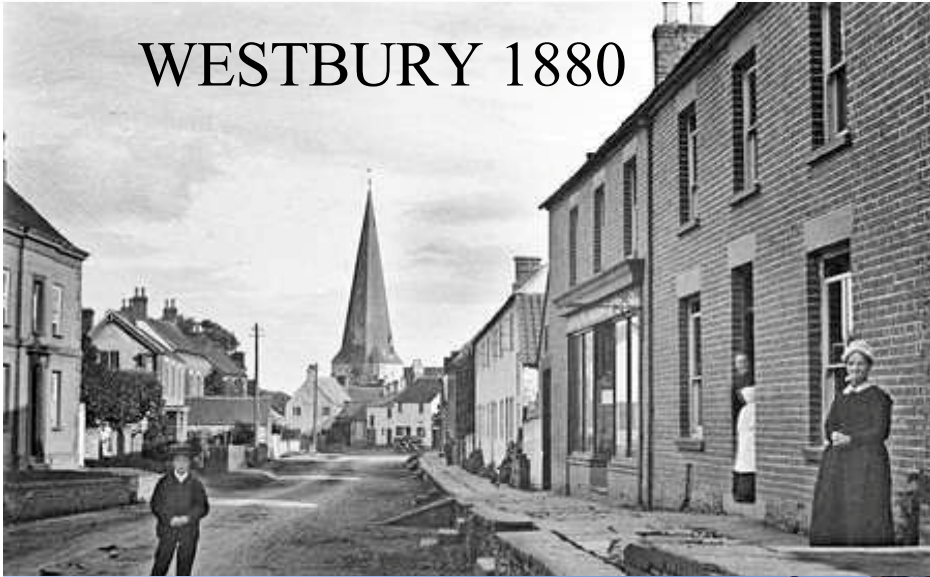


WESTBURY 1880



WESTBURY 2020



Our cover pictures illustrate how little our village has changed in the past 140 years, apart from the fact that there were more people about in those days. It is also an illustration of the strange times we are living through, with village life ‘locked down’ by the threat of a microbe in the shape of a crown. On the other hand, as we reported last month, the pandemic has highlighted a positive aspect of life in our community, with people offering to help those who need help with shopping or collecting prescriptions. People are also staying in touch by all means made available by technology unimagined 140 years ago and, where not long ago our community events would fill the Parish Hall, the same spirit prompts us to check on our neighbours. I’m sure that the same ethos prevails throughout the land in these troubled times, but I can’t help feeling that this corner of Gloucestershire is a bit special. *Ed*

Council Reports

All three layers of local government are involved in helping people through these troubled times. As reported last month, the parish helpline for those who need assistance with shopping or collecting prescriptions can be accessed on **01452 229570** and our amazing volunteers have been doing a great job with this. If you are feeling isolated and alone, and would just like someone to ring you up for a bit of a chat, we can do that too—so just call the helpline.

Obviously, there has been no Parish Council meeting this month, but on Monday we will be having a practice at a ‘virtual’ meeting in the hope that it works well enough for this to be the way we do things for the time being.

Letter from the Chairman of the Parish Council

Dear Parishioners,

It is with great concern that I write this letter to you all during these very difficult times.

The government’s advice to close burial grounds has been modified and it is now permissible to visit the graves of loved ones, although it is important not to congregate in the churchyard or burial ground and to keep at a safe distance from others. We have also been advised to close the Play Area at the Parish Hall due to the possible risks arising from contact with other children and the surfaces of the play equipment.

On a happier point, I would like to thank all of those parishioners, who when asked readily agreed to act as Eyes and Ears for the Parish Council Emergency Scheme and those who hearing of this Scheme, volunteered their assistance. I am also delighted that the WoS Young Farmers Club were so quick off the mark to volunteer their help and have joined forces with the Parish Scheme. It was intended to deliver a leaflet to every household in the Parish, but due to subsequent advice not all households were visited.

If you are over 70 or have health issues and need some help, please contact 01452 229570 where somebody LOCAL will answer your call and arrange for a local volunteer to do what they can to assist you.

Once again a big thank you to all those who have volunteered and shown amazing community spirit to help those in need. Finally I wish you all the best of health and look forward to meeting you after this crisis is over. *Simon Phelps.*
Chairman WoS Parish Council.

