



# THE GOSSIP TREE

News & Views from the Parish of FONTMELL MAGNA

This issue is kindly sponsored by St. Andrew's  
Open House

April  
2017  
Issue 278

## WELCOME to 'OPEN HOUSE' in St. Andrew's Church



Please come and join us for coffee/tea or hot chocolate at "Open House" in our comfortable social area at the back of St. Andrew's Church. Every Friday morning from 10.30am to 12.00 noon starting again on **Friday 28<sup>th</sup> April**.



"Open House" is a friendly gathering, which runs through the summer months and we look forward to welcoming friends old and new! Every Friday morning we provide refreshments and a warm welcome – a place to meet and relax over a cup of coffee/tea or hot chocolate. We have books for people to borrow and sometimes garden produce, home-made cakes and other 'goodies' to buy and there is a Children's Corner to keep the little ones happy! "Open House" is for **everyone** in Fontmell village and beyond – so please do come along, we'd love to see you!

**Remember! Every Friday 10.30am – 12 noon in St. Andrew's Church.**  
**A warm and friendly welcome awaits you!**

## Fontmell Magna Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting is a public meeting open to all residents of Fontmell Magna Parish. It will be held on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May at 7.00pm in the hall of St. Andrew's Primary School immediately before the Parish Council AGM and bi-monthly meeting.

All parish based clubs, societies and similar organisations are invited to report briefly on their previous year's activities and their proposals for the next twelve months. It is requested that all presentations last no more than 3 minutes. Any representative from a club/society/organisation who wishes to give a report, should inform the Acting Clerk to the Parish Council by Friday 21st April: Robin East, Chapel Cottage, Lurmer Street, Fontmell Magna email: [clerk@fontmellmagnapc.co.uk](mailto:clerk@fontmellmagnapc.co.uk). As in previous years, individual invitations will not be sent.

## Superfast Dorset Update

Superfast Dorset is rolling out faster, more reliable fibre broadband across Dorset. With fibre broadband:

- Everyone in your home can be online at the same time.
- Download and watch your favourite TV shows, films and sports when you want and without annoying buffering.
- Keep in touch with friends and family by video calling.
- Work from home with a faster and more reliable connection.

Superfast broadband is available in Fontmell Magna and Bedchester as a result of the fibre rollout. Residents in these communities should contact providers to check what is available to them. Superfast Dorset has plans, subject to detailed survey, to bring fibre broadband to **Hartgrove** during 2017 though, as always, individual speeds and availability will vary. To be the first to know when fibre broadband becomes available, register to be emailed on [www.dorsetforyou.com/superfast](http://www.dorsetforyou.com/superfast)

## Garden Club

On Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> March, the Garden Club enjoyed an excellent talk by Stephen Candy, who is Head Gardener at Kingston Lacy. Stephen, with a full-time team of five, and some 50 volunteers, looks after the gardens and woodland, and his particular interest has been the rejuvenation of the kitchen garden. Some of the trees are four hundred years old (one was planted by the Duke of Wellington) and the limes and clouded yew need particular care. Elsewhere, Stephen has access to papers left by Henrietta Bankes showing how the gardens were in former times, and great care is taken to keep colours and plant sizes as she designed them.

Kingston Lacy is famous for its snowdrops – it has 40 varieties in the snowdrop walk, which continues into carpets of daffodils, then bluebells. Their 26 varieties of *anemone nemorosa* form part of the national collection. Stephen illustrated his talk with many beautiful slides of both plants and wildlife, which emphasised the diversity of the different garden areas.

It was a very enjoyable and informative evening and we are very grateful to Stephen for his enthusiasm.

Robert McCurrach

## Notices – April 2017

### St. Andrew's Church

Sun	2nd	8.00am	Holy Communion (BCP)
Sun	9th	10.00am	Palm Sunday Holy Communion (CW)
Fri	14th	9.30am	Act of Witness at the Gossip Tree
Sun	16th	10.00am	Easter Day Holy Communion (CW)
Sun	23rd	11.00am	Holy Communion (CW)
Sun	30th	11.00am	Benefice Service at Iwerne

Fri 28th 10.30am Open House  
Prayers each Tuesday at 9.00am

### Annual Parochial Church meeting

Thur 6<sup>th</sup> at 7.30pm in the church.  
Details Barry Roberts 811906

### Parish Council

No meeting this month - next meeting Monday 8th May. Acting Parish Clerk: Robin East 812349

