING" by Graham Jones

JACOBSTOW WI

Meetings

9 December Christmas Party

13 January Furniture Design

Talk by Mr. A. Zoefitg

Bude Community Cinema

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FRIENDS OF THE GILDHOUSE SOCIAL EVENING

We heard a number of positive comments in the media about the community spirit evident in those areas in Cornwall hit by flooding recently. It seems to be a common response to disaster, that people work in harmony, support one another and enjoy the camaraderie. Later, some wonder why that spirit doesn't flourish all the time. This made me think about the essential conditions for 'community spirit' to exist.

This is my list

- ◆ Somewhere to meet socially
- ◆ An effective communication network
- ◆ A few people good at organising
- ◆ A variety of regular, frequent events/activities
- ◆ An underlying purpose

By no means exhaustive and even these few merit further discussion, but it's a start.

Our parish has the disadvantage of having no single focal point. Social gatherings centre on Widemouth Summerhouse, Bangors Chapel or the Gildhouse, so those with no connection with the churches can easily miss out. This magazine attempts to assist communication. We are blessed with talented organisers and there are regular events. I sense there is something of an underlying purpose present (keeping the community alive??).

Although conditions are not ideal, these pages suggest we don't do too badly.

How can we improve? What do you think? *Dudley Moore*



POUNDSTOCK CAROL SINGERS

The carol singers will be touring the parish this yuletide and will welcome anyone who would like to join us. We will meet at Bangors Chapel car park at 6pm on Monday 6 December.



Bring a torch, songsheets provided.
Seasonal refreshments to follow.

**We will be collecting in aid of
Children's Hospice South West**

Does anyone have a rectangular free-standing embroidery frame that could be used during the Gildhouse schools' Tudor Days? Please contact Sandy Dingle, 361356.

Poundstock Gildhouse presents

Christmas at the Gildhouse

on 19 December at 4 p.m.

A festive mixture of carols, Christmas songs and readings old and new, followed by mulled wine and mince pies

Special guests

The North Cornwall Community Choir

Entry free, donations to

Children's Hospice South West

Home for Christmas? Would you share your festivities with an international student at a UK university who might otherwise be stuck on an empty campus? HOST is looking for invitations for 2 or 3 days for students from China and many other countries. Hosting makes a worthwhile contribution to international goodwill. Please see www.hostuk.org or call HOST's voluntary regional organiser in Cornwall, Margaret Stevens on 01736 719090.

Pete and Jan King of Widemouth would like to thank everyone concerned for their kind messages, flowers, cards and even gifts, on the putting to sleep of our beloved Dalmatian 'Todd'. If only his legs had been as strong as his will, and, of course, his stomach! We fervently hope that heaven is full of dirty old banana skins. He'll need every one! God Bless and thank you all very, very much.

(with an apology from the editor: this should have appeared in a previous issue, but somehow was left out)

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WINTER LETS CAN BE ARRANGED

New Record at Poundstock Pumpkin Festival

This year's heaviest pumpkin competition was won by a pumpkin about twice the size of previous records. Graham and Liz Jones came up with a 90lb giant, which was tough on two that were over 70lbs! Only another 1100lbs needed to beat the world record! The competition was well supported by good entries in the senior and junior carved pumpkin competitions. Caitlin Jefferies was the winner of the junior section, and Chris Spettigue the senior section.

The Craft Fair was a huge success, despite the heavy rain most of Saturday. Many people came to support the stalls with the opportunity to buy Christmas presents of wood turned objects, jewellery, knitted and sewn items, Traidcraft products, pottery, and so much more. There was also a demonstration of wood turning, and very popular were the alpacas that graced (not grazed) the churchyard. The bottom the Gildhouse had been turned into a wonderful food hall, with meats, vegetables, cheeses, cakes, and ice cream! With so much to see and do, the refreshment area was also very well supported.

This annual event is an excellent fund raiser for the Gildhouse. People attending the Pumpkin Festival and Craft Fayre are always amazed at the versatility of this wonderful building which is now being well used for weddings, parties, as well as meetings and exhibitions.

