

## TVT AIMS & OBJECTIVES

- raise awareness of Thorncombe parish's unique & special local environment
- protect its historic buildings & footpaths
- oppose inappropriate building & development
- promote & support nature conservation
- safeguard & enhance the countryside

*Founded in 1985 & governed by a formal constitution, the Trust currently represents 130 families with local connections*



# THORNCOMBE VILLAGE TRUST NEWS

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## THORNCOMBE VILLAGE TRUST

<b>President</b>	Sheila Moreland
<b>Chair</b>	John Whitbread
<b>Newsletter Editor</b>	Eve Higgs (01460) 30994
<b>Contacts</b>	John & Rachael Whitbread (01460) 30525
<b>Email</b>	villagetrust@hotmail.co.uk
<b>Website</b>	www.thorncombe-village-trust.co.uk

*TVT CHRISTMAS SALE  
VILLAGE HALL  
Saturday  
22 November  
10.00 to noon  
Home-made cakes,  
crafts, gifts, cards  
& bric a brac.  
(Donations of sale  
items also needed)*

## SHAPING OUR FUTURE

Recent changes in planning law mean that several fields around the perimeter of the village, particularly those to the south-west, remain potentially vulnerable to development which would radically affect the character of Thorncombe.

The Localism Act was given Royal Assent in November 2011. It introduced new rights and powers to allow representatives from local communities to have their say in any future new development by coming together to prepare neighbourhood plans which will have legal status. The plans can be taken forward by two types of body – either parish councils or ‘neighbourhood forums’.

In Thorncombe’s case, the local planning authority West Dorset District Council is in the process of exploring the formation of neighbourhood forums consisting of neighbouring local parish councils and parishioners working together. A steering committee has been formed comprising representatives from several parishes including Thorncombe, Marshwood, Bettiscombe, Netherbury and Hawkchurch to explore possibilities.

Thorncombe Village Trust has also been invited to participate. However our small caretaker committee no longer has sufficient resources to enable the Trust to make a significant contribution without members’ active input.

If you would like to help the Trust committee participate in helping to shape Thorncombe’s future contact John Whitbread for a chat; see contact details above. *JW*

## TERRY BY NAME - TERRIER BY NATURE

The late Terry Bennett (1936 - 2014) is remembered fondly by many TVT members, especially those who worked closely alongside him on various issues. Terry stood up firmly for his principles and beliefs. His unwavering commitment, intellect and extensive knowledge of planning law combined with tremendous warmth and wonderful cockney humour helped keep eyes on the ball and heads above water when the going got tough.