District Council Report

The Forest of Dean District Council has been dealing with a lot more claims for Council Tax Support than usual and have had to draft in assistance from other teams in order to cope. Additional funding has been received in order to help working age customers in receipt of Council Tax Support.

The Local Housing Allowance rates have been increased, which means that those in receipt of Housing Benefit for private rented properties will have increases in their Housing Benefit, which will benefit 572 households in the Forest of Dean. Grants have already been paid to over a thousand businesses, totalling more than £10 million and more are being assessed on a daily basis.

Calls to Customer Services have now levelled out, and planning applications continue to be processed, but the number received is much lower than normal. All waste services are running as normal.

To date the community support team has dealt with and helped 449 vulnerable people, many of whom needed help with more than one issue, although the majority of the requests relate to food collection and delivery.

Business information

All businesses eligible for coronavirus related grants need to fill in and return the form on the District Council website as soon as possible. Business Grants are processed on a daily basis with 1,448 grants totalling £15,485m so far having been processed. There is also guidance on the website for those put on 'temporary leave' (furlough), and other information for employers and businesses.

Registration of births

Appointments should now be deferred

until we are through the current pandemic period. New parents are advised that they are now able to claim for child benefit or universal credit prior to the birth being registered where they have been unable to do so because of these measures.

Pets

The RSPCA has advised that, during the outbreak, pet owners should be encouraged to make a plan for their pet to ensure animals get the care they need if owners need to self-isolate or go into hospital.

The Street Wardens are currently focusing on community work, so people will need to ensure dogs are kept on a lead and are kept in secure areas as collecting strays will be taking time away from helping vulnerable families.

Domestic Abuse

Self-isolation and social distancing mean more people are staying at home and this is an extremely risky time for victims of abuse. GDASS (Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service) are working remotely to support victims of domestic abuse on 01452 726570 or for professionals wanting advice 01452 726561 This website may also be useful: <https://www.gdass.org.uk/staying-safe-at-home/>

County Council Help Hub

Anybody who needs help can also register (or be registered by someone else) on the Gloucestershire community help hub:

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/gloucestershires-community-help-hub/>
Phone 01452 583519

Gloucestershire County Council have set this up for those residents who may not have neighbours or families that can easily help with their daily needs. The

Hub is also taking calls from people who wish to offer help. and is receiving this data on a daily basis, and they are calling the individuals (or those making a referral) and connecting them to their local Town/Parish council or local group.

Volunteers

Many volunteers who have registered on the Help Hub are already volunteering locally but if not, their details are sent to local groups to help boost their volunteers. Some have specialist skills or wish to work across the district and these are added to a database should their skills be needed. Skills like befriending and counselling are key to the wellbeing of our community.

Help hub stats as of 23/4/20

I can offer help – **3155**

I need help – **2326**

Someone I know needs help – **893**

My business can help – **277**

County Council updates

Education - A Schools and Education Recovery Planning Team is being set up to consider the issues and challenges with getting schools back to full operating capacity as and when Government confirm this can happen.

Every Mind Matters - We are supporting a national Public Health England campaign to encourage adults to take steps to look after their mental health during this difficult time, using Every Mind Matters and self-care resources. There is now a web page with information and support for children and families during COVID-19.

Daily Covid19 stats—as of 23/4/20

Total Confirmed Cases in South West - **5,411**

Total Confirmed Cases in Gloucestershire - **1,021**

Total Deaths in Gloucestershire - **152**



'Nothing serious. Try cutting down on your intake of coronavirus news for a couple of weeks'.



The hall is still closed along with the play area but there are still some bills to pay and Sarah Mitten, our Treasurer, has this in hand along with all the other monetary issues. She has advised that there are no rates to pay and she is also trying to reduce the direct debits for electricity and gas.

A keypad for the surgery has been attached to the outside wall of the hall for the NHS assessment hub which we previously advised was going to happen at the Surgery.

We may try to have some sort of a meeting soon so that we can ensure we don't forget about the hall, and by then we may have a better idea as to what the future may hold and what plans we may be able to make. We have never been in this position before and we, like a lot of others, are finding our way with the help of others and there are things that we will learn from it, but in the meantime please:

Stay well and keep safe

Jan D'Ambrogio

Local businesses

We will try to include as much as we can about local businesses that are up and running and able to help supply the community's needs. If you are able to supply any new information on this subject for the next edition of WoSP, please do so.