Our Sky in December 2010

Jupiter continues to dominate the evening sky, but will set at about midnight at the middle of the month; he is joined by the quarter moon on the 14th, and the two should make a fine sight in the South. Saturn rises about 3am for the early birds, with Venus following not long after, Venus will be unmistakeable in the South East, and if you are up before 7am, take a look out of the window to see her shining brightly as the Morning 'star'. The winter constellations are now putting in an appearance, with the 'V' of Taurus well up in the east by 7pm, with Orion following him; both will adorn the southern skies until the Spring, and are among my favourite constellations.

These constellations harbour some interesting stars. We tend to think of stars as all being much the same – twinkling objects, with some brighter than others. But take a look at them through binoculars, and you will see some differences. In fact, stars are as varied as all the animals in a zoo. There are White Dwarfs, Red Giants, Blue Super Giants, Pulsars, Gamma Ray Bursters, Supernova and, thankfully for us very ordinary moderate sized stars such as our Sun. The colour of the stars is a direct reflection of their surface temperature – the bluer, the hotter. So study the constellation of Orion the Hunter; His right foot, as you look at him, is Rigel, a Blue Giant, whilst his left shoulder, Betelgeuse, is a Red Giant, at the end of its life, and an indication of what our own Sun will become in 4.5 billion years time, when it will either swallow up the Earth, or at least make it uncomfortably warm! The bigger the star, the greedier it is in using up its hydrogen fuel which keeps it inflated; once it has gone through some complicated nuclear processes, producing many of the heavier elements, and keeping the home fires burning, it's final act is to produce iron which cannot use fusion to keep the burning process going. At this point, the star rapidly collapses under its own gravity, and rebounds on the core to produce the massive explosion we call a supernova. It is this final act of a dying star that produces all the heavier elements of which the Earth and you and me consist.

So next time you are out on a dark starry night, you might be looking at the great great grandfather star of some future solar system; it puts our short life into an interesting perspective!

A very Happy Christmas to all my readers, and to all those who skip my ramblings!

Bill Turnill



Bude Circuit Singers present

The Glory of Christmas – a cantata by Jimmy and Carol Owens

Friday 3 December at 7 pm, Bude Methodist Church

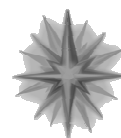
Donations in aid of the League of Friends of Stratton Hospital

Saturday 4 December at 7 pm, Bodmiin Street Methodist Church, Holsworthy

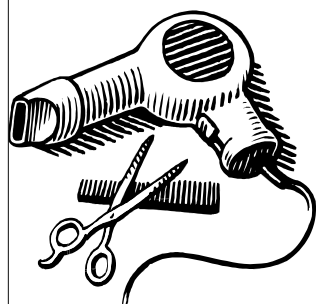
Donations in aid of Devon Air Ambulance Trust

Sunday 4 December at 7 pm, St Olaf's Parish Church, Poughill

Donations in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support



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THE INTERVIEW WITH ... NICKY VEREKER

What was it that first brought you to this part of Poundstock?

I moved here in 1999. John went to school in Bude and has had this house in Widemouth Bay for 30 years, so his association with the area has been much longer than mine. I wanted desperately to move out of London to somewhere quite different. This was a wonderful opportunity to move to the country and I thought I could create a living here with my catering business.



I grew up abroad near a beach, so I'm very happy to be near the sea. I loved the idea of living in a rural community in a place as different to London as possible.

What do you enjoy most about living here?

I love being in the country and have made good friends here. I enjoy the opportunity to ride, on the beach especially. I love Cornwall, walking the coast, and there are so many wonderful opportunities for walking around here. I like doing my job here and getting involved a bit in Cornish food. I help a little bit in promoting Whalesborough Cheese at fairs and things and try and use local Cornish food, meat, cheese, fish, as much as possible in my business. We're so lucky to have fabulous meat and fish here.

I like the fact that we have a village here, even though it's a funny one, so spread out and fragmented. There's still a community feeling here, I think, and it's one of the things that attracted me to this area.

And you were instrumental in setting up the Widemouth Residents' Group.

