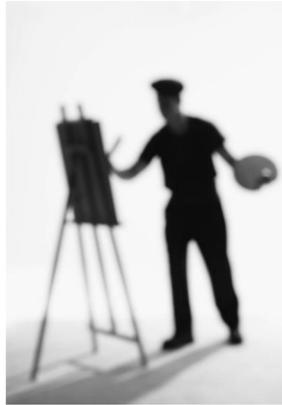


**PILSDON ART SHOW @ THE CHAPEL IN THE GARDEN, BRIDPORT  
25TH -28TH JULY 2013**

The Pilsdon Art Show will be held in Bridport in the summer holidays and will be a celebration of Pilsdon as a creative community. There will be an exhibition of both arts and crafts created by the Pilsdon Community; the past and present offering of a vision of the future through a presentation at the launch event. The work shown will be by current and previous guests, volunteers, members, and trustees of the Community. Life at Pilsdon will be shown through photographic displays, a showing of past documentaries, and the art itself. Please go to [www.pilsdon.org.uk/events/art-show](http://www.pilsdon.org.uk/events/art-show) for more details.



**\*\*\*STOP PRESS\*\*\***

**Pilsdon Community Anniversary celebration will be held on 13 October 2013.  
All welcome. Please see the Pilsdon Community website for more details or  
contact the office.**

**Community Member & Community Volunteers Opportunities**

The Pilsdon Community is seeking a new Community Member and volunteers to join the existing team, based on our 12 acre farm in West Dorset. Community Members and volunteers are drawn from a variety of backgrounds and professions; the key requirements being a demonstrable sense of calling to the role, being a good team player, flexibility in work patterns, strong relational qualities and an ability to work in an emotionally and physically challenging environment.

If you would like more information about the Pilsdon Community please visit our website at [www.pilsdon.org.uk](http://www.pilsdon.org.uk).

If you would like to be considered for either of the above posts please write to the Warden outlining your suitability for the post and enclose a cv. Postal and email address are outlined below.

Reg. Charity 261139  
[www.pilsdon.org.uk](http://www.pilsdon.org.uk)  
[pilsdon@btconnect.com](mailto:pilsdon@btconnect.com)  
Pilsdon Manor,  
Pilsdon  
BRIDPORT  
DT6 5NZ

# The Pilsdon Community

*Sharing a common life of prayer, hospitality and work*



## Spring NEWSLETTER 2013

**IMPORTANT CHANGES AFFECTING YOU!**

We are updating all of our mailing lists and we would really appreciate your assistance.

**If you would like to continue to receive our Pilsdon Community Newsletter and hear about our work and future plans, we must hear from you!**

Please take a moment and fill in the information below and return in the Freepost envelope.

Name:.....

Address Line 1:.....

Town:.....

County:.....

Postal Code:.....

Email Address:.....

How would you like to continue to receive our newsletter (please indicate below)?

Via mail

Electronically

**Supporting Pilsdon**

There are many ways in which people can support the Pilsdon Community. Our foundation in mission and ministry is to be a place of prayer, hospitality and work.

We hope that you will join with us in prayer for our community, for our life and work in serving and living alongside one another.

If you would like to explore the opportunity to support The Pilsdon Community in a practical or financial way please do get in touch with the community office on 01308 868308 or email [pilsdon@btconnect.com](mailto:pilsdon@btconnect.com).



One of my biggest hurdles has been to cook for so many, I'm afraid that there were times when I was reduced to tears, when I felt quite overwhelmed with things. Needless to say I gradually gained confidence by sticking to cooking one or two dishes that I was happy with – and luckily for all, my repertoire gradually extended, tears are still shed though but only when peeling onions.

After I had been here 6 months, two members had left, leaving only four with Adam as Warden. I was quite concerned, thinking that 4 members were not enough – which was why I put myself forward for membership. I went through a formal application process and discernment and became a member in Feb 2010. The first year was a lovely year, working with an established and experienced team, from whom I learnt much. I remember thinking how wonderful it was to be at Pilsdon, almost too good to be true. Surely things had to be hard and difficult if

you were following God?? However by the end of the year things were not so rosy, two more members had left or were about to, bringing the membership down to three. This was when Teresa joined us on a part-time basis, which was an enormous help. However, things became harder still in the spring of 2011 when Liz left and at the same time Teresa became ill, leaving Adam and I to soldier on. Looking back, I find it hard to believe that we were able to carry on, but I guess with a “dig deep” attitude and a reliance on God for your strength, you can get through most things. It was actually only like that for a couple of months, and we had a light at the end of the tunnel in the fact that new members were due to start in July, but never the less it was a very difficult couple of months.

