



DISTINCTLY WINKLEIGH

QUARTERLY JOURNAL

The Winkleigh Society

WORKING FOR WINKLEIGH & HOLLOCOMBE

AUTUMN 2026





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Winkleigh Society Report

The first publication produced by The Winkleigh Society was a four page newsletter in February 2002 announcing a **Business Support Day**. It asked Winkleigh residents to suggest a name for a regular village magazine and it launched a competition for a cover image. The judges? A primary school pupil, a senior citizen and a local artist. It also asked for suggestions for a catchy title.

Scroll forward 24 years and we are on edition 99 and making plans for a special 100 bumper edition. The Winkleigh Society has successfully applied for and been awarded a locality grant with support from our County Councillor, Cheryl Cottle-Hunkin towards the additional printing and associated costs.

We recently had a meeting with our editor Peter Hopkinson to discuss ideas and themes to include in the bumper edition. With an array of past editions to look through we discussed favourite covers, illustrations, themes and stories we have included since February 2002 to present a kaleidoscope of changing village life.

Peter Hopkinson had been in discussion with Godfrey Rhodes [our recently retired editor] about a celebration edition and Godfrey had created a memory stick (USB Flash Drive) containing all the past editions, Godfrey was looking forward to working with Peter on this special edition as he had devoted so much time and thought into the production of our village magazine. Alas it was not to be as Godfrey died last month.

Godfrey had taken up the mantle as editor from Alan Mulcahy and Peter Howard in 2010 and for a few editions shared the editor's role with Alice Turner.

Always a hard worker with an eye for detail and forensic intelligence he enthusiastically took on editorial duties and introduced changes and innovations; transitioning from black and white to full colour, suggesting and finding new contributors, searching out new stories and spending many hours jig-sawing all the stories and adverts together. Initially he and Jo his wife also took delivery of all the magazines and boxed them up into the 'postie' rounds before Barry and Barbara Jenkins volunteered to take on this ever-expanding task.

We in The Winkleigh Society are forever grateful for his commitment to Distinctly Winkleigh, his work on the Winkleigh Archive and his talents and friendship he shared with us melding us into a happy team working for a common purpose.

Penny Griffiths and Margaret Miller



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Welcome

TO OUR SUMMER EDITION

In June we had the sad news that my predecessor as Editor of Distinctly Winkleigh, Dr Godfrey Rhodes, had died. There is a obituary to Godfrey on p64 of this issue and I'd just like to extend my condolences to Godfrey's family and friends.

What a summer we've had! The hottest ever, well at least since records began over 100 years ago. Great for the kids when rather than having a summer school holidays spent dodging the rain there was wall to wall sunshine. On the flipside of the coin we should spare many a thought for our farmers who have not only found the going tough due to the months of lack of rain but have now been hit with bluetongue.

If there is anyone out there who would like to put finger to keyboard and write an article or two for Distinctly Winkleigh then I'd love to hear from you. Please give me a buzz or send me an email.

Peter Hopkinson

Editor - peter@hoppy.biz - 07770 821752

The Distinctly Winkleigh Team

Editor: Peter Hopkinson

DW Advertising Liaison:

Philip Griffiths

Publisher: The Winkleigh Society

Graphic Designer:

Becci Arscott - bsharpsdesigns.co.uk

Distribution Manager: Barry Jenkins

Regular Contributors: Alan Jacobs, Angela Findlay, Caroline Dennis, Erica Williamson, Jo Coffey, Kim Melhuish, Linda Millership, Margaret Miller, Pat Cunnington, Penny Griffiths, Tim Laarveld, Vicky Samuels, Allan Leighton, Lizzie Marshall, Marcia Butt, Pam Down, Cheryl Cottle-Hunkin, Rachel Duckworth, Stuart Rosamund, Will Slocombe, Winkledown, Tom Robinson, Stephen Middleton, Pauline Odulinski, Rachel Goldsworthy

Distribution Team: Alan Jacobs, Andrew Warner, Anita Hooper, Jackie Hooper, Catherine Knight, David Trenaman, Richard Clarke, Helena Lewis, Philip Griffiths, Jane Beresford-Smith, Jane Hill, Linda Millership, Linda Popham, Monica Lawrence, Roger Bourne, Sue & Andrew Ware, Wendy Oxborough, Rachel Goldsworthy

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

PRESS SNIPPETS

Okehampton Times 16 July

North Tawton town council is considering whether they will continue with their live streaming of their council meetings. This follows controversy about an Australian You tube channel producing satirical videos featuring clips from the council meetings.

Crediton Country Courier July 16

A Ferry linking Devon with Swansea could cost just a £15 fare with a journey time of one hour. The hydrogen powered, zero-emissions ferry service, with a speed of 40 knots, is being championed to bring high value jobs for coastal communities like Appledore and Ilfracombe.

North Devon Journal July 23

A multi-Academy Trust that runs three secondary schools in North Devon [Bideford College, Ilfracombe and Atlantic Academy] is set to dissolve. The Athena Learning Trust is mired in controversy over its strict discipline rules and special educational needs and disabilities provision.

The Moorlander JULY 24

One of Dartmoor's best known beauty spots Becky Falls has been named among the U.K.'s top destinations for a waterfall walk.

Penny Griffiths

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WINKLEIGH Methodist Chapel News

It's been a busy summer for Winkleigh Methodist, starting at the beginning of July with fun-packed Stowford Camp, followed soon after by tasty cream teas at the Winkleigh Fair opening ceremony and wrapping up the month with a Zootropolis-themed Holiday Club, which brought 25 children through our doors for a day of sports, crafts, activities and games. We had a great time and we hope you all did too!

We have lots planned for Autumn as well, including the return of our Harvest Lunch on Sunday 11th October at 1pm. Tickets are available now from Jane Hill (01837 680128) or Fiona Marshall (01837 83382) - adults are £15 each and children (up to 11 years old) are £5 each. This year, we will be donating proceeds to Devon Air Ambulance & FORCE Cancer Charity (who support anyone affected by cancer in Exeter and Devon).

We're also aware that this summer has been challenging for some - the warm, sunny weather has been great for holiday-makers and day trippers, but concerning for many of our farming families with crops to water and livestock to feed.

People during Jesus' time on earth were much more aware of their dependence on the land than many of us are today. Jesus often spoke in agricultural metaphors because they were so widely relatable to people's everyday lives.

Jesus once said to a crowd of people "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." He said this having himself experienced all the struggles of human life - worry, hunger, pain, exhaustion.

As we look forward to our usual Harvest celebrations, we are well aware that the harvest isn't going to be as

plentiful this year. A poor harvest will unfortunately result in a more challenging winter for farmers, with a knock-on effect on the cost of our weekly shop. Jesus offers us rest from the anxieties of daily life. If you need rest or would like to talk, please feel welcome to join our Sunday services at 11am.

Our Methodist Pastoral Worker is Rev Chris Jackson. His details are on our notice board on the outside of our chapel.

You can also find support online or via helplines, such as:

Samaritans: www.samaritans.org/support-us/campaign/real-people-real-stories-rural-communities/tips-for-looking-after-mental-health/

Christians Against Poverty: capuk.org/money-and-debt-advice/support-with-the-cost-of-living

AUTUMN DATES

27th Sept / 25th Oct / 22nd Nov,

3-4:30pm - Tea & Puddings

11th Oct, 1pm - Harvest Lunch @ Village Hall

18th Oct, 11am - Harvest service

18th Oct / 15th Nov, 6:30-8:30pm - Kree-

8 @ Madworthy Methodist Chapel (go to www.westdevonmethodists.org.uk/youth/activities/ for more info & sign-up)

8th Nov, 10:50am - Remembrance service

Christmas events - tbc but will be advertised on our Facebook page

Lizzie Marshall

Cemetery Work

Tenders are invited for work at Winkleigh Cemetery for 2027 -28 Please contact the Clerk to the Council (clerk@winkleigh-pc.gov.uk) or tel: 07754121280 for a specification



From your **Devon County Councillor**

Cheryl Cottle-Hunkin

Joint Update from Your Local Devon & Torridge District Councillors

As we move towards autumn, we wanted to provide a joint update on several major issues affecting our communities. From significant infrastructure proposals and farming challenges to healthcare services and local investment, we are committed to keeping residents informed and ensuring local voices continue to be heard.

Proposed Hyperscale Data Centre and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS):

Many of you will already be aware of the proposals by Xlinks for a hyperscale AI data centre and Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) on farmland in Great Torrington. From the information we have heard and seen so far, we believe the proposals are entirely inappropriate for our area. The development would remove around 850 acres of productive farmland within the UNESCO North Devon Biosphere Reserve and would directly affect a landscape that includes two listed farmhouses. The visual impact would be immense, with structures visible for miles across the surrounding countryside.

We would like to pay tribute to the tremendous work being undertaken by the local Action Group, whose volunteers have dedicated countless hours to researching the scheme. Through Freedom of Information

(FOI) requests submitted to Torridge District Council, they have uncovered a significant amount of information that has helped reveal the true scale of what is being proposed. Much of the information released relates to pre-application discussions between the developer and the council; documents that are usually viewed as commercially confidential have been released publicly through FOI.