Rachel Roberts and I set up the Residents' Group, firstly because of the opposition to some building development. We were horrified that Cornwall Council were completely ignoring everything local people, or the Parish Council, had to say. We thought that if we protested as a group it might have slightly more effect. It was also to try and foster more community feeling, because so many houses around here have become second homes and are empty for 9 months of the year. It was a way of providing some point of contact for the community. It's a pity, but the local pubs do not really provide a social meeting place for locals. We have a core group of 12 to 15 people, who turn up regularly to our meetings, and when we arrange a social event, we get 50 to 60 people come along. We do litter picks around the village and a monthly beach clean. There are 7 of us who do a speedwatch to try and make the coast road a bit safer. There are other issues that crop up that we try to do something about, like the car parking on the downs.

What are the main changes you have seen since you've been living here?

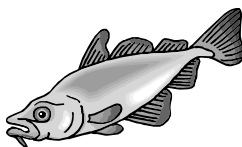
The most noticeable change has been the increase in the number of second homes. As ownership of properties has changed, they have become holiday homes. My greatest fear for this area is that this trend will continue. I do some work in Constantine Bay and it's an absolute ghost town at this time of year. It has about 2 houses permanently occupied and there's no community at all. It worries me that the same could happen to Widemouth. I'd like to see the council doing something to stop the development of more and more holiday homes.

I think this is a lovely place to live and I'd like to do a little bit to try to keep it that way.

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Graham Jones 01288 361147

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01288 352404

Services 11.00 a.m. Sundays

December

5th Street S
12th Wood US
19th Carol S LA
26th Prayer mtg

January

2nd Street Cov
9th US at PC
16th Satterly
23rd Street
30th Kyle

24th Dec 11pm Communion at Bude
25th Dec 10am Christmas Day Wor-
ship at Bude

DIMMA METHODIST CHAPEL

Lay pastoral assistant: Brian Parkman 01840 212736

Contact: Audrey Wickett 01840 230268

This morning it is too beautiful to work. Driving towards Bangors, I glance over my shoulder towards to the eastern skyline. A phantom-white mist and a fierce red sun are warring it out across the distant hills. Leaves are the main casualty. Everywhere the remaining beech and hazel leaves, like a fortune in gold, rain down from the hedges. The universe beyond the windscreen is both sombre and glittering, a golden age. And my mind is lost in a childhood memory of my Great-uncle's funeral, and the shush-shush of the leaves that carpeted the road as the hearse took him on his final journey.

Journeys had been the key to Uncle John's working life in that other golden age, with the railway. And I recall the photograph I found of Aunt Vi, in late-autumn days before the war, when her husband was choirmaster at Pendogget and Station Master at Camelford, sat up in her tweeds in the little Austin Seven tourer. In the dicky-seat of this unofficial taxi- service sits a youthful John Betjeman, eager for the Christmas holidays and the family home at Trebetherick down the road.

Maybe it was the excitement of these seasonal journeys, through the wet twilight, towards the sea that later coloured his poem, "Christmas":

The bells of waiting Advent ring,
The Tortoise stove is lit again
And lamp-oil light across the night
Has caught the streaks of winter rain.

And then, in a childlike state of wonder, he asks:

And is it true? And is it true,
This most tremendous tale of all,
Seen in a stained-glass window's hue
A baby in an ox's stall ?
The maker of the stars and sea
Become a child on earth for me?"

How easy it is to lose touch with the simple childhood treasure of Christmas. Perhaps that's what our Lord meant about children when he said, "The Kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these." So, this coming Advent, I wish you a joyful return to the Christmases of *your* childhood memories, that the Christchild may break through all the commercial clutter, and fill your hearts afresh with *real* Christmas excitement and anticipation, and that nothing

. . . can with this single truth compare;
That God was man in Palestine
And lives today in bread and wine.

RevdRob

REVD GEORGE and SARA ROWE SAYING THANK-YOU BUT NOT GOODBYE

As you will be aware, after over three years as our assistant curate and as the pastor at Widemouth Bay and Poundstock, George now moves into his new ministry as a retired priest with the Bishop's Permission to Officiate.

Of course, many have benefited from George's warm personality and range of skills, which have been much valued by all those of us it has touched. We have all gained so much, too, from Sara's quiet but very effective pastoral ministry. George's licence as Assistant Curate comes to an end on 31st December, after which he and Sarah will take some much deserved time off to share with their rapidly expanding family!