From then to now we have increased our membership, and there is an exciting and renewed vision for the future, and I find it is me that is passing on the knowledge and experience that I have gained from all those that I had worked with before.

Pilsdon has given me such a lot, including...a cat. One cold winter morning, Teresa and I discovered a ginger cat trying to shelter in the office foyer, he was a miserable skinny looking thing that was shivering and mewing plaintively. It was love at first sight, so I took him in and he has rewarded me by being a wonderful friend and companion – now my prayers would truly be answered if he had come in the form of a Mel Gibson look alike, but I guess God knows what he was doing and having Rusty come to live with me has proved a great support.

So there it is, in four years, I have worked with 3 Wardens, and 11 members. I've laughed until I cried and cried until I laughed, I've been inspired, encouraged, guided, and educated. I have felt anger and frustration, exhilaration and despair but what I have felt most of all is love.

.....Oh, and been adopted by a ginger cat.

## A GUEST'S PERSPECTIVE

It is great to be able to highlight the personal story of someone who is currently living with us at Pilsdon. Mark is a guest who has been part of the community for over three months. Here he reflects in his own words how life in community has made a difference for him:



Reflecting on life at Pilsdon Mark says:

'When I arrived here just after Christmas I was feeling pretty down, life had become difficult and Pilsdon offered me the chance to begin to put my life back together. Since being here I have been very busy - working in the grounds, looking after the cars, cooking in the kitchen and now I also help to look after the boiler room and the heating for the East Wing. It is great to be part of something and have a role.

Pilsdon has given me a positive focus, the opportunity to live alongside others in a positive and friendly environment where I am accepted and encouraged. It has been a very long time since I have been as happy and content as I feel right now. Pilsdon has made a huge difference to my life.'

### 3 WARDENS, 11 MEMBERS.....& A GINGER CAT

As she prepares to retire in the summer, Community Member Dilys Hunt reflects on her time at Pilsdon :

I first came to Pilsdon in March 2009, as a volunteer, Jonathan was Warden then, and Adam, Lis, Liz, Anne, & Rob completed the membership. I quickly found I had lots of new skills to learn – milking cows for starters. Of course everyone is slow at first so I was delighted to hear one day, after I had been milking for a few weeks, one of the old hands telling me that I wasn't "Dead slow Dilys" anymore just "Slow Dilys".

Then there was the morning I walked into the Aga room, as Jonathan was walking out, "Ah Dilys" he said "you must be good at icing a cake, can you get a birthday cake done by this afternoon's tea?" and not waiting for a reply made a fast exit. That cake was the first I had ever iced but it was the first of many – all great fun to make and hopefully fun to receive. There have been cakes made to look like paintbrushes and books, cakes decorated with cows, pigs, even washing machines, cakes with iced vegetable patches and paint palettes on, and even one with a "muck spreading" theme! (I have the picture to prove it!) Of course I am not the only one to enjoy decorating cakes, as I have been on the receiving end of four lovely cakes – mostly with a horsey theme, in my time here!

## MICHAEL WRITES

Spring is slowly creeping into Pilsdon. Although unseasonably cold and a bit wet, there are signs; daffodils, crocus, bees stirring, new calves, and an unmistakeable sense of lightness with in the community.

The past few months have been quick and have been filled with many events; holidays, snow storms, welcoming many and saying good bye to a few. It is an ever present reminder that Pilsdon is alive and that we each get to share in its life for what seems to be a brief moment in its history. We all share in this stewardship.

Recently, I received a telephone call from a priest to discuss a potential guest who might apply to Pilsdon. This individual was struggling somewhere in the dilemma of wanting to live in community, and also wanting all of their current and specific needs met. They saw problems with eating what she was served, having to share in work that may not be to her liking, and with not being left on their own to do as they wished for most of her time.

It was interesting for me to answer a whole series of questions about how we operate. To be a guest in this community does require one to learn a certain selflessness; a recognition of the common life we share. Here we learn to accept what is done for the common good, whether that be in the meals served, or the tasks assigned, and also in our ability to encourage each other; in our efforts to learn and try new things; and to encourage each other to keep trying. It almost forces us to recognize that we are not perfect within ourselves and we keep on trying.