### The Surgery

Mon - Thur 8.00am - 12 noon. Enquiries 812058

### Village Shop & Post Office

Mon - Fri 8.00am to 6.00pm  
Sat 9.00am to 1.00pm  
Sun 9.00am to 12.00 noon  
Enquiries 811201

### The Fontmell – Opening Hours

Bar 11.00am to 10.00pm (Sun, Mon & Tue)  
11.00pm (Wed & Thur), 12.00 midnight (Fri & Sat)  
Kitchen 12.00 noon to 2.00pm (2.30pm Fri & Sat) & 6.00 to 9.00pm (9.30pm Fri & Sat); Sun 12.00 noon to 8.00pm

### Iwerne Valley Walking Group

Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> 10.00am. For details please contact leaders Pam Payne on 811251 or Penny Wintle on 812222

### Bell-ringing

Tue 18th Practice 7.30 to 8.30pm  
Details Chris Bellers 811734

### Bin Collection Dates

W/C 3rd & 17th - Recycling & Food  
W/C 10th & 24th - Rubbish & Food

### St Andrew's School

Fri 7th - Break up for Easter  
Mon 24th - Summer Term starts

### Village Hall events - see over

### Are you interested in...

The Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan (FMNP) Group is looking at ways to respond to what residents said (in last year's community questionnaire) they would like to see happen in the parish. Currently we are trying to gauge interest in the scouting/guiding movement. If you are a young person, or the parent/guardian of a young person, who would like to join a Rainbows/Brownies/Guides or Beavers/Cubs/Scouts group in the parish, please email [fmplanbh@btinternet.com](mailto:fmplanbh@btinternet.com) to let us know. We are just seeking to gauge the level of interest at this stage and you do not need to send your name.

Thank you from the FMNP Group

## Events in the Village Hall

### Sunday Breakfast

Sun 2nd at 9.00am. Informal breakfast run by St Andrew's Church. All welcome. Free! Any questions Janet Smith 811904

### Fontmell Magna & District

#### Society

Fri 7th at 7.30pm. 'Shaftesbury's Abbey – 600 years of history' by Bill Owen

Details Dick Stainer 811153

### Fontmell Film Group

Wed 12th - 'A Streetcat Named Bob' (12a). Doors open 7.00pm. Details Libby Gendall 811551

### North Dorset Wildlife Trust

Wed 19th - illustrated talk on 'The wildlife of Brownsea Island' by Chris Thain, DWT's Brownsea Island manager. 7.30pm. Details Geoff Peters 811546

### Archive Society

Thur 20th 4.00pm to 5.50pm. Details Roger Hillman 811878

### Garden Club

Thur 20th 7.30pm. Social Evening. Details Robert McCurrach 812077

### Pilates

Mon 6.30 to 7.30pm. STOTT Pilates Matwork with props. Details Vicci Gillett 07940 961221 [www.stable-bodies.co.uk](http://www.stable-bodies.co.uk) also  
Tues 9.15 to 10.15am and 10.30 to 11.30am. Details Lyn O'Neill 07989 192424

### Fontmell Magna Art Club

Tues 2.00 to 4.00pm. Details Sandra Jelbart 812468

### Carpet Bowls Club

Thur 6th, 13th and 27th, and Fri 21st 7.30pm. Details Gerry Bone 811814

### Taekwon-do

Tues 8.00 to 9.00pm. Fri 6.00 to 7.00pm. Details Sam Donohoo 07584 039351

To book the Hall, call Catherine Allard on 812047 or email [catherineallard1980@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:catherineallard1980@hotmail.co.uk)

## Fete – dates for your diary

Fete Meetings for 2017 will be held in the Village Hall at 7.30pm on the following Wednesdays: 22<sup>nd</sup> March, 10<sup>th</sup> May, 7<sup>th</sup> June, 12<sup>th</sup> July, 30<sup>th</sup> August, 25<sup>th</sup> October and 22<sup>nd</sup> November. The Fete itself is on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> September. Hannah Lister 811120

## Parish Council

The following items were discussed at the meeting held at 7.00pm on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2017.

### Public Questions

Chris Bellers reported that, following notification by the PC, the concrete blocks had been removed from the chalk pit carpark at the top of Fontmell Hill. However, there were now several containers of rapeseed oil and some old tyres dumped there. Cllr. East would report this but said that anyone could report fly-tipping on the [dorsetforyou](http://dorsetforyou.com) website. Chris also asked when the phone box at Bedchester would be repainted, as this had been promised by the end of February. Cllr. East had reminded the contractor (Malcolm Jenkins) but had not received any reply - local residents are welcome to help. Bill Hall asked about the money now available to be spent on the A350/C13. This is covered under *Highways* below.