On Sunday 19 December at 9.45 a.m. there will be a **celebratory Communion service at St Winwaloe's Church, Poundstock**, with fellowship and refreshments in the Gildhouse after.

Please come and join us as an expression of our corporate thanks to George and Sara for all that they have shared with us over the past three years.

Please can you help?

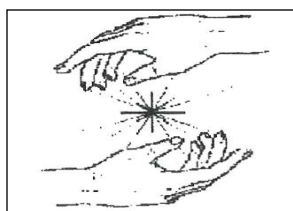
St Winwaloe's Church needs someone willing to act as church treasurer, beginning in the spring. You don't need to be a member of the PCC or even a regular church member, just good with figures and able to compose a balance sheet. The churchwardens will be very happy to give further information. We would be so grateful if you can help.

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This lovely Christmas greeting was drawn by Eyanah Cholerton

**Thank you, Eyanah. The Poundstock Packet team
join you in wishing all our readers
a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year**

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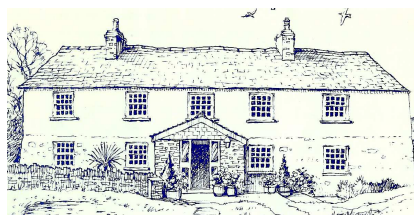
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Christmas is Coming, the Goose is Getting Fat

True to the opening words of the old song that '*Christmas is coming*' was Tavistock Goosey Fair held on the second Wednesday in October. Farmers brought in geese for people to buy and fatten up for Christmas. Another tradition held two days before Christmas takes place in Mousehole, a fishing town in South Cornwall. While it is nothing to do with goose it does address the subject of Christmas dinner. It is to commemorate the bravery of the town's fishermen who went out in severe stormy weather and caught enough fish to save the townspeople from going hungry at Christmas. A special fish pie is made called Stargazy Pie. Fish heads poke through the crust, eyes wide open, gazing up to the sky. Another reminder that Christmas was coming was the Launceston Maid Hiring Fair. It was held a week after Christmas, but it reminded people weeks before that Christmas was approaching

I remember a few Christmas dinners I had at Grandma's cottage in Tre-skinick Cross. It was always goose and as far as I was aware at that time, most people out and around had goose for Christmas dinner.



Many farms seemed to have geese in their yards. Occasionally I had to take something to one of those farms and I was careful to give their geese a wide berth, otherwise they would run at you head down, neck thrust forward and hissing in a very aggressive manner. Grandma's dinner also included Christmas Pudding with a sprig of holly on top. Before serving, the holly was removed and brandy was poured over it and set alight.. All very fascinating, especially when we were told to eat the pudding carefully as there were silver sixpences and silver threepenny coins hidden in it; hopefully in the piece you were given.

These days the turkey is replacing the traditional goose as the Table Bird at Christmas. The turkey seems to have been a well travelled bird and there are many theories regarding from where, when and how the turkey arrived in England. The one most credible explanation seems to be that they were brought in by Mediterranean traders who picked them up in the eastern end of the Mediterranean and consequently the birds were named after the country from which they were thought to have originated. Oddly, in Turkey the birds were thought to have originated in India so they had the name India Birds. However the Portuguese had brought them to India when they colonized that part of the world. Tracing the birds' world travels can be very confusing. John Cabot brought back a few wild turkeys when he returned to Bristol from his first voyage to North America in August 1497. Shakespeare mentions the turkey in his play *Twelfth Night*, produced in 1600, so the turkey must have been familiar to his standing audience crowded onto the floor of the old Globe theatre. Occasionally King Henry VIII had turkey in place of the traditional Boars' Head on his Christmas Table. However, James I, (1603-1625), disliked pork so the turkey arrived on his table with the more affluent of his subjects following the Royal lead. In 1851 Queen Victoria had turkey replacing the Royal Swan on her Christmas Table.

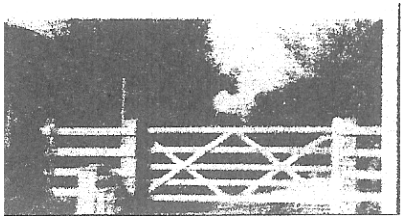
In the 18th century the main turkey rearing farms seemed to be in the Norfolk area. As the Christmas season approached the turkeys were herded together and were walked the 80 miles to the London markets beginning around October. Farmers fitted them out with little booties as they were not used to walking far. Arriving exhausted and hungry they were then fed well, fattened up and rested. The turkeys must have felt London was a wonderful place to be.