What these documents reveal is deeply concerning. The most striking issue is the sheer scale of the proposal. Two of the largest data centre buildings would each have a footprint of approximately 22 ACRES! To put that into perspective, each building could accommodate the equivalent footprint of 18 Exeter Cathedrals and would be 40m tall. This is not a modest rural development or even a large industrial estate. It would be a monstrous industrial complex unlike anything currently seen in the region.

Questions also remain over water usage. Xlinks has publicly stated that the facility would be self-sufficient in water. However, documents obtained through FOI appear to tell a different story. They indicate that in an extreme dry year (sound familiar?!), annual water demand could be as high as 2.9 BILLION LITRES. Given the increasingly frequent periods of drought and pressure on water resources, residents are rightly asking how such demand could ever be

considered sustainable... What is also concerning is that whilst Xlinks has told the press that the proposals being circulated are out of date, the documents released under FOI show these same designs were submitted to the council as recently as April 2026.

This scheme is being described as one of the largest AI data centre developments and battery storage facilities anywhere in the world. We simply do not believe that North Devon's countryside should be sacrificed for an industrial development of this magnitude. We will continue to challenge these plans and support the community's right to have its voice heard. If, like us, you believe this proposal should not proceed, we encourage you to support the campaign and sign the Parliamentary petition: <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/776949>

Bluetongue Outbreak:

The Bluetongue outbreak has been devastating for many livestock farmers across Devon and beyond. Whilst the disease poses no risk to human health or food safety, the impact on farming families, animal welfare and rural businesses has been profound.

There are many lessons to be learned from this outbreak, and we believe some very difficult questions need to be asked. Most concerning, here in Devon where the outbreak started, the virus was present and confirmed and yet farmers were left in the dark and were not alerted by Defra. That is quite simply inept and represents a failure by the very government body whose responsibility it is to protect animal health, safeguard welfare and provide confidence to the farming community. The availability of vaccine has also

been a major issue. Many farmers who wanted to urgently protect their livestock found they were unable to access the vaccine due to the high demand and lack of vaccine in the country. At the same time, test results are taking weeks to come back, creating uncertainty and making it incredibly difficult to track exactly how quickly and where the virus is spreading.

What has perhaps caused the greatest frustration is the lack of meaningful support. Farmers have faced substantial veterinary, medicine and vaccination bills, animal losses and carcass disposal costs. Behind the financial impact lies an enormous emotional burden. Watching your animals suffer, nursing them and seeing more and more animals with new symptoms day after day is extremely tough. Dealing with uncertainty and carrying the weight of additional financial pressures has taken a significant toll on the mental wellbeing of many farming families.

Despite this, there has been no support from Government to help those affected at all.

We would like to place on record our sincere thanks to the Farming Community Network (FCN), whose volunteers continue to do an incredible job supporting farming families through what has been an exceptionally difficult period. We would also like to thank the wider local community, veterinary professionals and neighbours who have been so supportive.

Looking ahead, we are now calling on our local MPs and the Government to work with industry, farmers, scientists and animal health experts to develop a funded, coordinated national Bluetongue strategy to ensure that this never happens again.

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At present, the main message we hear from DEFRA is they are “monitoring the situation”. That’s not good enough.

Our farmers feed the nation, care for our countryside and underpin our rural economy. They deserve better than delayed communication, inadequate preparedness and a Government that appears content merely to observe events as they unfold.

Suspension of Birth Services at North Devon District Hospital:

The suspension of births at North Devon District Hospital should never have been allowed to happen.

Earlier this month, the Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust was heavily scrutinised by Devon County Council’s Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee, where serious concerns were raised about how the situation had been allowed to develop. The Leader of Devon County Council described the closure as a “catastrophic failure of senior management”, reflecting the frustration, anger and anxiety felt by many residents across North Devon and Torridge.

Throughout the scrutiny process, we highlighted the very real risks associated with expecting mothers having to make lengthy journeys whilst in labour- up to two hours in some cases. What makes this situation even more disappointing is that local people were repeatedly assured that the merger of services between Barnstaple and Exeter would make health services more resilient. It certainly doesn’t feel like it right now.

We would like to acknowledge the considerable efforts of Ian Roome MP, who has been working tirelessly alongside families, healthcare professionals and local

representatives to ensure that pressure continues to be applied to restore services as quickly as possible. The Trust has now indicated that it is hoping to reopen birthing services in Barnstaple by the end of September, and we sincerely hope that timeline can be achieved. However, restoring the service is only part of the challenge. There must also be a full and transparent review of how this situation arose and what safeguards are needed to prevent it from happening again.

This issue goes beyond maternity services alone. It raises wider questions about the resilience and fragility of healthcare provision across North Devon District Hospital. If a core service such as maternity can be lost so suddenly, residents are right to ask what pressures may exist elsewhere within the hospital and wider NHS system. Rural communities deserve the same access to safe, high-quality healthcare as those living in cities and larger towns. Just because we live in a rural part of Devon does not mean we should be expected to accept reduced access to essential health services.

Investment in Winkleigh Sports Centre:

Finally, we are delighted to end on some positive news.

A grant of £30,587.61 has now been successfully transferred through Section 106 developer contributions to support the refurbishment of the changing room facilities at Winkleigh Sports Centre. This funding will help improve the quality, accessibility and sustainability of the facilities, benefiting sports clubs, community groups and residents who use the centre throughout the year.

This is an excellent example of developer contributions being

reinvested directly into local infrastructure, ensuring that communities benefit from improved facilities and that funds generated by development are delivered back into projects that matter locally.

We would like to thank everyone involved in helping secure this funding and bringing the project forward. We look forward to seeing the improvements completed and the facilities continue to serve residents for many years to come. It is a privilege to represent our communities, and we are always keen to hear your views on local issues, concerns and opportunities and will do our best to help where we can.

Cheryl Cottle-Hunkin

Devon County Councillor

cheryl.cottle-hunkin@devon.gov.uk
07495 367801

Winkleigh VOLUNTEER Service

Volunteers take people to hospital and other medical appointments, and other essential journeys. Volunteers give their time for nothing but we do charge 50p per mile.

**Please ring Angie
01837 682616 or 07455365144**

Please don't leave multiple messages on the landline, it fills up my inbox. If I have not returned your call in 24 hours please ring mobile.

Please give as much notice as you can as our volunteers can't be expected to help at a moment's notice, we are not an emergency service

THANK YOU

May I take this opportunity to thank all my volunteers for their support and help with this service.

**If you are interested in helping out,
please give me a ring to find out more!**
Angela Findlay

The Air That We Breathe

Throughout 2025 the air quality at Winkleigh Primary School was monitored to measure the Oxides of Nitrogen (NO and NO₂). There was concern that the increase in traffic due to the building of the new housing estates may result in increased levels of Oxides of Nitrogen which could adversely affect our respiratory health. The Environmental Health and Community Safety folk at Torridge District Council installed an air monitoring device across the road from the school and the readings from it are shown in the table below.

What do the numbers mean?

The numbers are reported in micrograms per cubic meter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) and the things to be cognisant of are:

1. the lower the figure the better the air quality.
2. Defra stipulates that the average reading above which action must be taken by the Council is $40 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$

So it is good news with the readings showing there was very little air pollution and our children were not being poisoned by the air that they were breathing whilst at Winkleigh Primary School in 2025!

The monitor has now been removed as it is not policy to monitor at schools which are not on major roads and there is absolutely no reason to assume there is, or has been, any material change to the 2025 figures shown opposite.

