

DrewsNews

The Newsletter of Drews Park Village Association - Spring 2009 - Issue 21



The snowmen went from large to enormous as snow fell daily during early February!



DEAR RESIDENTS OF DREWS PARK



Norma Humphreys

As the current Chair of the Drews Park Village Association I have to say this is a role I had always managed to avoid during my 'on and off' involvement with the committee since moving here in 1999, but it seems this is my time!

First, I would like to welcome all the new members to the Association – we have had a fantastic increase in our membership this year – a total of 99 units which amounts to 78% of owners. Thank you so much for your input is an important part of our association and goes a long way to ensure that our Managing Agents keep Drews Park as we all would like it to

be. The committee has tried hard to keep all our members in the picture throughout the year. If you do have an email address that is not on our records please advise our Membership Secretary at lisa@drewspark.co.uk as this will help to save a huge expense on printing and postage when ever we need to communicate with you.

On 13th January we attended a 'pre-trial' meeting with the Leasehold Tribunal about the proposed increase in sinking fund contributions with regard to painting this year. The hearing is set for 14th May – possibly in Devizes - we'll keep you informed.

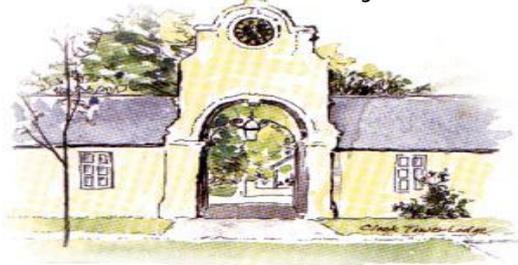
I was hoping that by the time you read this issue of Drews News, the winter weather would be over, the snow just a memory, and the gardens looking spectacular once again. Not so, at least at the end of February! Over the past ten years we must have planted thousands of bulbs around the site to welcome spring and this is an on going project which our gardener Bruce adds to each autumn. We hope the much needed improvements to the planting in Thurnham will continue during the year.

It has become apparent that as we all try to be more ecologically friendly more and more bicycles are appearing around the building. We have been in discussion with Sarsen HA to try to obtain at least two more storage racks. If you think your Court needs one, let us know. It has also been pointed out that a number of local people are using the private car parks while they walk their dogs. To this end, Sarsen HA has agreed to install signs saying that the car parks are private as well as signs to persuade non-residents and their pets not

to use our private gardens.

On a brighter note - spring must surely come soon to Drews Park and the daffodils are just starting to bloom again, although later than usual! I really hope we will enjoy a much better summer this year.
Best wishes to all

Norma
Chair - Drews Park Village
Association



UPDATE ON OUR TV/SATELLITE INSTALLATION

If you were among the unlucky residents who were without a TV signal for between three and five days last November you will be particularly interested in a swift and reliable service should this happen in the future. About 50% of people were without service during the last 'outage' and there was some confusion about the process of getting repairs.



Unfortunately, as we discovered, we were not entitled to an out of hours service as social housing are. We are working to change this situation. It turned out that the failure was due to a nothing more than one failed component but our original installers were not prepared to attend as an emergency.

Eventually Sarsen instructed an excellent firm who attended twice to make repairs and walked around the site with our Chair to assess what might need doing in the future. However, we understand this firm does not undertake contracts such as ours. The system appears to be in need of some maintenance and we will keep you informed.

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MAJOR WORKS FOR 2009/10

By now everybody must know that Sarsen propose to initiate a major repainting programme this year. Many residents have completed a survey in which the large majority, almost 100% of respondents, felt that all the houses need not be painted this year, particularly since many were painted within the last two or three years. However, tenders will shortly be under way and residents have a right to participate in consultation in the selection of the successful firm.



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CONTACT DETAILS FOR SARSEN

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Leanna Waters
Leasehold Services Co-ordinator
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Leasehold Services co-ordinator
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Direct dial -01380 735435

Debbie James
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Direct dial - 01380 735390

Stephen Craig
Service Charge Officer
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Direct dial – 01380 735403

Book Club News

Here are the books we will be reading during our third year of the book group. You can join by emailing Norma on norma@drewspark.co.uk or calling on 724950

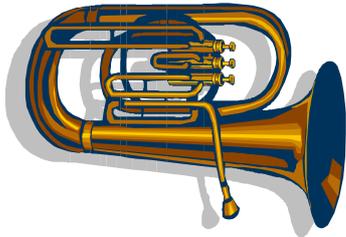
March	Mudbound by Hilary Jordan
April	The rebels by Sandor Marai
May	The Mitfords by Charlotte Moseley
June	Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil by John Berendt
July	Disgrace by J M Coetzee

Happy reading!