Charles Dickens is credited with making turkey popular for Christmas dinner. In his Story, *A Christmas Carol*, (1843), a grief stricken and penitent Scrooge had a large turkey sent to his over-worked and under paid clerk, Bob Cratchit. The Cratchit family had a disabled and sickly son, the weak little boy was known as Tiny Tim. Tiny Tim's last words in the story as he stared in wonderment and thankfulness at the turkey were: "*God bless us every one*".

Although Tiny Tim voiced his blessing 167 years ago, it would not be inappropriate at this festive season to extend his blessing to each and every one of our Poundstock Packet readers.

Don Sutton

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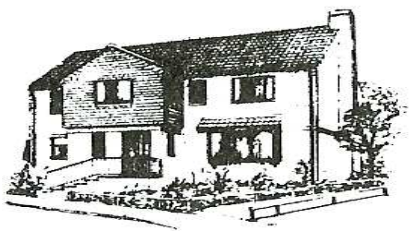
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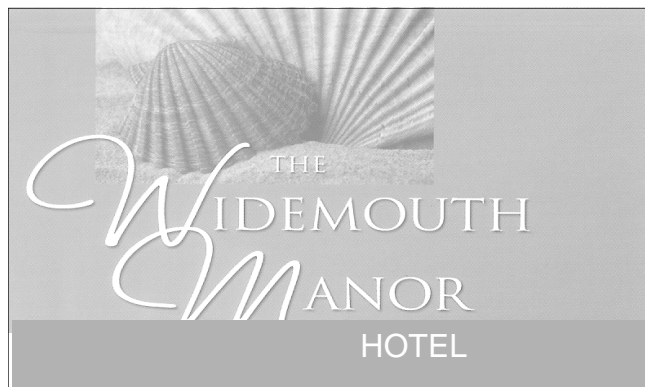
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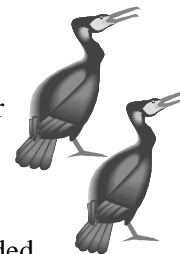
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Wild about Poundstock

Millook Valley Walk

Despite what was promised, we had to put on our waterproofs as the seven of us prepared for our walk around the Millook Valley. This was the culmination of our Ruby Wedding celebrations. We had enjoyed a party and time on the Northumbrian coast with Sandy's family, now we were celebrating with our friends back here. The walk was to take off the pounds put on at the party the night before!

We walked the severely rutted cliff path down into Millook itself and talked about the changes there from the old photographs I showed. Climbing up the other side, we stopped and recalled the wreck of the Italian barque, the *Conzeconi* in 1802, the timber cargo from which had resulted in the chalets being built. We then climbed up onto the path again, passing many lovely mauve blewit toadstools and along towards Dizzard. By this time the sun had come out so the sea was looking good. I had my eye open for peregrine. Often there is one perched on one of the offshore rocky outcrops, but not today. Instead there were a couple of cormorants. When it was windy a few days ago there were gannets to be seen but they tend to be further out when the weather is calmer.



Turning inland, we took the path down to Millook Cottage and into the wood. Colour here was provided by the loaded holly trees. Will the berries still be there for Christmas or will the birds have their fill if we have a cold snap? The path along towards Lions' Den was bordered by the oaks, still showing much autumn colour. As we crossed the field, we chatted about the last time some of us had walked this way in the summer when it was alive with butterflies among the many flowers. This really is a lovely spot.

From Lions' Den we took the track up to Trebarfoote, pausing to enjoy the view back across to the russet and yellow mass of the woods on the opposite side of the valley. From the top by Trebarfoote, the sea comes back into view and the sweep of the fields towards home. We dropped down again, past the site of an Iron Age hill fort, back to Millook through the tortuous sessile oaks, the branches supporting the lichens which are at their best at present, including the rare and large tree lungwort. It was then a right turn to go back up the side valley that brought us out at the bottom of my field. The climb up to the house was made easier with the thought of a warm bowl of soup to finish a most enjoyable morning.