During Lent we had an opportunity to give up something we enjoy or to take up something new, a new discipline, into our lives. This was done either to remind us of what suffering there is in the world or to teach us to have grateful and accepting hearts. It helps us to accept ourselves and each other as we are; to accept the gifts we have to offer and others offer us, no matter how imperfect they might be. It teaches us that it is not about perfection, it is about progress. During the Easter season, we begin to put into practice the lessons learned during Lent; a much more difficult task. As spring slowly moves into our area Pilsdon will again become a place of gardens, and pastures, and growth. As we move into this new season, hopefully we have learned a little more about accepting each other, and more about taking on our role in our common life.

Yes, spring is here! New growth is appearing in expected and unexpected places. Amid all this change, we need to remember that we are stewards and carers for each other and a part of the vision of Pilsdon.

Thank you for your continued interest and support, it is very much appreciated by us all.

### PILSDON NEWS.....

In February we launched our new website ([www.pilsdon.org.uk](http://www.pilsdon.org.uk)). In two months we have had nearly 2000 unique visitors to the site and sustained continued interest from all around the world. The fresh look and new facilities, such as the ability to donate to Pilsdon online and to follow us on twitter (find us at [@pilsdoncomm](https://twitter.com/pilsdoncomm)), have added value to our online presence. New pages are being regularly added that will hopefully give our network of Pilsdon supporters and friends a fuller flavour of all that is happening here and how to participate in the life of the community.

There has been quite a turnover in personnel since our last newsletter. Volunteers Matt Swan, Matt Rink and David Cole have moved on to pastures new, as has Lauren, our volunteer from Australia. We are very grateful for all their help and support to community life. We are delighted to have welcomed Chris and Lillian from the Bruderhof Community, they will be with us throughout the coming year and have brought with them some very welcome transatlantic culinary traditions (see photo!).

### CATHERINE REPORTS ON THE GARDENS

There was an air of panic in the garden this morning: Our weekly garden meeting was held a matter of hours after Matt (pictured), our faithful volunteer for the past 12 months was making his way to Wales for his new venture. He had spent many hours in



the garden each day tending as well as carefully planning the garden for the year ahead. This combined with the work of the meticulously tidy gardener David- another residential volunteer who has also now moved on- has meant that the vegetable garden and surrounding areas are in a very healthy, well-planned, tidy and alive state.

As well as the initial panic, there is an abundance of enthusiasm from a team of around eight, with a wide range of experience and confidence, getting involved. Over the past few weeks we have planned for Matt's departure, dividing up the garden into areas of responsibility and developing a "garden angel" rota for opening/ closing the garden and watering the seedlings and so on. As with other areas of community life;

shared gardening brings its joys and frustrations. There are many opinions to be voiced, varying levels of cleaning up after oneself and a mixed ability to plant in a straight line. However, it is all carried out with much banter, laughter and affection. So as the vegetables (hopefully!) grow alongside one another... so will we.



### SCOTT REPORTS ON THE LIVESTOCK



Like everybody else in the country, the Pilsdon animals and folk have been at the mercy of inclement weather conditions. Persistent wet weather over the winter has meant that the fields have never dried out enough for the spreading of manure. Due to the cold spring our grass has failed to grow and so the cows didn't get out this year until 15<sup>th</sup> of April; a month and a half later than last year. We are relieved to be seeing some sunshine at last!

Angelica and Hyacinth both calved in February and March respectively. Their

calves have been called 'Hazel' (pictured above) and 'Rufus' and are both thriving. Violet is due to calve on May 10<sup>th</sup>.

We said goodbye to Virginia last month and now have a freezer full of top quality beef.

Early in the lambing season we lost one of our ewes to a probable rotten lamb infection, which was a real blow. She was poorly for a couple of days but failed to respond to any medication and finally passed away.

All of our remaining ewes have now 'lambled' and we have nine lambs frolicking in the field, only one of which is being bottle fed. Please do keep an eye on our twitter feed to get the latest updates on all our livestock!



### CHRISTMAS AND EASTER... ..A FULL HOUSE AT PILSDON

As ever the Christmas and Easter seasons at Pilsdon were extremely busy. For the first time in recent memory we experienced all rooms and beds occupied for the Easter weekend.

It was lovely to have the resident children distributing Easter eggs and leading the egg decorating activities. The Church has been the focus for spiritual reflection throughout the Lent and Eastertide periods and the crosses of ashes, palms and simple wooden cross beams on the chancel floor followed by the empty tomb scene at the altar have all been powerful symbols of our individual Christian lives and our shared community life here at Pilsdon.