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Nox data 2025	jan	feb	march	april	may	june	july	aug	sep	oct	nov	dec	Average	Data Capture
high st Bideford	19.73	26.09	26.78	23.16	20.79	17.44	17.37	18.64	17.84	20.13	22.17	23.83	21.16	100%
No 5 Torrington Hill	18.33	21.98	16.73	16.69	17.68	11.6	12.45	13.43	13.94	17.21	19.87	15.86	16.31	100%
Old Forge Torrington Hill	29.68	29.81	18.92	26.22	30.28	26	24.18	25.63	25.16	28.12	29.91	27.23	26.76	100%
ETW Bideford	20.47	24.76	25.32	23.26	21.75	17.28	20.31	21.75	18.01	19.84	16.32	20.47	20.80	100%
Affinity Outlet	19.37	18.52	16.48	16.01	11.9	12.58	9.32	14.85	13.96	13.76	13.73	14	14.54	100%
Clovelly Close	6.86	8.61	7.64	5.86	3.9	3.05	2.62	4.21	4.64	4.44	4.44	6.08	5.20	100%
Clovelly Road	21.24	22.96	21.53	20.04	16.35	14.44	12.48	14.46	16.67	14.94	19.14	17.34	17.63	100%
Hospital, Bideford	9.75	9.86	7.49	6.02	3.98	3.01	2.60	4.04	4.48	4.63	6.08	6.47	5.70	100%
A39 Heywood Road	19.17	21.13	20.97	16.22	18.09	15.67	17.26	17.49	14.67	15.5	17.62	16.02	17.48	100%
Buckleigh Rd	16.79	20.21	18	20.66	17.43	14.81	13.39		16.67	15.78	17.27	12.93	16.72	91%
Chapel St, Hols	34.09	31.94	28.78	28.42	30.07	29.43	28.56	35.36	32.47	29.56	30.12	28.3	30.59	100%
Holsworthy Square	13.66	14.18	13.2	10.73	11.69	12.73	13.60	13.35	12.64	11.82	13.19	11.93	12.73	100%
Health Centre	19.35	20.25	19.45	17.23	15.58	11.35	13.36	14.93	14.38	13.25	17.45	14.35	15.91	100%
Eskill Place	7.56	8.12	6.75	5.12	4.08	3.98	3.09	4.33	4.58	4.18	5.22	4	5.08	100%
Caif St, Torrington 1	19.63	20.25	17.89	19.97	16.23	17.34	10.94	18.15	18.68	17.12	17.06	18.42	17.64	100%
Torrington School	12.86	16.19	11.89	10.19	8.99	8.12	7.83	8.82	8.99	6.41	9.23	10.9	10.04	100%
Torrington Square	14.13	13.98	12.1	11.81	9.32	9.1	7.34	10.26	10.69	9.12	11.18	12.57	10.97	100%
Caif St 2	30.16	25.95	23.21	25.01	22.47	23.81	18.88	25.1	24.37	24.89	22.48	23.78	24.18	100%
Winkleigh primary school	8.42	9.31	7.06	5.63	4.18	3.98	3.48	4.45	4.78	4.69	5.83	5.76	5.63	100%
Bideford Comprehensive		17.09		11.61	9.89		6.13	8.86	9.5	9.46	11.2	12.66	10.71	75%
Holsworthy Comprehensive		22.95	26.06	20.63	19.4	16.75	18.18	19.65	15.86	16.53	13.84	19.96	19.07	91%

Table provided by Peter Dryland, Environmental Protection Officer for Torrington

COMMUNITY ★AWARDS 2026★

‘Whilst our village grows, the quiet dedication of our volunteers ensures the heart of Winkleigh remains unchanged.’

On 10th July 2026, the village hall was packed with over 100 people as we celebrated many stories of generosity and kindness, and care for others that bind us together. The participants included children from the primary school informing us with their stories of how to belong, the young people at Chulmleigh College inspiring us with their hopes and aspirations, and the quiet volunteers whose daily acts of kindness are the backbone of our community.

This year's community awards shone a light on the multi-generational spirit that defines our Devon village. From the youngest children finding their place to the quiet volunteers working behind the scenes, these stories demonstrate the true meaning of community.

A community is not defined by the speed at which it grows but by the care it takes of its people, and here in Winkleigh the care shown spans every single generation.

The children aged 5-10 told their stories about belonging. Children look at the world with open eyes and open hearts and examples from their stories focused on making sure that no one was left to sit or play alone, that a new face was a potential friend, and the magic in exploring the countryside.



Our young people aged 11-15 looked to the horizon, capturing the unique perspective of growing up in a rural landscape and dreaming of the future.

Our adult heroes and heroines represent the silent engine of the village, those who step up without being asked, seeking no praise, headlines or rewards. True kindness is quiet and examples found in the litter pickers, those offering support to someone in need, driving a neighbour to an appointment or fixing a broken gate.

The saying “*it takes a village to raise a child*” was truly evident in this multi-generational evening; sharing and being part of creating an inclusive, friendly, welcoming village culture. We are indeed truly grateful to such people bringing fresh energy and inspiration.

Winkleigh Parish Council COMMUNITY AWARD WINNERS 2026

★ LONG-SERVICE Award to COMMUNITY ★

Honouring years of dedication to the Winkleigh Community.

Penny Griffiths

She started a mother/baby group in 1974, has been involved in WASPS the amateur dramatic group putting on talent competitions and shows, she initiated music evenings, was a guide leader, and

is now Chair to the Distinctly Winkleigh local magazine. She is a passionate campaigner for the biosphere, the green agenda, walkways and many more aspects of improving peoples' lives and caring for our planet.

Highly Commended - Stephen Leahy

★ LONGSTANDING SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY ★

An enduring testament to the power of quiet compassion and selfless service.

The Church Wardens - Sylvia Smith, Sue Ware and Jane Hill

This award recognises the selfless way these individuals not only provide support for the church, working alongside the Vicar, managing day to day administration, legal requirements, and the smooth running of the church services etc. They act primarily as officers of the Bishop and representing parishioners.

Highly Commended - Kings Arms, Seven Stars, Sue and Andrew Ware

★ OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY ★

Sowing seeds of hope and progress that will flourish for generations.

Youth Club Founders - Leanne and Graham Wonnacott.

This award goes to the Youth Club Founders, Leanne and Graham Wonnacott. The legacy they have created and the number of young people this has positively impacted, is significant.

Highly Commended - Fiona's café, Tony and Kay Aston, Jan Ovenden

★ OUTSTANDING SERVICE FROM GROUPS IN THE COMMUNITY ★

Commitment to strengthening our community and enriching the lives of so many.

The Winkleigh Fair Committee - Represented by Julie Robinson, Liz Rooke and Neil McQuire.

The Community Fair is a long-standing part of the history of the village and provides fun and celebration with many different activities bringing people together to celebrate both in the summer and at Christmas. It is a remarkable community event.

Highly Commended - Devon Pathways

★ OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO PEOPLE ★

A shining exemplar of civic duty and selfless quiet devotion.

This is a joint award which goes to two individuals who work quietly, making a difference in the village.

Linda Popham & Linda Millership

Keeping the village tidy and free of litter and always with a smile and with no expectation of reward. Also helping people in need, helping cleaning signs and being good neighbours.

Highly Commended - Tom Basford - Volunteer coach and referee, Jaqui Sheppard - Community Clubs and Societies Handbook

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The Nook

The Nook is not just a cafe....

The people running it have shown selflessness, kindness and made a significant contribution, going above and beyond their role. Providing space for those experiencing loneliness and looking out for vulnerable people via telephone connections.

Highly Commended - The Mad Butcher, Scribbleton, Pets, Homes and Gardens, The Little Red Hen Studio, Westridge Vets, Southwest Fixings Staff.



Invitation to Airfield Remembrance 2026

The annual service of remembrance will take place at the R.A.F. Memorial on **Saturday 7th November**. Assemble at the Airfield Monument at **10:15am**. The flags of the five nations that served at the airfield (at different times) during WW2, will be flown.

We look forward to beating the record attendance of seventy last year. It is a tribute to residents of how the Airfield Remembrance has grown over the years.

The Airfield Remembrance Service gives the people of Winkleigh the opportunity of paying their respects to the service and sacrifice of the personnel from many nations that served from R.A.F. Winkleigh during those dark and dangerous days.

A Royal Canadian Air Force Officer will read the roll call of the fallen and the famous moving poem "High Flight" by John Gillespie Magee Jr.

In support, the following; R.B.L Standard Bearer, Last Post & Reveille (Katrina Beer), Public Address (Lorne & Alec Hamilton Stage Productions).

Thanks also go to the many willing folk who will sort the flags & poles, offer the use of their adjacent barn in the event of foul weather, the brave soul risking life and limb in attempt to slow down speeding vehicles. Plus; the

volunteers putting on the refreshments at the Sports Centre.

Following the service everyone is cordially invited to the **Sports Centre** for light refreshments.

Phil Griffiths

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The finger pointed directly at me
from the posters in cities and towns.
Your country needs you, right here, right now.
Take the King's shilling and get your names down.

The girls will love you in your tunic and cap.
A hero they'll call you, and more.
It will all be over by Christmas, they said.
You'll all be back from the war.

Kitchener beckoned from walls and on doors.
The queue went on forever.
The man with the stripes and the pen just smiled,
as we signed for this global endeavour.

We were in before the ink was dry.
You'll receive a letter and a date.
Training and drill you understand,
but make sure you don't arrive late.

Brown garb and belts were handed out,
though nothing seemed to fit.
And boots that made our feet red raw.
All to do our bit.

Marching, shooting, bayonets and knives.
We were drilled until we dropped.
We'd need all this to save our lives,
and to counter the threat from the Bosch.

The day came around when we headed to France,
on boats that bounced on the sea.
Don't worry, the captain told us all,
you're just the reserve, you'll see.

We saw a sign pointing to Ypres
though none of us knew how to say it:
We saw the trails of wounded and dead
as we arrived with our shiny new kit.

Our eyes were opened by the sight of the many
I'd never seen anyone dead.
But not to worry, we thought, keep going:
it will all be over by Christmas, they said.

A whole generation died in that war.
Hundreds of thousands of men.
And yet, in another twenty years or so,
we'd be doing it all again.

September thirty-nine, and too old to fight,
but my son was first in the line.
The man with the stripes and the pen just smiled,
"You'll be back by Christmastime."

Forty years later, I pilgrimaged back
and looked at the graves with a tear.
It will all be over by Christmas, they'd said.
But they never told us what year

by Tony Aston



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WINKLEIGH Jubilee Hall

Well, after the cold wet weather it's now too hot and dry. The Committee are aware of the shortcomings of the aged heating system and that the Hall gets too hot in a heatwave.