We hadn't seen many flowers or insects. There was a primrose in flower in Millook, and thrift and a sheepsbitt scabious flowering along the coast path. We came across one dor beetle in the valley and enjoyed its iridescent blue underside. Of course, there was a variety of fungi to be found as well. However, once again we had been shown what a beautiful place Poundstock is.

Tim Dingle

The weather report

Since the last *Packet* report our weather station in the north-east corner of the parish, two miles inland, has recorded:

	October		November (to 26th)	
Wettest day	17.3 mm	(3rd)	15.0 mm	(8th)
Total rain	75.7 mm		107.2 mm	
Days of rain (>1 mm)	16		18	
Highest temp	22.2 °C	(8th 13:10)	15.7 °C	(3rd 13:20)
Lowest temp	-2.8 °C	(25th 08:00)	-0.6 °C	(25th 04:40)
Average max temp	15.7 °C		11.8 °C	
Average min temp	7.0 °C		5.6 °C	
Max wind gust	40 mph	(23rd 11:40)	47.0 mph	(11th 15:00)
Windiest day	8.5 mph	(23rd)	16.1 mph	(11th)
Total sunshine hours	134.5 hrs		(data not yet available)	
Sunniest day	8.3 hrs	(11th)	(data not yet available)	

These two months have seen quite a contrast in the weather, with dry, sunny, warm October giving way to wet, windy, cloudy November. The rain in October was only 77% of the Met Office average for the month over 1971–2000 and the sunshine hours were 25% up on the average. There was only one morning of frost, the 25th, when the temperature dropped to -2.8 °C but by the next day it had warmed up, with the lowest temperature 6 °C higher.

November has been much more typical: the rainfall is about average (at least for the Bude area) as are the temperatures. The wettest day I recorded was the 8th when we had 15 mm of rain. This was 3 mm more than fell on the 17th, the day there were the dreadful floods in the St Austell and Lostwithiel areas. It seems that the north Cornish coast was fortunate because Bude and Newquay recorded a lot less rain than inland and further south. However, there was enough water flowing down the River Neet for it to flood the roads at Woolstone Mill and elsewhere in the parish.

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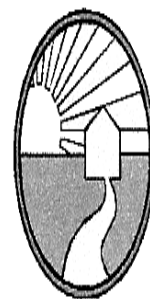
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LEGAL AID - IT'S NOW OR NEVER

So now we know a bit more! Instead of death by baseball bat on the skull, it is now death by a thousand cuts. The Government has just announced the cuts will in fact total £350m a year by 2015.

The Legal Services Commission operates legal aid. Its attempts to slash viciously the number of legal aid providers, especially in East Cornwall (described as an advice desert), was recently declared illegal by the High Court. Realising what a pathetic job it had done to cut back on legal aid practices, the LSC decided against appealing. Instead, it is going through a process of keeping the same number of legal aid firms on board-it just intends to limit how much they can do. At the same time they are making it much more difficult for those in need of legal help to get it.

OVERHAUL

Now the Government has announced how it will cut £350m from the legal budget. The consultative paper "Proposals for the Reform of Legal Aid in England and Wales" was released on 15th November. It intends to cut from the legal aid scheme a whole raft of cases where help is currently available. So out will go the following:-

- Employment
- Education
- Immigration (unless the applicant is detained)
- Private law children and family cases such as residence and contact disputes regarding children
- Divorce, money and property claims
- Clinical negligence
- Applications to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority
- Debt claims where your house is not at risk
- Many housing matters
- Consumer claims
- General contract claims
- ♦ Welfare benefits

WHAT IS LEFT?

You may think the list above will effectively strip the cupboard bare. What on earth is left, you might well ask? From what I can glean, the Government intends to preserve Legal Aid for matters such as:-

- Asylum cases
 - Domestic violence
 - Threats of immediate loss of your home
 - Mental health cases
 - Forced marriages
 - Judicial review where people look to hold the state to account
 - Crime
 - Inquests
 - Care proceedings involving children
- Mediation of some family disputes

WILL I QUALIFY?