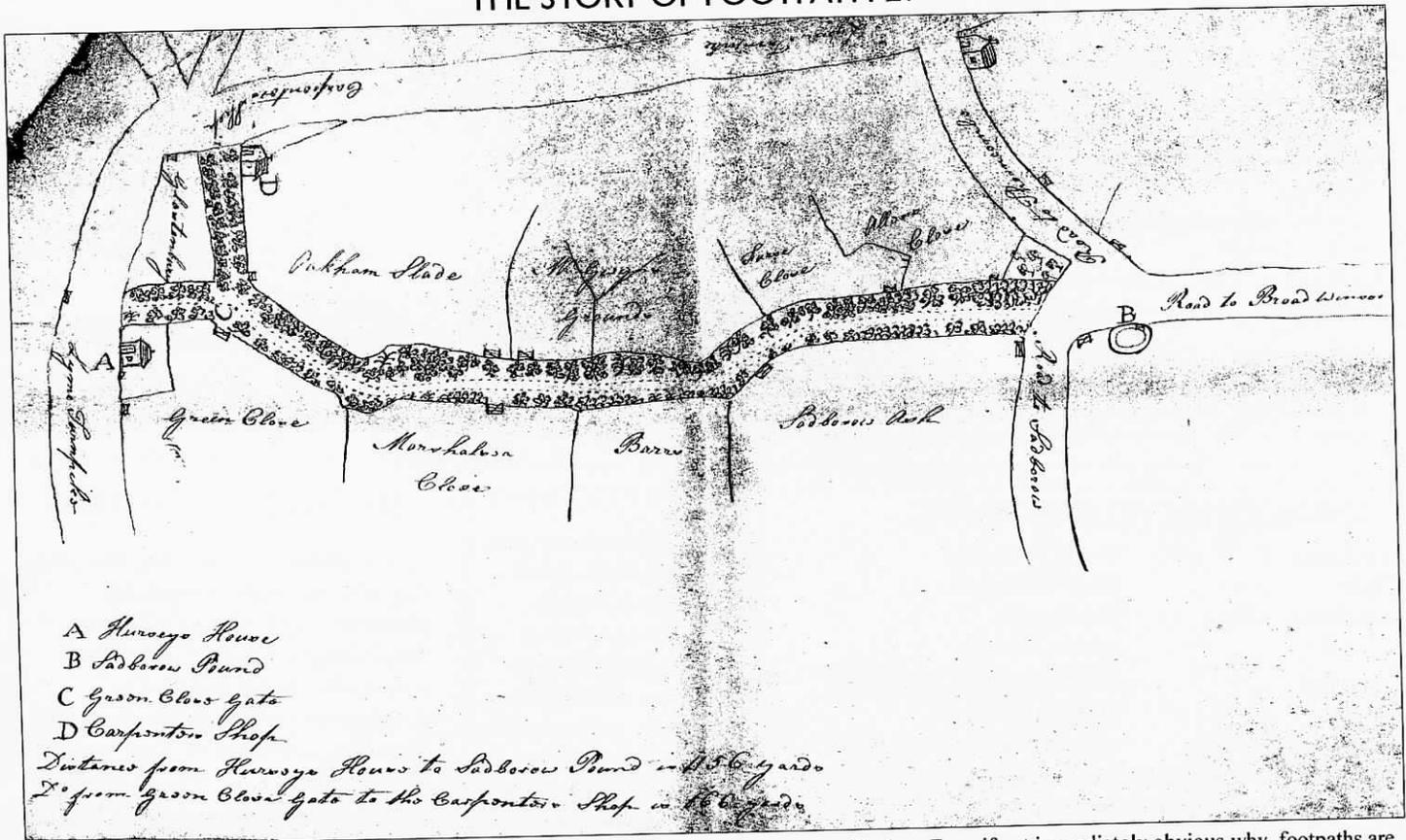
Mark Agnew recalls how ‘alarmed by the imminent flood of housing planned for Thorncombe in the late 1980s, Terry just couldn’t stand by and watch this happen without questioning the sense of it all. He joined the parish council in 1995 and two years later was elected chairman. By then Thorncombe was in line for over 100 new houses and a doubling in the size of the village. This was too much for Terry. He led a highly effective campaign, with the TVT, against this excessive and damaging expansion of a village without the infrastructure to support it or any local need for 80 more private houses. It took several years, two planning inquiries, difficult negotiations with the developers, lawyers and the district council and a huge amount of tenacity, but it was worth it. The 40-55 house

development off High Street behind the playground was stopped. Terry led an elected parish council to stand up to the imposition of unnecessary development. Leaving the council in 2003 after eight years he gave his efforts to the TVT committee to continue promoting a local voice in the future of this parish. He took on the heavy role of secretary for eight years until his health forced him reluctantly into retirement. This parish owes him much.’

## SEASON OF MISTS

Sheila Moreland writes: ‘This autumn, I have had many visiting animals, birds etc in my garden, including a very large badger near the house, and two foxes who were following a cat down some steps but left the cat alone at the bottom and returned to the lawn at the bottom of the garden! Toads, frogs, moles, you name them, I have got them. Please remember to feed the birds this winter, and clean feeders and bird tables regularly to cut down on infections, especially amongst greenfinches and tits.’