We are actively seeking funding in order to effect several improvements to the building and one priority is greener heating that will bring air conditioning as well. In the interim, we have procured two pedestal fans that will provide some air movement.

The Hall has been busy over the past three months and the monthly Saturday Market has continued to flourish especially the Easter one with the Easter Egg Hunt and Egg Painting. It was nice to see some young faces there.

Funding is a constant headache, but I have to announce that the Kiely Group have given us a start with a £5,000 donation and we hope to build on that foundation.

The Charity is registered as "Winkleigh Jubilee Hall" so we must use that name to fund raise

As for Fund Raising that will cost residents not one penny. We have an account with easyfundraising. Just download the app, Sign up (free), nominate your cause "Winkleigh Jubilee Hall" and follow the instructions. There are 8,500 outlets listed, including all the usual supermarkets. Each time you shop, they donate a percentage of your bill to the Hall account. If you click on the Donation Reminder and agree we will get a £5 bonus.

Within the app when you start shopping type in your brand and if listed you will be able to access their store.

Every penny helps and anyone in the UK can sign up and contribute to our fund.

I hope we can achieve 500 plus enrolments as this will again give us a bonus donation.

Any questions regarding easyfundraising contract me on 07790 407790.

Allan Leighton

Chair

Get up and go!

I have lost my "get up and go"
And I've looked all over the place.
Upstairs, downstairs in the garden
and sheds,
It's disappeared without a trace.

I know that I had it a short while
ago,
I was full of the joys of spring,
Then the weather changed,
It's now wet and cold.

And I don't feel like doing a thing.
Our "get up and go" is important,
It helps us to start each new day,
To face life with its ups and downs
To be happy, come what may.

So, I'll just have to keep on
searching,
I can't live without it I know.
I will not give in to these feelings,
I will find my get up and go!

Gwen Jones



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Pavement Parking

The latest changes to the Highway Code puts people walking and wheeling at the top of the road- user hierarchy.

Unfortunately this information alone does not prevent motorists mounting the pavement and parking.

In South Street cars regularly park on the pavement. Cars routinely mount the pavement outside Londis and the Post Office. Behind the King's Arms pavement is another hot spot.

In Southernhay outside the surgery is always busy. Fortunately most motorists now switch off their engines since the surgery put up their switch off sign.

Clifford's Way entrance and exit at Southernhay is now delineated KEEP CLEAR after Joyce Brock pointed out that parking there blocked access for those with mobility aids.

Driving up on the kerb is cracking up the kerb stones and creating craters in the pavement. Westward Housing have recently mended the hole in the pavement next to the oak tree as motorists were parking on the pavement to get the full benefit of the shade.

73% of over 75's say pavement parking is a significant problem.

50% say they are more likely to walk if pavements were free of vehicles.

Rates of walking to school has been declining for years resulting in the worrying statistic that over 75's are walking more than under 10's.

The school walk has been replaced for many with the school run.

Autonomous delivery robots are already operating on pavements in Sheffield, Leeds, Barnsley, Milton Keynes, Sunderland, Reading, Bristol, Northampton and Cambridge.

Living Streets, the charity that champions pedestrians, is organising a campaign that challenges this assumption that pavements are up for grabs.

Pavements are part of our public infrastructure. They belong to the people who use them including the most vulnerable people in our communities; children, the elderly and the disabled.

As car ownership continues to rise [along with the size and weight of cars] pavements in villages are increasingly being used as car parks putting pedestrians at the bottom of the road user hierarchy.

Penny Griffiths



Tractor parked on pavement July 2026,
South Street Winkleigh.



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SPEEDING *by Trish Clarkson*

Is it an issue? Is it a nuisance or a menace? Is it an imposition of your human rights? Is it a choice? Is it illegal?

Let's take these questions and think about them.

Is it an issue? Well yes, speeding on our roads is endemic, and unfortunately seems to be getting worse. That leads to a lot of government and local government funds needed to try and reduce it and its impact. That's not someone else's money, it's yours, the money you work or worked very hard for. Your money that's trying to make our roads safer.

Is it a nuisance or a menace? Some will say definitely yes, some definitely no.

Nuisance? Here's a scenario, your vehicle has been registered as speeding by a camera at say 33mph in a 30mph zone and you've got a fine. You're probably not going to be delighted, possibly saying 'come on, really!' but you pay up and move on. Another scenario, a paramedic is trying and eventually is unable to save a child's life on a motorway. Camera footage shows that a driver involved in the collision was exceeding the limit by just 3mph. Can anyone affected by this move on?

Is it an imposition on your human rights? You're just being asked to be responsible and care for the safety of your fellow human beings however they're using the road. Is that really so hard?

Is it a choice? We should be aware of the limit on a section of road either by noting the road side signs or by thinking about the environment we're driving through, is it urban or rural. Changes in limits from 30mph to national at 60mph and vice versa can cause problems but it can be done. That sign isn't a target speed to reach upwards but definitely is downwards.

Is it illegal? An emphatic yes. You're a 'real criminal' and you've committed a 'real offence' each time you exceed one. Whether we agree with the speed limit on a section of road isn't up for question; it's what's been deemed to be safe.

I remember when taking my driving test the examiner asked me what speed should you do on a dual carriageway? I proudly answered 70mph he looked at me and said 'No you do the speed you're told to'. I've never forgotten that one.

Speeding, it's your choice, you're in control.



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June 1816 was titled “The Year Without a Summer” and changed the course of European History.

Although The Meteorological Society of London was not established until 1823, temperatures were measured and records kept.

Following a series of major volcanic eruptions around the world, the final straw for the year of 1816 was the eruption of Mount Tamboura in April 1815 in the then Dutch East Indies (Indonesia today). The amount of sulphur released into the atmosphere created a Volcanic Winter where average global temperatures decreased by 0.7 to 1 degree Fahrenheit (0.4 to 0.7 degrees C) the coldest of any record between 1766 and 2000.

This caused massive worldwide agricultural disaster including famine, flooding, riots and a Typhus Epidemic which swept through Europe; untold misery. People resorted to boiling grass and leaves to survive and as there was no feed many animals starved or were slaughtered. The worst hit areas were the Northern Hemisphere Americas and Western Europe. Hardships and unrest forged new ideas. Following Waterloo in 1815 across Europe treaties were signed and broken as countries did not want to revert to the problems caused by the Napoleonic Wars. New ideas, secret societies, social reform and Liberalism heralded a turning point for dealing with both human decisions and the forces of nature.

Technical advances at this time included the Davy Lamp, the Stirling Hot Air engine and the beginnings of an electric telegraph system. From the lack of oats and hay for horses, the idea of wheeled horseless transport developed.

Meanwhile in June 1816, incessant rainfall induced Percy and Mary Shelley, Lord Byron, John Polidori and their friends to stay indoors during their Swiss Holiday at Villa Diodati. To pass the time they read German Ghost stories and inspired by these and the unnatural Summer, Lord Byron proposed a contest to see who could write the scariest story. He wrote “A Fragment”, which Polidori later used as inspiration for “The Vampyre” which was a precursor to “Dracula”. Mary Shelley remembered those days at the Villa being occupied by wine, laudanum use, a tincture of opium and intellectual conversations. Allegedly, she awoke from a dream with the image of Victor Frankenstein kneeling over his monstrous creation and was inspired to write “Frankenstein”. Lord Byron also wrote the poem “Darkness”

I had a dream, which was not all a dream.
The bright sun was extinguish'd, and the stars
Did wander darkling in the eternal space,
Rayless, and pathless, and the icy earth
Swung blind and blackening in the moonless air;
Morn came and went—and came, and brought no day.

It would appear that the Bridgerton TV Series (and Spin- offs) that inspired Winkledown have now ceased. It is time for Winkledown's pen to be laid down, so this is the final episode by this author. Maybe, Gentle Readers, someone else may be inspired to take up quill and ink? For now then, Dear Readers, this is Farewell.

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AN OAK *by Nick Bengé*

There is an oak at the bottom of my garden. I am looking at it in between writing these words. It is a deep, dark green. Its toes are dipped into the bed of the stream that still just about trickles past it. Squirrels run along its outstretched arms, which are home to small birds and a myriad of insects. Jays take its acorns in the autumn and a small forest of baby oaks is springing up nearby as a result of the jays pushing them into the long grass. Occasionally a buzzard planes in to sit on a lower branch and survey the ground for voles.

Beneath the canopy the shade is cool. The grass is green, not parched and brown as it is in the sheep pasture on the other side of the valley. If there were cattle in my back garden, they could browse on its branches and loll about in the cool under the big oak. Its dense foliage is diffusing water out into the air. It is cooling its local environment. In windy weather house martins and swallows hunt in the lee of the tree where insects accumulate in the still

air. At night a tawny owl sits in it and bats hunt around it. Its fallen branches provide me with fuel for my log burner, and as I look south into the valley, it is a billowing block of green and shade in this too bright, hot summer.