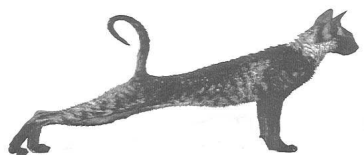
The Government is also attacking eligibility for legal aid on financial eligibility grounds. Even those on benefits will in future be means tested. The equity in your home will come even more under the microscope. If you succeed as a result of legal aid, you will have to make a minimum contribution to your legal aid costs if you have £1000 or above in disposable capital. And so it goes on...

ACTION

Against the background of such severe cutbacks, don't say you haven't been warned. If you are putting off getting legal advice for no good reason than "I can't be bothered yet", then take heed. The opportunity may be there now-but it is likely to disappear once and for all before you shake off your apathy.

So take my advice. Seek help now, or you may lose your chance once and for all. The system has started to crumble, but before it becomes dust, go and see your solicitor. Don't say in a year or two's time, "If only....."

J. Busby



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Widemouth Bay Residents Group Report

We met on November 10th and decided on Thursday December 9th for our Community Fish and Chips Night. This year we have chosen to have the evening at the Beach House, to make transport easier for people. We hope as many residents as possible will come for a delicious supper. The cost will be £6 each and the Beach House will provide a bar. Tickets available from Nicky (361 530) or Rachel (361 582). We will hold a raffle (prizes, please!) in aid of the Air Ambulance.

There will be a Litter Survey on the main beach at 9am on December 2nd. This takes a short time, and provides valuable data for keeping track of the state of the beach. All welcome - we meet by the life guard hut.

Councillor Phil Tucker kindly attended the meeting, and updated us on various issues. As many will now know, planning permission has been granted to put a surf shop and tea room at Trelawney on Marine Drive. Although the parish council objected, the County saw no reasonable reason to refuse it, so it is hoped it will prove a benefit to the village. Some time ago, we asked for a "bus stop" sign to be painted on the road by the car park stop, to make the stop more prominent. Although it has now been made a compulsory stop, this has apparently not filtered down to all the drivers, who are inclined to flash past unless you put your arm out! Mr Tucker promised to follow up on having the road painted. Please come along to the Fish and Chips evening and support our next meeting at the Summerhouse on January 12th.

Nicky Vereker

IT'S POLICY (OR NOT)

A self-apparent truth is not a policy, or so today's pen-pushers and representatives of your local (unitary) authority believe. It is very frustrating trying to represent the best interests of a community to the remote bureaucrats of Cornwall Unitary Council, so I was very disappointed that lack of policy was sufficient excuse to endanger the long-term viability of Widemouth's convenience store (formerly the Beach House Post Office).

My thanks go to our Parish Clerk, Lynn Pluess, who attended Cornwall Council's Planning Committee at Liskeard on the day after I was admitted into Derriford hospital for a brain operation (later in the day postponed due to equipment failure!), in order to present Poundstock Parish Council's case for seeking a refusal of permission for the proposed sale of beach goods from The Trelawney, just a few yards from The Beach House stores. I am also grateful that I didn't have to sit through 5 hours of deliberations before presenting the Parish Council's concerns over pedestrians crossing the busy summer traffic in Marine Drive; the distraction factor of the advertising boards which would attend the proposed use; and our principal concern that the shop would add nothing to the community in the winter months and would almost certainly "cream off the trade" in beach goods from the shop used by so many who depend on it or use it as a convenience to save a repeat trip into Bude for some forgotten item. Co-incidentally, the Beach House lies in Marhamchurch P.C.'s area which has already suffered the result of misguided Government policy by the closure of its Post Office followed by the shop.

Is it not self-evident that this is not a straight case of accepting competition, and is a policy needed for the protection of a facility essential to residents which would certainly be compromised by the sale of high mark-up beach goods during the short summer season? In the light of the Cornwall Council decision, I would urge all who can to support your local shop (which sells some of the freshest fish in the locality).

And in case anyone from Cornwall Council wishes to take issue with me: yes, I am aware that there should be a presumption in favour of approval for any proposal which does not run counter to stated policy, but there must always be exceptions and I would have been quite happy, faced with an appeal against refusal of permission, to put up a case based on a thoroughly researched review of the issues which this application raised. Out of the window goes common sense; fear of making a controversial decision takes second place to the (Health and) Safety of sticking to what is dictated by the bureaucrats. We are all in danger of having freedom of thought and freedom of action curtailed by the very people who have failed to curb the excesses of our culture from which we now suffer- and this goes way beyond a controversial planning decision.