## THE STORY OF FOOTPATH 29



Public footpaths are as much a part of our local heritage as listed buildings and also protected by law. Even if not immediately obvious why, footpaths are always there for a reason and part of a wider story. For example, Footpath 29 on Dorset County Council's Definitive Footpath Map, which links Sadborow Pound (from the gate by the post box) to Shearing Cross, used to be a road. A successful application to Devon Quarter Sessions to 'stop it up' was made in 1798 by John Bragge Esq of Sadborow. This sketch map was part of his application. Remnants of the traditional hedge-bank shown on the plan marking the edge of the road still trace part of the route of the footpath. The map shows the original position of Sadborow Pound beside Pound Cottage. It still survives in the undergrowth with its characteristic narrow entrance to prevent stray animals escaping. Turnpike Cottage at Thorncombe Thorn and Lyme Turnpike running through Easthay are also marked. FP29 feeds into a network of footpaths linking Thorncombe village to Bettiscombe, Hawkchurch, Ford Abbey, Causeway and beyond, so it is likely this forgotten byway was used by travellers to avoid paying unpopular turnpike tolls at Thorncombe, Birdsmoorgate and Coles Cross. Given the date of his application, it seems Mr Bragge was attempting to interrupt the alternative toll free route at Thorncombe. He failed. Thorncombe Turnpike closed in 1800, the lack of revenue making it uneconomic for the Lyme Regis (Crewkerne) Turnpike Trust to maintain the road. Responsibility for its maintenance reverted to Thorncombe parishioners. See *Brief History of Thorncombe. An Overview ...* on the TVT website for a map of the local 18th century turnpike network. Sketch map reproduced courtesy of Devon Heritage Services, DHS Ref: QS/113A/193/1

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### HELP WANTED TO FILL GAPS

The Ebdons, Forseys and Bowditchs are all old Thorncombe families. Through the TVT website, which incidentally has totted up nearly 5000 hits since it went on-line in 2012, the TVT has recently been contacted for advice on research, by the following family members who live elsewhere. If anyone can help with further information and/or photos, contact Eve Higgs and she will put you in touch.

Molly Ebdon Riggs wrote: *My family Ebdons, in Thorncombe, go back as far as Elias Ebdon, who married Ann Hawker in 1803 and they are both buried at Thorncombe. (I have found several Ebdons in the 1700s - including another Elias - all children of John Ebdon of Uplyme.....can't link with them) John Ebdon - my great great grandfather - 1804 - 1877 kept a grocers shop in Fore Street - and I wondered,*

*if by any happy chance, there is a photo - or picture - of this shop?*

Katie Hobbs who is 13 years old wants to know more about the Forsey family to whom she is related. There were Forseys in Thorncombe from at least the middle of the 18th century. She writes: *I have found a few names and I am unable to connect them up. I am descended from Emma Mary Forsey (born 26th Dec 1921) and I wondered if you knew anything about the history of the family or anything from higher up the family tree.*

The Bowditch family has connections to Thorncombe going even further back to the middle of the 17th century if not earlier. Miles Green is researching this branch of the family. *My mother was a Bowditch and I am currently writing that part of the family's history. Her great-grandfather, James Bowditch, a carpenter/Joiner, married Mary Bridle in Thorncombe in 1816.*

*Both were from Thorncombe, but in 1820/21 they left for Chard and the opportunities afforded by the newly-arrived lace mills ... I have tried to trace my Bowditch line in Thorncombe further back, but there are so many Bowditchs (30 marriages and 72 baptisms in the first century of register entries) and the entries show only the father's name, that I have ground to a halt with James's father, one of several Richards. Has anyone done any work on separating out the different Bowditch lines? The only work I have come across so far is a very intensive study by the Bowditch Family of Massachusetts in the early part of the last century in order to trace the forerunners of their ancestor who emigrated in 1671.*

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