We need more oaks like this to help cool our environment. To resist the winds and to shade us and the animals we live with. We need to stop draining our land, flailing our hedgerows and compacting our soils. Plant more oaks and let them bring all these benefits to you, your children and your grandchildren.



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Countryfile

"In September things start dying, then comes cold October mist," from English weather by Wendy Cope.

The thought of death creates a sense of loss for many people, we hear the word and think of those friends and family we miss, it is so much more though.

Death is how we stay alive, we need the death of animals and plants in order to eat, we kill detrimental bacteria so they don't kill us, we kill those who compete with us for food (sometimes too effectively for our own good, but more of that another time).

The ground that we walk on is in large part made up of dead things, significantly more so in some areas than others. All our soil includes the parent material and even some of this is made up of ancient dead things (limestone, chalk, chert and coal). Even on igneous (and metamorphic igneous) bedrock one of the key differences between subsoil which supports very few specialised plants, and top soil which is rich and fertile and supports most of our crops is the incorporation of organic matter. Organic matter includes dead plants and animals. Additionally animal manure, which is the waste of dead plants and

animals which have been digested, and if composted, they've just been digested again by bacteria and worms. All fertility and life is fed by the death of other things. It really is all a great big circle.

If land is to remain fertile the nutrients in the crops which come from it need to be replaced, the beauty of a compost heap is a that it is a little mound of death in the garden which feeds life. In farming waste matter of crops is ploughed in to compost in the soil and at home we can take crop waste and prunings and mowings, and add in other brought in matter, like cardboard and dead house plants, even urine and manure from vegetarian pets (but not cats and dogs) and it will turn into wonderful life supporting soil food.

So as things start dying off and dropping their leaves, as the wheel of the year turns, it doesn't have to be depressing, it can be a fascinating connection to the circle of life, a reminder that so much is cyclical, and that out of almost all passings comes some kind of new life.

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Winkleigh Fair 2026



Winkleigh's much-loved annual Fair returned this July, with a week of community events and celebrations beginning with the traditional opening ceremony on Sunday 12 July in the Village Square. Steve Worthington, the chair of the fair committee, shared "my vision for the Winkleigh Fair is to preserve its strong traditions while continuing to evolve it as a vibrant, inclusive event that brings the whole community together."

The Winkleigh Fair is one of Devon's oldest surviving community traditions, with the village fair originally granted a Royal Charter in 1262. More than seven centuries later, the Fair continues to bring together residents and visitors alike to celebrate the rich heritage and community spirit of Winkleigh.

Read on for how the fair both preserved tradition and added to a long-standing village event.

Sunday 12 July – Opening Ceremony

The Fair officially kicked off with a 15 minute ringing of the church bells and music from Hatherleigh Band. This was followed by the traditional procession of the fair king and queen with their attendants, and led this year by a bagpiper. Visitors then enjoyed witnessing the Blessing of the Well, the crowning of the Winkleigh Fair King and Queen (Lenny and Lily, accompanied by Rupert and Elsie). Roger Hill of Southwest Fixings and Hills of Devon crowned the king and queen and officially opened the fair with a ribbon cutting.

This was followed by a presentation of the poster competition winners, Lily

and Amandine, who were presented with their entries framed next to the version printed in the fair pamphlet.

Attendees then enjoyed a Fancy Dress Competition with prizes, and the fair kickoff concluded with a new addition: the Ball Rolling Competition, also with a prize for the fastest rolling ball.

Monday 13 July – Dog Show

Dog show evening had perfect weather for all the pooches to be at their very best. Some of the highlights included a pup dressed in a tutu, and a woman who matched her dog with a full face mask! From entries like "Handsomest dog," "Dog most like its owner," and "Dog the judge would most like to take home," it was a fun-filled event for a wide range of four-legged companions."

Tuesday 14 July – Bingo Night

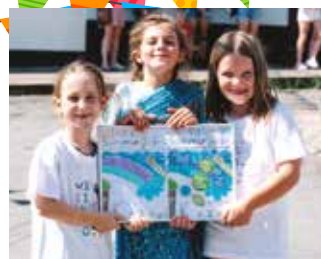
Bingo night is always popular and was very well attended this year. A local resident said "all age groups were there from teenagers right up to older people, and you could hear which is a lot, because sometimes you can't hear what the caller is saying. I really enjoyed it!"

There were many winners throughout the evening who were awarded with cash prizes.

Wednesday 15 July – Vehicle Show

The Vintage Vehicle show also enjoyed stunning weather - a great improvement from the rainy evening of last year! There was a variety of entries from two to four and more wheeled engines!

Our Vintage Vehicle Show, sponsored by Mid Devon Motors, returned to the village square with our largest turn out



yet of cars, bikes, tractors and other assorted vehicles despite the World Cup being on. The entrants were scrutinised by our expert judges from The Airfield Garage with the aid of the fair King and Queen. Awards were given out for Best Car, Bike and Commercial with Carl Walker in his 1968 Volvo 1800s taking the prize of best in show.

Thursday 16 July – Rounders night

Local resident Kiera Finch says “It was a fantastic day of rounders, laughter and community spirit! Thank you to everyone who came along, played, supported and helped make the Winkleigh Rounders event such a brilliant success!”

Friday 17 July was Quiz Night,

featuring the village quiz, refreshments, cheese boards (thanks to Taw Valley for the discounted cheese!) and a raffle. Quiz night winner (team name: Smoke & Mirrors) Martin of Winkleigh says “It was a lovely evening, a great atmosphere and friendly rivalry. Fully attended and a lovely surprise to be able to take away the champions cup.”

Saturday 18 July – Fair Day

This was a day for the books! Featuring live music throughout the afternoon and evening, children’s entertainment, a children’s disco, inflatables, food stalls, ice cream, tug of war, the Winkleigh in Bloom awards and the grand raffle draw.

We’d like to thank the community for your support in keeping the fair running. A super special shout-out to our numerous sponsors for making the fair such a fun and interesting time for all:

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Brynn Embley Photography
Catkin Blooms
Clayton Cabinets
Edge Stitch & Print
Hatherleigh Silver Band
Jonesy’s Cafe
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Lovells
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Mark’s Gym
Mid Devon Motors
Mid-Devon Sports Massage
Ministry of Marquees
Open Book Construction
Pet, Home, and Garden Supplies
Rangemoors
Sam’s Cider
Seven Stars Winkleigh
Southwest Fixings
Sueno Beauty
Tallet Cafe
The Post Office
West Ridge Veterinary Practice

We’d also like to thank our incredible volunteers, without whom we would have no fair. You make this community event possible, and in the words of Richard, Winkleigh Fair Committee member, “It’s hard work but really great fun and they’re a lovely team to work with.”

The organisers are looking forward to keeping the tradition going in coming years.

Photographs supplied courtesy of Brynn Embley Photography

Winkleigh YFC *Distinctly Winkleigh* Update

Summer is always a fairly quiet time for Winkleigh YFC, as members are busy bringing in harvest etc. However, quite a few different events have still taken place. Thank you to those who have helped organise & attended events.

- In June, the club went to Portmore driving range as a fun social meeting.
- The yearly Tarka rally was held at Sutcombe, with members from the club attending.
- Winkleigh YFC held its first ever online auction, which was live from the 9th to 23rd of August.
- An inter-club rounders match was held in Monkokehampston by kind permission of the Pearce Family.
- Monthly business meetings in the Community Centre carried on as normal throughout summer.

As the end of the YFC year draws close, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the club officers. You've all done a great job keeping the club running.

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



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GARDEN NOTES

To Coffey



As you tidy up the garden this autumn you may find more dead material than usual as the drought claimed a number of casualties. Not everything that lost its leaves early will be dead though, and not everything that is dead is useless. Our garden plants struggled this summer, but so did insect populations so the more habitat we can leave for them to shelter in over winter the better. This doesn't mean you have to leave everything as it is but if you can little mounds or bundles of plant matter at the back of borders or under hedges insects and small mammals, like hedgehogs, can make use of them.

Whilst the temperatures drop off, so long as there's still not regular rain water for insect life (plant saucers filled with pebbles so they don't drown are ideal) will help support them. More help comes from reviewing which plants did well in your garden this year, and which were most popular with wildlife, and planning more for the future. After this summer some may be tempted to choose desert planting but bear in mind many of those plants live on free draining sand, and good planting needs to cope with

winter as well as summer, and much of Devon has water retentive clay which can be sodden for much of winter.