### Parish Council Meeting

Six parish councillors were present, and 32 members of the public. Apologies for absence from DCC Cllr. D. Croney and apologies for lateness from NDDC Cllr. C. Langham (arrived 7.30pm). Cllr. Horstead said that the next meeting would also start at 7.00pm as it would be preceded by the Annual Parish Meeting for clubs and societies etc. to report on their activities (for which individual invitations would not be sent) as well as the AGM.

Cllr. Graham Carr-Jones, the current leader of NDDC, introduced himself and said he would be standing as a candidate for Stalbridge and the Beacons in the forthcoming local elections on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> May 2017 (Fontmell Magna is included in this area, following boundary changes).

There were no declarations of interest.

### Planning

*Springhead Distillery*. Cllr. East reported that both the applicant and his representative, having provided written responses to the PC, had decided not to attend the PC meetings. The biggest concern with this application for an 'artisan distillery' of gin, vodka and whisky was risk: risk to the character of the village and risk to Springhead Trust. It has taken four months to get a response from NDDC to the PC's letter of 14<sup>th</sup> September 2016 to NDDC, which set out 17 issues or concerns. There had been a constructive meeting last week with Steve Savage, Highways and Robert Lennis, Planning Officer. While, according to the Planning Officer, there were no planning reasons for refusing the application, it appears that 21 conditions will be imposed which will satisfy many of the PC's concerns. The proposed distillery will be employing four or five staff between 7.00am and 11.00pm but, as it will store bonded spirits, 24-hour security is needed, entailing security lights. As the site is close to the AONB, all external lighting must be approved by the Planning Office, to ensure there is no unnecessary light pollution. Despite claims on their website that there will be a visitors' centre (see [www.springheaddistillery.com](http://www.springheaddistillery.com)), there will be a planning condition that no retail outlet or shop selling distillery products can be operated. Springhead Trust should regularly monitor water quality so that concerns can be reported to the Environment Agency. Highways would be monitoring traffic damage both during and after the works had been completed, and residents were asked to report any damage they notice. Robert McCurrach pointed out that a planning application in Kent had been refused on the grounds that there was not enough benefit for the local community compared with the companies involved. Cllr. East would mention this in his response. Cllr. Langham stated, in response to the PC's request, that she will ask the Planning Committee to make a site visit before making a decision.

The PC had no objection to the planning applications in respect of Barn Cottage (West Street) or Hartgrove Cottage (Parsons Lane, Hartgrove).

### Minutes

The minutes of the last PC meeting on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> January were approved and signed.

### Matters arising

The proposal for two unitary authorities is going

ahead, despite objections from Purbeck and East Dorset. Cllr. Crompton has resigned, and a notice of vacancy has been posted. Unless 10 people request an election for a new councillor, the PC can co-opt one. Regarding the phone box by the shop/Post Office, the PC had notified BT that it would prefer for the box not to be removed until there was adequate mobile phone coverage. However, it appears that BT's application for blanket planning permission to remove all 'redundant' phone boxes has been refused, so there is no immediate threat.

### County/District Councillors' Report

The PC agreed to post the monthly reports on the PC's website: [www.fontmellmagnapc.co.uk](http://www.fontmellmagnapc.co.uk)

### Finance

The acting RFO reported that the PC's accounts currently held £8,901.34. Cllr. Horstead said that the PC meeting in July would review the Financial Regulations.

### Standing Orders

The Standing Orders were reviewed and agreed, subject to a strong recommendation that all new councillors should have access to email. It was clarified that the Neighbourhood Plan Group is a working party and not a committee or sub-committee and so is not subject to PC Standing Orders.

### Highways

Cllr. East reported that £2½ million had been made available for improvements to the A350 and C13 routes. He understands that this will be used to: resurface or repair stretches of the A350 between Shaftesbury and Blandford; to review all road signs on the A350 and C13, ensuring that there are no unnecessary signs and that all necessary signs are in the correct place; to review speed limits; and to address pinch points. Certain junctions would be improved, such as at Gore Clump (where the two roads joining the C13 would be made one way). Freight routes would be reviewed and co-ordinated with neighbouring counties and, if possible, SatNav influenced. Cllr. East had been led to believe that most of the proposals in the 2014 Fontmell Magna Traffic Management Scheme would be in place by the end of the year e.g. gates at the two entrances to the village on the A350 and a pinch point on South Street. He was happy to circulate a copy of the Scheme to anyone who wants it (email [robinm47@gmail.com](mailto:robinm47@gmail.com)).