Farm & Country Elton GL14 1JG
tel/fax:01452 760511 mob: 07779 334445 Open for business as usual.
Mon-Fri 8:30am-5:30pm; Sat 9:00am-2:00pm Orders can be taken on phone ready for collection or happy to deliver. More information from Farm & Country Agricultural Service on Facebook. Lots of seasonal plants to cheer you up and seeds aplenty. Also compost, bark, farmyard manure etc. which you can pick up with your essentials.

Leaf Creative, Ross Rd, Huntley GL19 3EX 01452 830837
Website <https://www.leafcreative.co.uk>
Email:- enquiries@leafcreative.co.uk
Delivering free to local addresses.

Still open for essential food supplies, tomato, chilli and some vegetable plants but other gardening supplies have to be delivered as the garden centre is closed to the public. The Fernery cafe is now doing takeaway food and local deliveries. Email fernery@leafcreative.co.uk

Fairview Gardener & Tea Room-
Chapel Lane, Birdwood
E-mail orders and contact details to Info@thefairviewgardener.co.uk or call 01452 750436 . Delivery service

The Lyon Inn
Now offering take-away and deliveries within 4 miles on Thurs, Frid and Sat. Basics of pizza and fish & chips but a weekly specials board with other options. More info on Facebook page or email hello@thelyoninn.co.uk or call

01452 760221.

The Barn at Severn & Wye

The food hall, deli and fish market remain open for business as usual

NB change to opening hours

Tuesday —Saturday 9.00am –4.00pm

Home delivery and collection are also available. Complete the order form on the website severnandwye.co.uk or call 01452 760191, or Email homedelivery@severnandwye.co.uk

The range of products has been extended to include many new items to address the current shortages experienced in supermarkets.

Over Farm

www.overfarm.co.uk T 01452 341510

The shop is open and well-stocked. Card payment only. Also able to offer click and collect and delivery for orders over £35 to the Westbury area. Orders need to be placed via the online shop by Wednesday each week and are delivered on Thursday by their lovely volunteer named Rob.

Resources for Worship in these trying times

In these times when our worship together is curtailed, you may be interested in a range of resources available to help.

The Church of England offers 4 services a day on its own website. I myself will use morning prayer at 8.00am and evening prayer at 9.30pm. The services may be found at:

churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-in-service-daily-prayer
Gloucester diocese also offers resources which may help, at: -
gloucester.anglican.org/your-ministry/your-prayer.

Here you will find eight different Prayer Booklets, to reflect eight different styles of praying so you will be sure to find

one that suits you. You can download or print them.

BBC1 carries worship from Hereford Cathedral at 11.00am and Songs of Praise from Glasgow Cathedral at 1.15pm. The churches of Cinderford have an excellent youtube channel, which the Vicar of St.Stephen's has said we are welcome to visit and use. It is at: [cinderfordchurches.org.uk/Our You Tube Channel](http://cinderfordchurches.org.uk/OurYou Tube Channel)

If any of you would like a list of the Sunday bible readings for the month, a copy of my sermon notes for the week, or a shortened Communion Service for the current week, then please email: stevewillstay@gmail.com or phone 760756. The same resources are available from parish wardens. May God be with us all. *Rev. Steve Taylor.*

Letter from the Vicar

Dear Friends,

If you look at the history of God's people down the centuries and across the continents, then you would have to say that things have not always gone well. Life has rarely been simple, and often painful. There have been plagues, persecutions, wars, famines, fires and floods, a great deal in fact to lead us to question why these things happen, if God is all powerful and omniscient. To put it in its most common form, the question is, "Why do bad things happen to good people?" The correct answer to this question is "because we are broken people in a broken world." Two tempting but incorrect answers are "God doesn't care" or "God can't act".

Moving away from the world of cliché and platitude for a moment, there is no doubt that the church has always found it hard to speak with one voice in any time of national trial. During and after

the two World Wars there was an immense conflict, within our nation and our church, between the values of patriotism and pacifism, with the vast majority of rational people being able to understand both views, while usually preferring the former. In our contrasting situation now, there is nevertheless a conflict of similar scope between collective responsibility and individual liberty, or the needs of the many versus the needs of the one. While we might struggle in our minds to resolve this, all the while around the world men, women and children are dying in large numbers. We hope and pray for relief, while fearing further disaster. From where is our help to come?