SEPTEMBER

- Divide herbaceous perennials
- Pick autumn raspberries
- Collect and sow seed from perennials and hardy annuals
- Dig up remaining potatoes before slug damage spoils them
- Net ponds before leaf fall gets underway
- Keep up with watering of new plants, using rain or grey water if possible
- Start to reduce the frequency of houseplant watering
- Clean out cold frames and greenhouses so that they are ready for use in the autumn
- Cover leafy vegetable crops with bird-proof netting (always ensure netting is tight and securely fastened)
- Plant spring flowering bulbs

OCTOBER

- Divide established rhubarb crowns to create new plants
- Cut back perennials that have died down
- Divide herbaceous perennials
- Move tender plants, including aquatic ones, into a greenhouse or conservatory
- Plant out spring cabbages
- Harvest apples, pears, grapes & nuts
- Prune climbing roses
- Finish collecting seeds from the garden to sow next year
- Last chance to mow lawns and trim hedges in mild areas
- Renovate old lawns or create new grass areas by laying turf
- Apply a last round of nemaslug before the temperatures fall too far - the fewer overwintering and breeding slugs, the less slug damage in spring

NOVEMBER

- Clear up fallen leaves - especially from lawns, ponds and beds
- Raise containers onto pot feet to prevent waterlogging
- Plant tulip bulbs for a spring display next year
- Prune roses to prevent wind-rock
- Plant out winter bedding
- Cover brassicas with netting if pigeons are a problem
- Insulate outdoor containers from frost - bubblewrap works well
- Stop winter moth damage to fruit trees using grease bands around the trunks
- Put out bird food to encourage winter birds into the garden
- Use a seasonal bonfire to dispose of excess debris unfit for composting BUT CHECK FOR HEDGEHOGS!




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WINE COLUMN *by Bruce Evans*

More Flavours Than Ice Cream.

Wine is made from grapes. While hitting the dizzy heights of judging at the Dolton Flower show I came across some apple wine, call me a puritan but isn't that cider? It still won't be class, as the rest of the entries, (home made Merlot etc) were confected and out of balance. So, for the purposes of the next five minutes of your time, please agree with this definition, that wine is grapes and grapes make wine.

Although wine is made of grapes, only one grape actually tastes of grape, muscat. The flavours you get in a bottle of wine vary from intense citrus to granite, and manure. If all that was in one bottle it wouldn't be particularly pleasant and my simple definition of a decent wine is one which you wish for a second glass. The flavours in wine are broad, but always layered. If you just have fruit flavours you have fruit juice. Wine has, or should have a structure, with acidity, alcohol, tannins, and secondary minerality all playing a part. If you are tasting wine, you break the palette down into the weight of body, the mouthfeel, then the initial fruit, the secondary flavours and finally finish.

Different grapes will obviously give you different fruit flavours. Sauvignon Blanc is all gooseberry and lime, Viognier is apricots, Merlot is plums and blackberries, Cabernet, currants and cassis and Shiraz is dark fruit and chocolate. Then there is where it is grown, Northern Rhone Syrah has notes of leather and peppery spice on the secondary flavours, whereas a McLaren vale Shiraz, (same grape) has dark chocolate and black forest

gateaux. That is what wine people try to confuse you with, terroir. Soil and climate influence the way the grape grows.

Some wines are rich and heavy, and some light and fresh, this is mouth feel and body weight. As we head into autumn I tend to favour midweight wines, Pinot Noir and Beaujolais, the lightly oaked Chardonnay and Alpine Pinot Gris, perfect with the slightly cooler nights and richer food.

The basic way to make a wine is to grow a grape, pick it, squash it, take the juice, ferment it, then put it in a bottle. However wine makers tend to get bored with this system, and introduce other things which complicate it, oak barrels, carbonic maceration, cold soaks, malolactic fermentation and lees aging, amongst others. All these methods alter the flavour in your mouth. French oak barrels give a cedar note to the wine, American oak gives vanilla, Malolactic converts to tartaric acid to lactic acid so makes it creamy, and this obviously shows in the glass. Now take into account there are at least 10,000 grape varieties for wine, and 100,000 commercial wines in the world and they all change each year, and my job is pretty simple! You do not become a wine merchant to finish a subject, you do it for the joy of finding new flavours and the eternal search for the next great glass. It may not be correct in the modern world, but some grapes are better than others, and some wines are still pleasantly on your palette 10 minutes after that initial sip. That is why I have been doing this trade for more than half my life.

SPARE A THOUGHT FOR YOUR *Delivery Driver*



In the past I have lamented over the failed delivery of something I have ordered on line. Like many people, I have the luxury of sitting at home and in a few seconds, I can order a product from anywhere in the world. I am very aware that this retail revolution has a massive impact on drivers, as on-line retailers fight to keep up with changing expectations from us the consumer, whilst retaining massive profits for themselves. This in turn piles pressure on drivers into working long hours to meet tough targets, this, along with abuse from frustrated stay-at-home shoppers presents a real threat to a driver's health and well-being. The demands of meeting tight schedules, dealing with traffic, and navigating difficult delivery locations can lead to stress and fatigue. This not only affects mental health but can also increase the risk of accidents.

There are regulations about how many hours a driver is limited to, in any day, but often, as they are self-employed or have unregulated employers, these can sometimes escalate into dangerous amounts of time on the road. In the past a driver would be hired; he would sign a contract and have a job description, but the so-called *gig economy* is changing all that, leaving drivers unprotected and the customer not knowing who is responsible. Some drivers earn per drop and others receive an hourly rate or shift based pay. Many drivers don't receive employer pension contributions, sick pay, holiday pay, or over time rates.

Those working in the gig economy may also have to provide and service their own van, pay for fuel, tyres, road tax and insurance on top. Gig workers can sometimes enjoy schedule control but many face income insecurities and don't always get the minimum hourly rate after expenses. Drivers also report that they work longer than the number of hours paid, because the delivery time does not include traffic jams and difficulties in parking, or waiting time to load or unload vans at the beginning and end of each shift. This practice tallies with the experience of many of our care workers whose employers factor in driving time with patient appointments leaving them with little time for those they tend.

Men and women drivers often have tight time targets which can encourage risky driving habits; abandoned, unsafe parking and the skipping of breaks leading to eating and drinking whilst on the move. Drivers have to navigate dense traffic, narrow county roads, bad weather, and in our village a lack of safe places to pull over or park. Delivery work does not stop for inclement conditions, exposing the delivery driver to potential health risks from working in extreme conditions, such as our recent heatwaves; heavy rain or cold snaps. These conditions can lead to heat stress, hypothermia and increased risk of accidents. Delivery workers spend a substantial amount of time on the road, making traffic accidents one of the most significant risks they face.

Delivery environments can vary widely,

from well-maintained office buildings to uneven paths in residential areas. Slips, trips and falls can occur due to wet surfaces, uneven, or obstructed ground. Deliveries to residential areas may expose workers to uncontrolled pets, or wildlife in rural areas, leading to the risk of animal bites or stings. This is especially a concern in areas where dogs are not properly secured. Many men and women can suffer physical strain from heavy lifting, constant loading and unloading or improper lifting techniques due to lack of training, leading to physical fatigue, and injuries such as muscle strain, often with no sick pay if unfit for work.

While employed drivers have set hourly rates and legal rest protections, gig-economy and freelance couriers often face income anxiety, piece-rate pressure, and variable schedules. Unfortunately, many of these drivers are not protected by a trades union.

There are many delivery companies with differing rates of pay and terms and conditions. Amazon, the largest company in Britain, delivers from all over the world. In order to achieve this, they rely on a net work of thousands of drivers who are not their employees, who enjoy few rights; including fluctuations in pay and no overtime during the pre-Christmas rush or Black Friday events. Currently I don't use Amazon at all because I have to ask, when in the full calendar year of 2025, Amazon made a net profit (net income) of **\$77.67 billion** why he treats his employees so badly?

I am not the only one horrified by the driver's conditions of employment, a couple of years ago, after COVID, 39,000 people, including myself, signed a petition, calling on Amazon to review their pay rates. Drivers worked hard during Covid, but like some NHS workers, they went unrewarded. Sadly, being clapped as key workers, doesn't put food on the table! Unfortunately, unlike NHS workers

they don't have the luxury of taking industrial action and still keep their jobs.

Few drivers are in unions, but they can join. Several trade unions in the UK, such as Unite, GMB, USDAW, Community and Workers Unions actively represent, organise, and support delivery drivers, parcel couriers, and logistics workers, covering both traditional employed staff and gig economy contractors.

Personally, I think if you are a delivery driver, union membership is essential as Bezos and other CEO's will not give up their billions without a fight. Indeed, Amazon avoids paying its full tax bill in the UK by rerouting a substantial amount of revenue from UK sales through its base in Luxembourg.

Reputable delivery companies should work with unions to enhance the safety of delivery drivers involving a multipronged approach. It is crucial that all drivers become employees, they should receive decent pay, proper rest breaks, standard conditions and adequate training. This includes safe driving practices, vehicle maintenance and manual handling techniques with regular refresheres.

Until Amazon remunerates its workers justly, I shall continue to boycott them. Perhaps other readers should consider this approach rather than continue to fill the pockets of people who already have obscene amounts of wealth; far more than anyone can spend, more than some countries have! Yes, Jeff Bezos has a net worth (estimated) of well over \$200 billion which exceeds the annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of more than 100 sovereign nations, such as Iceland, Honduras, and Afghanistan.

So next time a parcel is late or missing please be kind and spare a thought for the awful conditions our drivers are expected to work under.

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Letters...



Dear Editor,

A huge thank you from The Nook

We would like to thank everyone for their support and nominations for our community award which we were delighted to receive, we can't thank you enough.

Our little village cafe has really become a community hub where great friendships have been made, and we are so very lucky to have all our wonderful customers.