Wiltshire Blind ASSOCIATION

**Aldbourn Band Spring Concert with the Kentwood Show
Choir
in aid of the Wiltshire Blind Association**



Date: Saturday 4th April 2009 at 7.30pm

**Venue: The Memorial Hall, Marlborough
College**

**Come and join us for an exciting evening
of Brass Band music from a Championship Band
with the highly renowned Kentwood Show Choir.**

**Tickets:£10, available from the Wiltshire Blind Association, St
Lucy's, 1, Commercial Road, Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 1EH, Tel :
01380 723682, Aldbourn Post Office, White Horse Bookshop,
Marlborough (from 5th March) or Alan Watson Tel : 01672
540580.**

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WINTER WEATHER

This winter has been one of the coldest we have experienced for some years with day after day of below freezing temperatures - and we in the south west have not suffered as badly as other parts of the country! However, we have heard examples of neighbourly help at Drews Park that shows that we have become a community. People have offered to shop for house-bound people and alternative forms of heating have been offered to some unlucky enough to have the central heating break down. Those in trouble can always phone committee members for help. Numbers on back page.



IT Tips

Useful websites for everyday

- Want to check your emails on the move? Try www.mail2web.com

You can enter your email address and password for quite a few providers and pick up your emails from an Internet Cafe or a friend's computer anywhere in the world.

- Print on internet pages too small? Press ctrl +++ as many times as you wish to magnify the print.
- Want to make a pdf but don't have the software? Do it free with www.Zamzar.com

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Why not join the other 99 members? Sign up and send!

Drews Park Village Association

I would like to be a member of the DPVA

Name

Court..... Number.....

Home address (if different).....

.....

.....

Signature..... Date

Tel no:.....

Email address.....

(This saves trees & postage)

Please send or deliver to Gail Nugent at 9 Wyatt Court,
Thomas Wyatt Rd, Devizes SN10 5FF or Peter Benns at
18 Bowes Court, Thomas Wyatt Road, Devizes, SN10
5FQ

NEVER VOLUNTEER....

Says Adrian Wood, Drews Park resident with the dream job....

Give a man a beer he will waste half an hour, teach a man to brew he will waste a lifetime - *anon.*

NEVER VOLUNTEER - I am the treasurer of the DPVA having been a resident for the last two years. I work for the Wadworth brewery as Trade Quality Brewer. This is many people's dream job as I spend most of my time going around the Wadworth pubs sampling the beer and advising landlords on their procedures. I have spent the last 40 years brewing. Before Wadworth I was Head Brewer of a family brewery in Bridport Dorset. When I left there, and joined Devizes brewery a condition was that I lived within 3 miles of work. Recent weather has shown why having a home in Drews Park was such a good idea!



I have been involved with SIBA the Society of Independent Brewers for some years and again **NEVER VOLUNTEER** - so I am chair of the organising committee for our shop window, the Malting Beer Festival in Newton Abbott, Devon - 4,500 visitors sampling 278 locally produced cask beers from 72 brewers over 3 days April 23 -25. Also - **NEVER VOLUNTEER** as I have joined the committee for the Devizes Food & Drink Festival in July.