The Prince of Wales is surely right to say it will come from within ourselves, as we find resilience we did not know we had. Her Majesty the Queen is surely right when she says it will come from our collective strength and pride as communities within our great nation. The Archbishops are surely right when they remind us of the presence of God in days of darkness gone by. The pages of scripture are certainly right when they tell of God never abandoning his people, despite slavery, invasion, national exile or a host of other disasters. Finally it is our Saviour himself, on the cross and in the Easter garden, who reminds us that death has no lasting victory. He is absolutely right. So in the light of these many sources of encouragement and resolve, this is surely enough to persuade us that we are never alone, not even on the day of greatest anguish and despair. May God's peace and power rest in our hearts, today and always, whatever tomorrow brings.

Rev. Steve.

A seminar on time travel will be held two weeks ago

Westbury Benefice Magazine Distribution for May 2020

The May parish magazine will be delivered firstly by email, so could subscribers please make sure their normal distributor, the Editor or the Vicar has their email address. It will also be emailed to all Church Council and congregation, so that it can be sent on to other friends and neighbours by email. Subscribers not on email could obtain magazines by normal distribution, though fewer rounds will be delivered this time. We are grateful to new volunteer distributors. A small number of magazines can be delivered by post, if the Editor has your postal address. If you don't receive a copy by the last day or two of April, then please email or telephone the editor to give your contact details. As a last resort individual copies, by pre-arrangement only, can be collected from the Vicar or the Editor. Similar arrangements may need to be used again in June. Thank you all for your patience.

Yvonne Jones, Editor (762052)
Steve Taylor, Vicar (760756)

Time for us girls!

*By Pam Ayres, 2020 and to be found on
her Facebook page*

I'm normally a social girl
I love to meet my mates
But lately with the virus here
We can't go out the gates.
You see, we are the 'oldies' now
We need to stay inside
If they haven't seen us for a while
They'll think we've upped and died.

They'll never know the things we did
Before we got this old
There wasn't any Facebook
So not everything was told.
We may seem sweet old ladies
Who would never be uncouth
But we grew up in the 60s -
If you only knew the truth!
There was sex and drugs and rock 'n roll
The pill and miniskirts
We smoked, we drank, we partied
And were quite outrageous flirts.
Then we settled down, got married
And turned into someone's mum,
Somebody's wife, then nana,
Who on earth did we become?
We didn't mind the change of pace
Because our lives were full
But to bury us before we're dead
Is like a red rag to a bull!
So here you find me stuck inside
For 4 weeks, maybe more
I finally found myself again
Then I had to close the door!
It didn't really bother me
I'd while away the hour
I'd bake for all the family
But I've got no flaming flour!
Now Netflix is just wonderful
I like a gutsy thriller
I'm swooning over Idris
Or some random sexy killer.
At least I've got a stash of booze
For when I'm being idle
There's wine and whiskey, even gin
If I'm feeling suicidal!
So let's all drink to lockdown
To recovery and health
And hope this awful virus
Doesn't decimate our wealth.
We'll all get through the crisis
And be back to join our mates
Just hoping I'm not far too wide
To fit through the flaming gates!



*Pam Ayres
MBE: English
Poet, Comedian and
National
Treasure.*

She hits the nail on the head. She makes us laugh, and if we can see ourselves in her witty words it's all the funnier. A dose of Pam does us good; much like a visit to the WoS panto.

But Pam, for all her popularity, doesn't claim to be a conventional poet. In an interview a few years ago, before an appearance in the Hampstead and Highgate Literary Festival, she said "I never claimed to be a serious poet - the word poet is highly explosive". She plays down her talent with typical modesty.

Pam's fame began when she won a TV talent show, called 'Opportunity Knocks', (presented at that time by Hughie Green) in 1975 at the age of twenty-eight. Within days her life had changed with a sack of fan mail and the exciting offer of a starring role in a cream cheese advertisement.

Pam's memoir 'The Necessary Aptitude' tells of her impoverished childhood. She was the youngest of six. She says that it isn't a hard luck story but more of a record of 'a way of village life' that no longer exists. "We didn't have any sanitation, but neither did anyone else." Pam goes on to say "We had great freedom, the whole countryside to play with. There was an endless range of fun."