It is amazing to feel so supported and recognised THANK YOU.

Yours faithfully
Nicky & Ash

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A SUMMER TO REMEMBER AT **SAM'S CIDER**



It has been a brilliant summer here at Sam's Cider, full of creativity, celebrations and plenty of cider! From adding a striking new piece of artwork to our historic site, to welcoming a record-breaking crowd to our annual cider festival, it has certainly been a summer to remember.

that, more than 100 years later, cider is still being made right here in the village.

We are incredibly proud to be continuing that tradition and keeping cider production alive on a site that has been associated with the industry for generations.



CELEBRATING WITH A MURAL

We started the summer with something we had been thinking about for quite some time – a brand-new mural on the front of our building.

Cider has been made here on our site in Winkleigh **since 1916** and we wanted to create something that celebrated that history while also bringing a new lease of life to the building. The result has certainly got people talking!

The mural has attracted an incredible amount of attention, not just locally but from people visiting from all over the country. We've loved seeing people stop to take a look, photograph it and learn a little more about the history behind the site.

For us, it is much more than just a mural. It is a celebration of Winkleigh's cider-making heritage and a reminder



A RECORD-BREAKING CIDER FESTIVAL

Another huge highlight of the summer was, of course, the **Sam's Cider Festival 2026**.

This year's festival was our biggest yet, with tickets completely selling out and making it a record-breaking year for us. Seeing so many people come together to enjoy an afternoon and evening at the cider works was fantastic.

We were also very lucky with the weather. The sun came out, the drinks were flowing and there was a brilliant atmosphere across the whole site.

One of the unexpected stars of the festival was our **rodeo bull**! It proved to be a massive hit, with plenty of brave volunteers stepping forward to see how long they could hold on. Some lasted considerably longer than others, but it

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provided plenty of laughs throughout the afternoon!

Music played a huge part in the day too. We welcomed three fantastic live bands to the stage, starting with **The Rodeos**, followed by **Rising Tide**, before **The Revivals** brought the live music to a close with an excellent performance.

The evening then continued with **100% Charged**, who finished the festival with a DJ set full of anthems and kept everyone dancing late into the night.

Alongside the entertainment, there was plenty of food and, naturally, plenty of Sam's Cider. It was wonderful to see the site so busy and to welcome a mixture of familiar local faces alongside visitors who had travelled from further afield.

Thank you, Winkleigh

Events like this simply wouldn't be possible without the people behind

them. A huge amount of work goes on behind the scenes, so we would like to say a massive thank you to our staff, bands, DJ, food vendors, security and everyone else who helped make the festival such a success.

Most importantly, though, we would like to **thank everyone from Winkleigh and the surrounding communities who continues to support us.**

Whether you visit The Tallet Café, pop into the cider shop, attend one of our events, recommend us to friends and family or simply enjoy a pint of Sam's, that support allows us to continue doing what we love here in Winkleigh.

After such a fantastic summer, we're already thinking about what comes next.

One thing is certain – after more than a century of cider making in Winkleigh, there is still plenty more to come from Sam's Cider.

Here's to the next chapter – and perhaps a cider or two along the way!

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WHAT'S ON...

REGULARS

MONDAY

Short Mat Bowls 1:45pm-4:15pm Sports Hall

Netball Club 7:30pm-8:30pm Sports Hall

FitSteps 6:30pm and 7:30pm Sports Centre

Yoga 6pm Village Hall

2nd Monday of each month bar January, July & August Church Wives Group, Village Hall 2.30pm-4.30pm

TUESDAY

Yoga 9.45am Village Hall

Free 'Sewcial Crafternoon' at Catkin Blooms 1:00-3:00pm

Badminton 7:00pm Village Hall

Family History Group every 3rd Tuesday 10.30am-12.30pm

2nd Tuesday of each month Artists' Critique Group: 7-9pm in North Tawton. Email ruth.helen.smith@outlook.com for venue details

Last Tuesday of the month Life Drawing 7-9pm at the Community Centre, North Tawton.

WEDNESDAY

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

Piano Lessons early evening Village Hall

Tap Dancing 7:00pm Village Hall

Kung Fu 6:30pm-8:00pm & 8:00pm-9:00pm Community Centre

THURSDAY

Winkleigh Art Group 10:00-14:00 Community Centre

Chi Kung 10:30 Village Hall

Tiny Tots 9:30-11:15 Sports Hall

Theatre Jam Village Hall 4pm

Therapeutic Pilates 7:15pm Village Hall

Tai Chi 19:30-21:30pm Sports Centre

FRIDAY

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

Therapeutic Pilates 9:30am

Short Mat Bowls 13:45-16:15 Sports Hall

SATURDAY

Dance classes with Taylor Dinnis mornings at Village Hall

1st Saturday Monthly Market,

3rd Saturday of the month 10.00 Portrait Session Community Centre, North Tawton.

1st & 3rd Saturday of the month Teen Cafe at Community Centre 7:00pm to 9.00pm



SEPTEMBER

25th "Basket Making"
A talk by Jane Walsh
7.30pm Chulmleigh Pavilion EX18 7JL £7 payable on the door.

OCTOBER

9th Chulmleigh Rural

Cinema – **The Christophers** (15) starring Ian McKellen & Michaela Coel. The Pavilion, Leigh Road Chulmleigh EX18 7JL. Tickets £5.50 Doors open 6:45pm Film starts 7:30pm



13th The Friendship Club coach trip to Strawberry Fields and Tavistock

16th Winkleigh Village Hall The Theory of Everything (12) starring Eddie Redmayne and

Felicity Jones Doors open 6:30pm film starts 7:00pm

NOVEMBER

7th Air Field Remembrance 10:15am (see p16)



8th All Saints Church remembrance service

13th Chulmleigh Rural Cinema – tuner (15) starring Leo Woodall & Dustin Hoffman. The Pavilion, Leigh Road Chulmleigh EX18 7JL. Tickets £5.50 Doors





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6:30pm film starts
7:00pm**



DECEMBER

**18th Winkleigh Village Hall
High Society (U) starring
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and Frank Sinatra Tom
Hanks and Mark Rylance
Doors open 6:30pm film
starts 7:00pm**



**21st *Mariners Away* Village Hall 7:00pm
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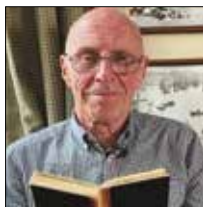
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'Listening to the Enemy' explores the history of the St Erth Radio Listening Station during WWII, detailing its crucial role in intelligence gathering and code breaking efforts.

Its story is told by Mike Griffiths whose Dad, Harry, was a radio operator at the station from 1939 to 1946. Harry recorded much of his work in his 'Code Book'.

The presentation provides the background about the part the station played in hunting for the Bismarck, Agent Zig Zag and how it was linked to Bletchley Park and its famous code breaking activities.

Admission - £1.00 to help towards the cost of the speaker, hiring the venue and refreshments. Non members welcome.

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Winkleigh FC - *Life in the Devon League*

This season marks a significant new chapter for Winkleigh FC as we take our place in the Devon League for the first time. The step up has brought tougher opposition, higher standards and a new challenge for everyone at the club — one we have embraced, even if some results suggest we are still waiting for everything to go exactly to plan.

Six games into our debut campaign, we have four draws and two defeats as we continue searching for our first victory. That may not look spectacular on paper, but Winkleigh have shown we can compete at this level. We have also become very good at collecting one point at a time, which is admirable, although three points would be a lovely change.

In most matches, we have taken the lead, showing the quality, character and attacking threat needed to compete in the Devon League. The next step is learning to protect those leads and see games through. At the moment, we seem to enjoy giving the opposition hope before making life difficult for ourselves.

The quality is higher, mistakes are punished and every point must be earned. If we become more disciplined and composed when ahead, there is no doubt performances will soon turn into victories — ideally before the season ends, although we are not putting too much pressure on ourselves.

There is also the small matter of how I returned to help the club. After confidently announcing all summer that I was retiring, I somehow found myself pulling the boots back on. Apparently, retirement was only a temporary decision.

This is a huge moment for Winkleigh,

and I wanted to be part of the journey rather than watch from the side. Whether contributing on the pitch, helping younger players, offering experience or simply doing whatever the team needs, I am proud to be involved.

I may not be as quick, fit or mobile as I once was, and getting through a match now feels like an achievement in itself. But pulling on the shirt again has reminded me why this club means so much. If retirement is still the plan, I am clearly taking the scenic route towards it.

Just as important will be making home advantage count this season. We have worked hard in previous years to make Winkleigh feel like a fortress, and we must rebuild that at this level. We need to compete from the first whistle and make every visiting side work for its points. At the moment, we are aiming for fortress status, although perhaps we are currently more of a slightly inconvenient shed.

That responsibility belongs to everyone connected with the club. The players must set the standard on the pitch, while the noise and encouragement from the sidelines can make a real difference. Together, we need to make Winkleigh a difficult place to take points from, rather than somewhere visiting teams leave feeling they have had a lovely afternoon.

One of the most pleasing aspects of our start has been the support.