### Neighbourhood Plan

Cllr. Humphreys reported that the Plan's draft statement of Vision and Objectives had been circulated to the PC. An Options Consultation on development sites and green spaces will take place on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> March in the Village Hall, open to the whole parish community. For those unable to attend, information will be available on the Parish Council website (under Neighbourhood Plan) and residents can comment by Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> April. The PC had been served with notice to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment. The PC acknowledged the substantial effort being made by volunteers in the working party to develop the Neighbourhood Plan.

### Dorset Best Kept Village Competition 2017

Fontmell Magna last won this competition in 2009 and it was about time we entered again. The PC therefore appealed for a volunteer from the parish to come forward to lead this project.

### Community Defibrillator

Capital, maintenance and personnel needs to be reviewed and to be on 8th May agenda.

### Future of Westminster Community Hospital

The PC had written to object to the closure of beds.

### The Gossip Tree

It was agreed to publish The Gossip Tree on the PC's website.

### Other business

Gary Payne said that one of the cherry trees by the War Memorial needs attention.

Marianne Wheatley has indicated she is considering resuming the role of Clerk and RFO to the PC in August.

The meeting closed at 8.43pm.

The next PC meeting will be on Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May following the Annual Parish Meeting and PC AGM - all in the School Hall, starting at 7.00pm. **Page 2**

### North Dorset Wildlife Trust

Brownsea Island is home to a myriad of wildlife species and has a variety of important habitats including reedbeds, lagoons, pine woods and flooded woodland. The Dorset Wildlife Trust leases 101 hectares of the island from the National Trust. This nature reserve offers over-wintering for many species, including avocets and godwits (black and bar tailed), and in summer you'll hear the sounds of chiffchaff and willow warblers and see an abundance of butterflies. Autumn is the best time for spotting our native red squirrels.

DWT's Brownsea Island manager, Chris Thain, is giving an illustrated talk on the wildlife of Brownsea Island on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> April at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. A small charge of £2 is requested to help cover costs and refreshments (tea/coffee & biscuits) are included. There is no cost for children under 16.

### Dates for your diary:

Dawn Chorus Walks on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> May. Meet at Bere Marsh Farm near Child Okeford at 4.45am for a 5.00am start. The cost is £12 and includes a full Farmhouse Breakfast afterwards. Numbers are strictly limited so booking is essential. Please contact Anna Aubrey on 07970903679.

### Fontmell Magna and District Society

Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March – Valerie Dyson – 'The Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance'

If anyone had doubts as to why we need an air ambulance in this county, a photograph showing the A303 in complete gridlock soon put these to rest. From its base in Henstridge, the helicopter can reach the most westerly point in Somerset in nineteen minutes and the most southerly point in Dorset in twelve minutes.

Valerie is a volunteer with our Air Ambulance charity and she explained how the service works. You dial 999 in the normal way and, if the people taking the call decide a helicopter is needed, it can be airborne in three minutes. There are always three members of staff on board, a pilot with extra skills in low-level flying, a paramedic with extra skills in dealing with trauma and a doctor.

The service is funded entirely by donations from the public. Valerie gave us a real insight into their work. If we did not already know how important it is to support them, our eyes were soon opened. In the end, it is an insurance policy for all of us. On Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May, local resident Eileen Hall will be doing a sponsored 'Wing Walk' in aid of the Air Ambulance.

Our next talk will be on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April, when we will hear Bill Owen talking about 'Shaftesbury's Abbey – 600 years of history'.

Michael Golberg

### Fontmell Films

Our film on Wednesday 12th April is the British family drama 'A Street Cat Named Bob' (12A). Based on the best-selling book, the film tells the true, feel good story of how James Bowen, a busker and recovering drug addict, has his life transformed after he meets a stray ginger cat. Starring Luke Treadaway, Ruta Gedmintas and Joanne Froggatt, not forgetting Bob the Cat!

Tickets £6 from Fontmell Post Office or £6.50 on the door. Doors and the bar open at 7.00pm and the film starts at 7.30pm. We look forward to seeing you and don't forget your cushion!

For more details please call Libby on 01747 811551.