For Pam's mother the story was different. It was an interminable round of preparing large meals, with little time to spare. Pam failed the 'eleven plus' exam and left school at the age of fifteen, working at tedious secretarial jobs.

She liked going to folk clubs in the early 70's but couldn't sing, so she found another way to join in with her short and snappy verses - and they made people laugh.

Pam continues to write, as she has always has, and she appreciates how fortunate she has been. "I know that I've had an extraordinary life but I remain a very ordinary person."

Ali Humphries April 2020

Information from an interview by Bridget Gatton which was published in 'Ham & High', July 2012 and also from Wikipedia.

March Weather Report

After record breaking rainfall in February, March brought us steadily improving weather conditions, even if everything else was going badly wrong. Although we half expect March to come in like a lion, this didn't happen, though the 1st was the wettest day of the month with 9mm of rain. After that, we had very light winds, only 63mm of rain over 15 days and no rainfall at all after 21st March. Surprisingly though, there were 11 frosty nights, the coldest being 5th/6th March, when the temperature dropped to -4C. However a maximum temperature of 17C warmed us up on 10th and 24th of the month and encouraged us out into our gardens. *Thanks to Simon Phelps for sharing these records with us.*



'And you have two minutes on your chosen subject—the life and times of Christine Keeler'



Owing to the current situation there has been a certain amount of rejigging going on, not unusual these days. The March AGM was postponed and will be rescheduled later in the year - memories will surely be tested to the max when members are asked to approve 18 month old minutes but we shall manage.

The Spring production has become the Autumn production, pencilled in for 8/9/10th October assuming...er....well, assuming the coast is clear. The cast have their scripts which I know they will be poring over and committing to memory in case we need to go from rehearsal to performance in a short space of time. As it's a whodunit, I can say no more.

Work is in progress for next year's Pantomime, and there is already a random smattering of ideas in circulation that just need to be brought together with a script, but time is a commodity that we seem to have plenty of at the moment to get that done.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of Westbury Players formation as an organization and we had hoped to celebrate in June with a summer party. That looks somewhat doubtful at the moment but we will keep members informed. On that subject, should readers wish to become active members please email westburyplayers@gmail.com or maybrass@btinternet.com or you can find us through our Facebook Page. Keep well everyone! *Mark Landon*

Westbury-on-Severn Parish
Church Friends
100 CLUB



1st: 100 Jane Broad £50
2nd: 77 Wendy Winfield
£20
3rd: 36 Mrs D'Ambrogio
£10

Summer Show

A Summer Show this September is looking extremely doubtful, but please still plant your sunflowers so that we can have a grand display at the Hall



The countryside charity
Gloucestershire

In its new Local Plan, the Forest of Dean will have to find space to build 8,000 new homes between now and 2041. Why? Because central government has determined this figure, not because the local population is naturally growing at this rate. Once built, this increase in houses will result in population growth in the district of about 20%. Worryingly, in arriving at this number of new houses, no account is taken of existing employment within the area or what infrastructure is in place to cope with such an increase. And even more worryingly, no account

is taken of the impact more traffic will have on an already congested road system. Our Forest of Dean district Chair, Simon Murray, has written about the Local Plan and its potential impacts for the people who live there and the full article can be found on our website at:-

<https://www.cpreglos.org.uk/>

Do you want to have your say on the local plans in your area? Contact us and we'll put you in touch with your local district volunteer team. Email:-

lesley.painter@cpreglos.org.uk

If you are interested in becoming a member of CPRE Gloucestershire so that we can campaign on your behalf using our network of skilled volunteers please do so via our Facebook page or website.

If you are worried about self-isolation

call us for FREE on 0800 048 7035

Monday to Friday 9:00am - 5:00pm
or visit www.guidedposts.org.uk

#StayConnected

Stay Connected is a free helpline for anyone anxious about self-isolation or who needs support at this time.

A call with the helpline can include:

- Practical guidance to staying in contact with families and friends
- Planning for essentials including food, shopping and medication
- Tips on wellbeing
- Advice for carers/family members
- A listening ear and a friendly conversation

Contact Stay Connected on:

0800 048 7035

(Monday to Friday 9.00-5.00)

or Email: hereinfo@guidedposts.org.uk

Visit Stay Connected online for

What do you call someone who's born in London, grows up in Paris and then dies in Moscow?

Dead.

Late Soccer Special

by Mark Landon

(overlooked by Ed and Mrs Ed for the last edition but included as a bit of nostalgia this month!)