As part of the step up, we were encouraged to consider making Winkleigh pay-to-watch. It was a reasonable suggestion, but one we decided to deny. Football here should remain accessible to everyone, so watching us lose leads, concede late and make life unnecessarily stressful will

continue to cost absolutely nothing.

Admission remains free, and we believe that is right for the club and the community. We may not be able to guarantee three points yet, but nobody can say they paid to watch us collect another draw. With four draws and two defeats from six games, free entry may currently be the most reliable value we offer.

I have always said Winkleigh are the best-supported team in these leagues, and that is something we should be proud of. The support gives the players an extra lift every time they step onto the pitch.

Our first home game saw an incredible 140 people come through the gate to watch us welcome Boca to Winkleigh — a fantastic turnout for village football and a clear sign of what promotion means to the players and wider community. It also proved that 140 people are willing to spend an afternoon watching us make things unnecessarily stressful, even when we are not charging them for the privilege.

That support has continued home and away, and it has not gone unnoticed. As we work to make our home ground a fortress again, we need it more than ever. The players will provide the football, the supporters will provide the noise, and hopefully nobody will have to provide too many excuses afterwards.

There is still a long season ahead and

plenty to learn, but six games into this new adventure, Winkleigh are finding their feet and showing that we belong. We may not have everything figured out yet, but we are certainly not here to make up the numbers.

Four draws. Two defeats. No wins... yet.

But with the way we are competing, taking the lead and improving, that first one feels like it is coming.

And when it does, it will be more than just three points. It will be a reward for the players who have embraced the challenge, the volunteers who keep the club moving, the supporters who continue to turn up and make themselves heard, and everyone who believes Winkleigh belong at this level. We may still be learning, we may still be making things harder than they need to be, and we may still be taking the scenic route towards victory — but this is our journey, and we are taking it together.

So keep turning up, keep making the noise and keep believing. The first win will come, and when it does, Winkleigh will be ready to celebrate it properly. Or, knowing us, we will make it far more dramatic than necessary. At least it will still be free to watch — and, if I am still playing, there is every chance I will be making it stressful from the inside too.

Up the Wink

Tom Robinson

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SCHOOL NEWS

Winkleigh Primary School Report
by Head of Teaching & Learning
William Slocombe



As we look back on another successful year, we have been reflecting on just how much our children have experienced over the last twelve months. From residential visits and sporting opportunities to inspections and community events, it has been another year full of memorable moments.

Our oldest pupils enjoyed a fantastic Year 6 residential to London. Highlights included visiting the magical world of Harry Potter, watching The Lion King in the West End, making their own pizzas at Pizza Express and taking in some of the capital's most famous landmarks. A boat tour along the Thames, the London Eye, Buckingham Palace, Westminster and the breathtaking view from the Stone Circle at St Paul's Cathedral all combined to make a truly unforgettable experience.

Year 4 travelled to Bristol for their residential, where they explored the interactive exhibits at We The Curious, stepped aboard the historic SS Great Britain and enjoyed a meal together at Za Za Bazaar. The trip provided a wonderful opportunity to develop independence while bringing classroom learning to life.

Our Year 5 pupils also travelled to

London for the day, visiting the National Gallery and the Churchill War Rooms, providing a fascinating insight into both art and Britain's wartime history.

For Year 3, their first residential adventure saw them camping under canvas, enjoying Forest School activities and tackling the challenges at Clip 'n' Climb. These experiences helped build confidence, resilience and teamwork, with many children describing it as one of the highlights of the year.

Across Key Stage 2, children also enjoyed an exciting visit to the Wake Park, challenging themselves on the inflatable course while developing confidence, perseverance and supporting one another throughout the day. Our Year 6 pupils rounded off their primary education with a surfing residential on the North Devon coast, making the most of the fantastic opportunities available right on our doorstep.

Back in school, we were delighted to welcome parents and families to our Colour Run. It was wonderful to see so many members of our community coming together to support the event, with children and adults alike embracing



the fun and creating a fantastic atmosphere.

This year also saw two important milestones for the Federation as both our primary school and our Under 2s provision were inspected by Ofsted. We are incredibly proud and are looking forward to sharing the published reports with our community once they are released.

As always, we would like to thank our families and the wider Winkleigh community for their continued support throughout the year. We are looking forward to welcoming everyone back for an exciting new year with lots more opportunities and experiences!

Ofsted Report for Winkleigh Nursery

Ofsted awarded Winkleigh Nursery the second highest grade of Strong Standard in their inspection report of 10 July 2026.

There are six categories assessed and in each Winkleigh Nursery achieved a Strong Standard grade whilst Ofsted's safeguarding standards including having an open and positive culture of safeguarding were also met.

The report also asks 'What it's like to be a child in this setting' and amongst the very positive answer was written:

"Babies thrive in this setting. They form positive and caring relationships with staff, and look to them for comfort and reassurance ... Babies are motivated to try new things with staff who are highly attuned to their needs.

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Chulmleigh College celebrates at Leavers' Ball



Head Girl Agnes Catling 2nd from right

Chulmleigh College proudly celebrated its Year 11 pupils at a spectacular Leavers' Ball, marking the completion of their GCSE examinations and the end of an important chapter in their educational journey.

The annual event, held on Thursday 18th June at Country Ways, brought together pupils and staff for an evening of celebration, reflection and friendship. A long-standing Chulmleigh College tradition saw pupils arrive in an impressive array of vehicles, including vintage cars, motorbikes, tractors, HGVs and even a police car, creating a memorable start to the festivities and showcasing the individuality and spirit of the Class of 2026.

The Leavers' Ball followed the conclusion of GCSE examinations earlier in the week, bringing to a close months of preparation and years of hard work. Throughout their studies, pupils have

demonstrated exceptional commitment and resilience, supported every step of the way by their families and College staff.

Reflecting on the achievements of the year group, Headteacher Neil Payne said:

"As we approach the longest day of the year and look forward to the summer ahead, it is with immense sense of pride that we reflect on the hard work, commitment and determination shown by our Year 11 pupils. The journey to this point has involved countless hours of dedication from the pupils themselves, unwavering support from their families, and the commitment of staff across the College. While we look forward to celebrating their achievements again on GCSE Results Day, it was a genuine privilege to recognise the Class of 2026 at their Leavers' Ball. We are incredibly proud of this exceptional cohort and all they have accomplished during their time with us."

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In memory of

**Dr Godfrey Milton Rhodes BSc PhD CEng MIEE
1946–2026**

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Dr Godfrey Rhodes, who passed away peacefully on 22nd June 2026, aged 80, with his wife Jo by his side.

Godfrey and Jo moved to Winkleigh in 2015 to begin their retirement close to family. In the eleven years that followed, Godfrey became a familiar face to many and quietly made a significant contribution to village life.

Perhaps most notably for readers of this magazine, Godfrey was, for many years, the editor of *Distinctly Winkleigh*. He devoted countless hours to preparing and producing each edition, approaching the task with the care, precision and attention to detail that characterised so much of his life. He took great pride in giving the village a voice and keeping the community informed and connected.

His involvement in Winkleigh extended well beyond the magazine. He joined the Winkleigh Singers, continuing a lifelong love of singing and choral music, and served as treasurer for the weekly Wednesday coffee mornings, with proceeds donated to local charities. He greatly enjoyed those coffee mornings and the friendships that came with them - including his regular place at the affectionately named “Naughty Boys’ Table”.

Godfrey also supported many other village and community activities alongside Jo. In recognition of his contribution to Winkleigh, he was presented with Winkleigh Parish Council’s Outstanding Community Service Award in July 2025, an honour of which his family were immensely proud.

Before retirement, Godfrey enjoyed a long and distinguished career in engineering and defence. Born in Essex in 1946, his fascination with science, engineering and understanding how things worked began at an early age. By the age of twenty-five, he had gained a degree in Electrical and Electronic Engineering, completed a PhD, become a Chartered Engineer and co-authored a technical textbook. His subsequent career included work with Ferranti Computer Systems and consultancy for the Ministry of Defence.

Despite those considerable achievements, Godfrey was a modest and unassuming man who rarely spoke about them. He was far more interested in solving problems, learning something new or simply helping when something needed to be done.

Away from work, he had a lifelong love of music, reading, family history, travel and, above all, his family. He and Jo married in 1973 and shared more than fifty years together. He was a devoted father to three children and a very proud grandfather to seven grandchildren.

Godfrey will be remembered in Winkleigh for his intelligence, kindness, gentle humour and quiet willingness to contribute without seeking recognition. He was never someone who needed to be at the centre of attention; he believed that if something needed doing and you were able to help, then you helped.

Winkleigh became an important part of Godfrey’s life, and his family know how much the friendships and sense of community he found here meant to him.

He will be greatly missed.

Tim Rhodes

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DISTINCTLY WINKLEIGH

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

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

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

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

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

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

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Philip Griffiths
01837 83407

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All residents of Winkleigh Parish are welcome to attend and vote at Winkleigh Society General Meetings. Further information about the Society can be accessed at:
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EDITOR

Peter Hopkinson – 07770 821752

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