This is our last film until September - full details of the Autumn programme will be included in the August edition of The Gossip Tree.

Libby Gendall

### Iwerne Valley Walking Group

#### Walk - Saturday 18 February

It was a grey and misty day when 15 adults, 1 child and 2 dogs set off for a four mile walk in Wareham Forest. We hadn't gone far before the sun came out and we had a beautiful and warm day. We mostly walked on level ground with only one hill so the going was easy (no stiles). Our route was made up of two loops. The last grassy track had some boggy patches but we made it through without mishap. Returning to The Silent Woman pub many had their lunch outside as it was lovely for February. It was a most enjoyable walk.

Jane Wallace

### Brookland Wood

Barry Roberts and I have now finished cutting a fresh patch of hazel at the Western side of the wood. Similar work in previous years has resulted in areas at different stages of regeneration, with more - or less - light reaching the ground vegetation and so creating a series of distinct wildlife habitats, a key aspect of coppice management. Some of the better rods will be used for hurdles; the heavier cuttings go as feedstock to the Dorset Charcoal Company with the proceeds helping to cover other costs of maintaining the wood. Beanpoles and peas-sticks will be available from me in due course, sold in aid of the Woodland Trust.

George Darwall 811888

### Piano Club

St Andrew's School piano club is holding a "tea for two" session on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April from 2.00 – 3.00 pm in the school hall at St Andrew's School. The young pianists from the school have joined forces to play duets and would welcome villagers to come and listen to their pieces. Tea and hot cross buns will be served during this informal piano club session. We would love to see you.

Sian Highnam

### Village weather for February 2017



A windy wet start and end to the month. A cold spell (5th to 13th) then relatively mild and damp. A few random sunny days. 17 rain days. 4 air frost. 14 ground frost. 1 day sleet/snow.

Comp. Figures	2017	2016
Rain (most 21.5 mm on 1st)	58.6 mm	83.4 mm
Sunshine	48.8 hr (av. 1.74)	88.3 hr
Max mean temp. (highest 14.1 °C on 18th & 22nd)	9.55 °C	9.3 °C
Min mean temp. (lowest - 2.4 °C on 6th)	3.23 °C	1.7 °C

### Full Pink Moon – Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> April

The Full Moon in April is traditionally called the Full Pink Moon as it was said to herald the appearance of one of the first Spring flowers – the grass pink orchid or wild ground phlox. It is also called the Sprouting Grass Moon, the Growing Moon and the Egg Moon. Many coastal tribes called it the Full Fish Moon because this was the time that fish swam upstream to spawn.



In 2017, this April Full Moon is also the **Paschal Full Moon**. Paschal is an ecclesiastical, rather than astronomical, term and derives from the Aramaic word meaning Passover. It is solely used to determine the date of Easter. Essentially, the Paschal Full Moon is the first Full Moon after the spring equinox (as long as the Full Moon is on or after 21<sup>st</sup> March) and the first Sunday following the Paschal Moon is Easter Sunday. As April's Full Moon on 11<sup>th</sup> April is the first since the equinox, Easter Sunday in 2017 is indeed on 16<sup>th</sup> April. In 2016, the spring equinox was on 20<sup>th</sup> March. The following Full Moon was on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March, and so Easter Sunday was on 27<sup>th</sup> March. The earliest date that Easter can be is 22nd March and the latest 25th April.



## Compost Corner



I was watching a professional gardener the other day, methodically and thoroughly removing moss and debris, accumulated over the winter, from a flower border. It was at the Hauser and Wirth meadow garden in Bruton, Somerset,

which was designed by the world renowned Dutch landscape designer, Piet Oudolf.

If you like 'prairie style' planting, you really should pay it a visit; there are bold drifts of grasses and herbaceous perennials in a delightful rural setting adjacent to the newly renovated farmhouse and barns, which also house art installations and a restaurant.

The gardener was very happy to talk about the planting, explaining why there were no bulbs in flower (mice from an adjacent field had eaten the lot) and why the sedum in the bed he was tending hadn't grown since they were planted two years ago (the soil was too heavy and poorly drained - hence the moss). He was obviously a very talented gardener but I didn't envy his ongoing job - the garden is 1½ acres and there are many, many hours of weeding and pruning ahead.

Alison Main

## Buddleia Pruning

Anyone who has the energy and time is welcome to help prune the Buddleias at Princes Field from Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> April to Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> April. Any time from 10.00am to 4.00pm - weather permitting. Thank you.