Westbury Utd 0-3 Viney St Swithins

Westbury crashed to a second home defeat after being thoroughly outplayed by top of the table Viney St Swithins on Saturday 15th March.

After a bright start Westbury fell behind as a mix up at the back left Sean The Keep red faced after calling for the ball and then assumed everyone would ignore him - but they dumbfounded him by leaving the ball alone as instructed



John Westby pleading his innocence to the referee in the 1st half

and it rolled into the net. This distracted the crowd who, until this point had been more concerned with self isolating each other and performing a wide array of non-contact handshakes.

Viney doubled their lead shortly after with a well worked move (apparently, I didn't see it properly) and from there Westbury began to labour. John Westby belied his years charging around with gusto and making himself unpopular with the opposition and indeed their supporters. Young Morgan led the front line bravely but rarely escaped a well organised Viney back line. Debutant Ben brought some welcome height to the attack and Andrew Cueto put in a surprisingly disciplined display at left back.



Andrew Cueto at full gallop

Sadly Viney managed to add a third in the second half although Sean the Keep pulled off a spectacular double save and Regan Warrington had what was described as the best shot of the match at the end (which missed, obviously). After the fiasco of last weeks pizza offering, Director of Football Tempest forgot to bring any at all this week and hurriedly put together some sort of

public health concern excuse to explain the absence of post match nibbles before berating the press for an array of global crises and not being cast in Westbury Players' upcoming production.

Lockdown Sport

Apart from the tardy publishing of the last league game of the truncated season (*see above*), sports news is pretty thin on the ground this month. However I have scavenged some items of what passes for news these days.

In a tense match at the Newnham "Back Garden" Course, Westbury FC XI captain Tom Landon went down 3 and 2 in the Pitch and Putt challenge. After a tense front nine, with the scores level, your WoSP Sports correspondent went ahead after Landon sent his drive into the pond (well, more of a chip). Further drama followed on the next hole where a cruel bounce off the admittedly poorly prepared green sent his ball into the extremely sharp Yukka plant drawing another shot penalty. Your correspondent was not spared either with a four putt on the next hole including an air shot receiving a sharp jab up the backside from the aforementioned Yukka bush whilst bending down for the putt - it will be cut down in future when the greenkeeper is looking the other way. Going into the final three holes, Landon needed a miracle but his approach to the green was deflected off the washing line into the light rough and his challenge fell apart.

In other news, Director of Football Tempest held his latest Press conference on Zoom. He started off in a furious frame of mind as he thought that a Zoom was an ice lolly (and his favourite at that) when he agreed to do it,

before bewailing the fact that he now has 75 players available as they haven't anything else to do on a Saturday. When asked about whether he was himself using the magnificent Adsett facilities currently at his disposal to get fit for next season, he stormed off pulling the plug out of his computer as he went, and went off to stare at a wall. Meanwhile rumours swirl that the Club Secretary Dave D'Ambrogio has purchased a multi gym in order to "bulk up" for next season, although he claims it's for his son - we shall see soon enough.

In cricket news, there isn't any - although, throughout the village, extravagant forward defensive strokes are being rehearsed in various kitchens, sitting rooms and gardens which should lead to some low scoring matches when the season eventually starts. One can be sure that any player able to pull off a competent square cut or hook shot will also be in the market for replacement crockery and light fittings.

Last item - Westbury FC Captain has just claimed his keepie-uppie count was rather low "because I've got the wrong trousers on" before retreating to reconsider tactics. *Mark Landon*



Wicket looking full of runs for the start of the season - whenever that is !

Westbury Rugby



Following the 'lockdown', Westbury-on-Severn RFC have not been sitting around simply eating and drinking. Coach Steve Wood sent out a detailed training plan to be sure the boys all stay in tip top shape. Starting every morning at 7.00 am after milking, Chairman Ken Boulton leads the hot Yoga with Yoda Ken session from the kitchen of his Rodley farm, and it's been a big hit with the chaps.

Vice Chair Si Roberts runs an evening class that starts with an educational approach on mindfulness about the railways and stations of the district, and then leads a vigorous spin class again via Skype. It's been very well received and Simon said "I've never seen so much sweat and effort from the lads - next week I hope some of them will be able to take the stabilisers off their bikes!"

Peter Miles



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