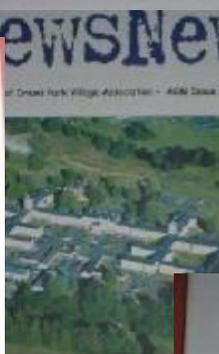
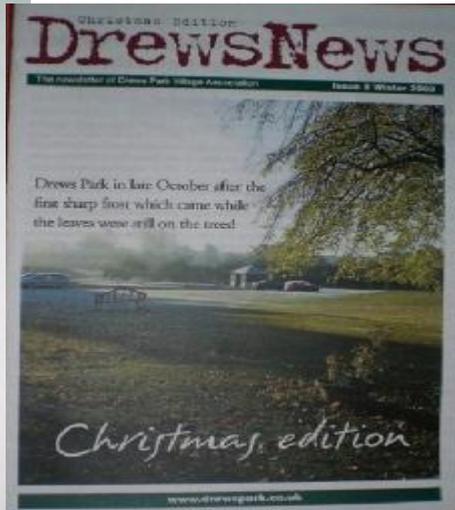
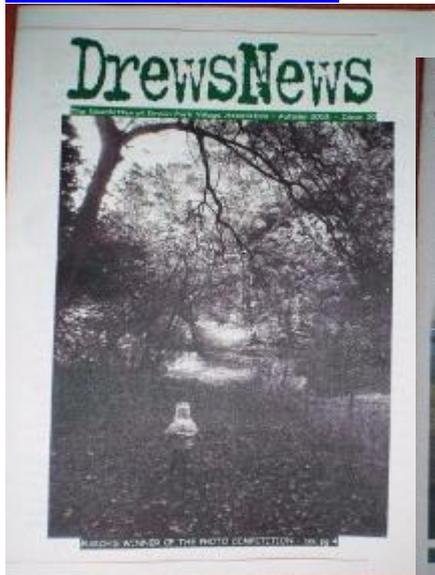
ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

We are pleased to report that we now have 99 members of the Association which represents 78% of the residents of Drews Park, a really representative group of people. You can contact any member of the committee, by email or phone. (See back page for details or page 6 for a membership form), if you have any queries. Try to make the meetings held occasionally by Sarsen - it's a good chance to ask those burning questions.

BACK ISSUES OF DREWS NEWS?

We don't want anyone missing out on the news around Drews Park. Email any member for missing copies and we'll try and get one for you.

However, you should find all the back issues on the website - www.drewspark.co.uk



Bill Hignett reminisces - and suggests a way forward -
Looking at this lovely picture of Drews Park in the snow this winter it's amazing to think that some of us have already been here for seven years.
When we first arrived we realised that we need to form a group to represent residents and negotiating with the developers and our new landlords and managing agents.
So the Drews Park Village Association was formed and has looked after the every day running of the site since then.
Now we feel it's time to re-evaluate and improve the way we represent you. So we are asking you to drop us and tell us what you would like to happen and let us have your ideas and suggestions.
Continued on page 7

Residents were celebrating the installation of the Drews Park name sign we have been waiting to see for so long. They have been placed on the first entrance to Thomas Whitt Road, visible from Byron Road, and just inside the second entrance just beyond the pillar box. It has been suggested that a tree similar to the one in the photo above should be planted behind the Chapel Court area name sign to give it the lovely green background of the one above.
The sign complement the grounds that have been looking so lovely this summer, with new planting (see page 30) and a number of treatments to improve the grassed areas.

FAQs

Frequently asked questions

These are some of the questions committee members have been asked during the last few months.

What is the LVT? Sarsen has submitted details of their proposed sinking fund increases for 2009/10 for a 'reasonableness' judgement by the Leasehold Valuation Tribunal.

How much can Sarsen expend on repairs/maintenance without consulting with owners?

Sarsen recently sent out a fact sheet that said the limits were £250 for works and £100 for long term contracts. In fact, at Drews Park the limits are £50 per unit for long term contracts, and £125 per unit for immediate 'works to the building'. This is because consultation is triggered when any one owner has to pay £250 or £100, and as some residents pay a double service charge, the amounts for the rest of us are reduced, as above. Sarsen's latest enclosure explaining these amounts did not make this clear.



Does Sarsen have to ask for tenders for smaller works, e.g. under the amounts mentioned above? In theory, no. But many owners feel that they would like to see 'best value' for their money and that this is best demonstrated by informal tenders, as have always been obtained in the past, even for small repairs. It's your money and I doubt any one of you would accept the first quote for any job costing several thousands of pounds. It takes little time to get two or three quotes and does not allow any 'partner' company to feel that any quote they make will automatically be accepted.

How often should the doors and windows be painted? The lease says 'as often as reasonably necessary'. In practice this would be approximately five-yearly but as we all know, on this development some houses deteriorate faster due to their exposure to sun/wind etc., whereas others could easily last for six years. You should inspect your paintwork, sills etc frequently as the actual replacement and repair of your windows and doors are your responsibility. If you see that the paintwork is peeling please contact Sarsen so that you have recourse if lack of repair causes your woodwork to rot.