Rupert Powell (Parish Councillor) Little Hamlets, Leverlake Road, Widemouth bay, Bude. 01288 361130

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Spending Review

At the time of writing this I don't know the details of the savings in full. I believe that the council is hoping to reduce the numbers of redundancies to around 700 jobs. This has been achieved by making reductions in spending earlier than planned by government so the savings kick in earlier. Also the numbers are reduced by a reduction of middle managers rather than front line staff. I know Alec Robertson, leader of the council, is keen to save early to minimise redundancies. We have in-depth briefings from the 1st to the 5th of November so no doubt the media will have full coverage. Unfortunately I am writing this on the 20th of the month. I have been to all meetings possible to put the case for the Bude area. Although cuts are going to be made we need to ensure it doesn't affect North Cornwall more than West. Government, in some form, employ roughly 1 in 5 of the working people of Cornwall and to protect our economy those wages are vital.

Waste

The emphasis therefore is on saving charges and fines and a major area to save fines is in dealing with waste. There has been a sluggish attitude in the past with Cornish waste handling. While the fines were low we didn't deal with the disposal of waste issue. The fines are now at a medium scale and land filling of waste will not be an option soon. This should have been dealt with 5 years ago maybe even 10. We had a presentation on what is being done nationally and some counties are at least 10 years ahead. Land-fill fines are set to double in the next 5 years so action is urgent.

My plea to all residents is to recycle your waste. Each kg of recycling will do its part. Unbelievably only half of the community of Cornwall do any recycling. We have reached 40% recycling with only half the community. Imagine if all did it. I wanted to deal with comments which I have heard.

It all ends up in the same place. All items placed out for recycling are indeed recycled.

It only ends up in another country for them to landfill. The items recycled in Cornwall have established markets in the UK and are totally audited.

Why should I do the work for the council? Put the other way why should the council do your work. You are not doing the council's work, you are taking responsibility for your waste and hopefully ensuring that the products used in your home (copper, tin, plastics and paper) are reused. Recent research points out that our world population has now used more than half of the total available metals in the earth.

The place stinks with all the different bags. Everything in any recycling bag should be clean and dry. If that is the case then it cannot smell.

It uses more energy to recycle than it does to get a new one. There may be things that use more energy to recycle, though I have yet to hear of one. What I can say is there is definitely no product which we recycle that uses more energy and resources to recycle.

How is it environmentally friendly to drive around the roads collecting recycling? We have to recycle. We can not landfill our resources like we have previously. Driving a truck around collecting recycling is not particularly good for the environment but compared with every resident driving to central recycling bins it is much more efficient.

It is the supermarkets fault for supplying so much packaging. Actually the supermarkets are very good at supplying what we want. If we didn't buy a memory card in a blister pack they wouldn't supply it. Councils are working with supermarkets to reduce packaging but ultimately it is down to the consumer to say no. An example is plastic bags; for years now supermarkets have supplied alternative bags which can be used again and again; use of plastic bags has hardly reduced.

Embrace Recycling

I hope we can all embrace recycling as a necessary part of our consumer life. We need to be proud of our ability to get as much out of the waste stream as possible. Importantly recycling saves money that can be used in our community.

If you have any problem or wish to discuss an issue with council then please call me. I am pleased to be your councillor and want to be approachable and helpful. Please call me. Regards Phil

philip.tucker@homecall.co.uk or Tel: 01288341617

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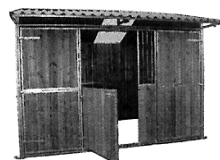
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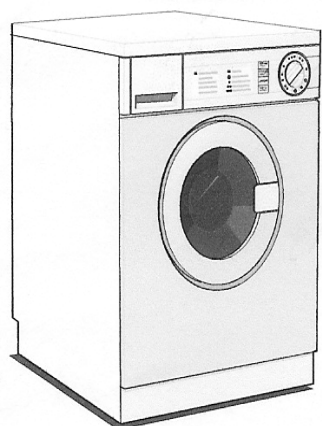
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