Judy Westgate (811302)

## Annual Parochial Church meeting

St Andrew's Church in the Parish of Fontmell Magna will be holding its Annual Parochial Church meeting on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> April in church. The meeting starts at 7.30pm with refreshments served from 7.00pm. All parishioners are welcome to attend.

Barry Roberts

## St Andrew's Church Spring Clean

The annual Spring Clean of our village church will take place this year over two mornings from 9.30am. On Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April, Barry Roberts will be organising a crack team to tackle the harder to reach parts of the church (a head for heights would be useful!). This will be followed on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> by a traditional, ground level 'Spring Clean'. Hot drinks and biscuits will be provided on both days. Help on either day will be very welcome - no previous experience necessary, just enthusiasm!

Details Barry 811906 about the 7<sup>th</sup> or Jan Cobby on 812115 about the 8<sup>th</sup>.

Continuing our series of articles featuring Bedchester.

## Bedchester - what's in a name?



There are three place name road signs for Bedchester. One is situated at the very top of Penn Hill and is actually in Sutton Waldron parish (the parish boundary with Fontmell Magna parish runs east to west between the last two properties towards the top of the hill so that the last one, Penn Hill House, is within Sutton Waldron). One sign is about half-way along the road from Woodbridge Mill to Bedchester Farm. However, both Woodbridge Mill and Woodbridge House would appear to be part of Bedchester, as are the houses in Woodbridge Lane. The third sign is on the road to Twyford, about 100m from Bedchester cross-roads. There is no sign on the road from Fontmell Magna village, though all the properties along Common Lane west of Piper's Mill would appear to be part of Bedchester. The picture shows the busy

fingerpost at Bedchester cross-roads (with incorrect spelling of Child Okeford).

Bedchester is almost certainly of pre-conquest origin and may be referred to in the Saxon Charter of 932 (see below) as *beteswirpe*. The Saxon Charter traces the boundary of Fontmell Magna parish, granted by King Athelstan to the nunnery at Shaftesbury, and the reference to *beteswirpe* describes a point less than half a mile north of Bedchester crossroads. The first part *betes* could refer to a person's name, while the second *wirpe* could be the Saxon for 'enclosure'.

The Shaftesbury Register, compiled following the Domesday Book in 1086, refers to *Butesursta*, but experts think this is "probably erratic". Later references from 1354 are to *Bedeshurst* or *Bedeshurste*, and from 1395 are to *Bedyshurst*, and also *Bedehurst*. Here, the second part of the name appears to be derived from the Old English *hyrst* meaning copse or wooded hill.

Shaftesbury Abbey was dissolved in 1539 and its lands were eventually purchased by the Arundel family. From 1575, as evidenced in the earliest printed map of Dorset, by Christopher Saxton, the name becomes *Bedcister*, with occasional variations as late as the 19<sup>th</sup> century such as *Bedceister*, *Bicester*, or *Bedcester* and even *Bedhurst*. The change in the second part of the name is difficult to explain, but happened also to Hoggeshurst, near Bridport, which became Hogchester.

It was not until the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century that the name became *Bedchester*. From 1848 to 1939, a trade directory for Dorset was published every four or five years. It started life as the Post Office Directory and became Kelly's Directory. The early directories refer to *Bedcister*, and do not refer to *Bedchester* until the 1867 edition. The 1841 census refers to *Bedcester*, but the censuses from 1851 onwards refer to *Bedchester*.

The directories also consistently refer to *Bedchester* (or *Bedcister*) as "a Roman station", although no evidence can be found to substantiate this statement. Interestingly, Hogchester was thought to have been a Roman signal station, though a recent excavational dig there, which hoped to find evidence of a Roman road (the Ackling Dyke), was unsuccessful.

Another signpost naming Bedchester featured in an episode in 1982 (A Touch of Glass) of 'Only Fools and Horses'. Note that Child Okeford has been spelt correctly on this one!



The views expressed in this publication by contributors are not necessarily those of the Editor or of the Committee of The Gossip Tree. Last copy date for the next issue is **Sunday 23rd April 2017**. Contributions for consideration should be submitted as early as possible to the Editor, Chris Bellers, via e-mail to [chris.bellers@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:chris.bellers@hotmail.co.uk) or phone 811734. Please also contact the Editor if, rather than have your Gossip Tree delivered to you, **you would like to be emailed a copy and benefit from seeing the pictures in colour** (while also saving us printing costs), or if you would like to sponsor an issue (cost £30).