RESTAURANT CORNER

Some of our readers have recently visited The Pear Tree Inn at West Hill, Melksham. This attractive pub/restaurant is pretty much 'fine dining' and the food and service, in our experience, is excellent. At lunch time on a fine day coffee can be taken outside in the lovely gardens and we were not hurried in any way, in fact we were still chatting at 4pm! Not cheap, expect to spend around £40 per head... Please share with us and submit your restaurants of choice in the area to drewsnews@drewspark.co.uk



PAYMENT OF SERVICE CHARGES



Did you know that you can now pay your charges by direct debit? This will serve to spread your charges into twelve payments instead of two and will result in keeping up with your contributions throughout the year even if it is necessary to pay a top-up at the end should unexpected costs be incurred. Contact Sarsen for a

form. You may recall receiving a notice from Sarsen last year in which they said they would not be sending twice-yearly invoices any more. They will be keeping a file for each owner showing the monthly amount due and will either invoice you, or alternatively you can set up a direct debit with your bank. The logical time to start this is, of course, this April as soon as we know what the charges will be for the coming year.

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NOTICE BOARD

Each Court should have a representative. We are still looking for someone to look after 1-22 Thurnham, 23-41 Thurnham, Cooke, Speer and Chapel. It's not particularly onerous; just look out for new residents and put a Welcome Pack through their door. Phone any committee member to sign on!

(May also lead to 10% contents insurance reduction)

Adrian Wood is Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator

<u>COURT</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>REPRESENTATIVE</u>	<u>PHONE</u>
Bowes	18	Peter Bennis	739419
Burnham	6	Sue Chick	724774
Chapel		<i>Representative required</i>	
Clock Tower	12	Adrian Wood	738424
Cooke		<i>Representative required</i>	
Elliot	11	Edward Lockwood	730709
Speer		<i>Representative required</i>	
Thurnham (1-22)		<i>Representative required</i>	
Thurnham (23-41)		<i>Representative required</i>	
Wyatt	7	Gordon Ingleby	723316

DEVIZES RUNNING CLUB

The Devizes Running Club will be undertaking a 10 kilometre race on Sunday 8th March (this coming Sunday). They will cause minimum disturbance to residents but Sarsen have asked for your care when driving along all parts of Thomas Wyatt Road during the course of the race - that goes for stragglers too!

NEED A TRANSLATION?

Sarsen has requested us to ask residents if they need a translation of your Newsletter. As far as we know all Drews Park residents have English as their first language, but if we are wrong please contact us and we will see what we can do. Equally, if you need a larger print copy let us know.

THEATRE NEWS by Mary Stevens



The productions I shall be reserving tickets for at the Wharf this spring and summer are:

Thursday 12th March

“Separate Tables” by Terence Rattigan – social snobbery and sexual tension in Bournemouth! Tickets £8

Thursday 14th May “A Double

Bill”. Actually it’s four plays – “A Man’s Best Friend” by James Saunders, “Score” by Lyndon Brook, “Night” by Harold Pinter and Alan Ayckbourne’s “Countdown”. Followed after the interval by “I include Me Out” written and played by Lewis Cowen. Tickets £8.

Thursday 28th May “Tess of the D’Urbervilles” by Thomas Hardy – no need to tell you what this is about! Tickets £10.

Thursday 25th June “The Blue Room” by David Hare – adult themes and strong language from the outset – Be warned! Was filmed as “La Ronde”. Tickets £8

Please contact Mary Stevens – contact details above as soon as possible so that she knows how many seats to reserve, 6 Speer Court or e-mail marystevens@talktalk.net Tel: 739599

Members – Contact numbers

Norma Humphreys	Chair	12 Wyatt Court
724950	norma@drewspark.co.uk	
Gail Nugent	Secretary	9 Wyatt Court
730118	gail@drewspark.co.uk	
Adrian Wood	Treasurer	12 Clock Tower
738424	adrian@drewspark.co.uk	
Peter Bennis	Member	18, Bowes Court
739419	peter@drewspark.co.uk	
Christine Fitzmaurice	Member	14 Wyatt Court
726448	john@drewspark.co.uk	

Co-opted Members

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