



# DEVON COMMUNITIES TOGETHER 2015-16

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A champion for the people and places of Devon helping communities help themselves.

Engaged in a wide range of projects, services and funding opportunities that support our vision of dynamic communities shaping their own futures.



# WELCOME TO OUR 2015-16 ANNUAL REVIEW

As you will see from the chart below, Devon Communities Together continues to support and deliver a wide programme of activity focused on *helping communities help themselves*.

We have recognised the important contribution that our work makes to support Devon's economy (affordable housing and enterprise support), community well-being and resilience (Devon Oil Collective, Energy Saving, Emergency Planning, Grants programmes).

We have continued our important work helping communities retain and improve their facilities and services (Village Halls, Community Shops, Social Enterprises) whilst providing the support to ensure that communities can have more say about the future (Neighbourhood and Community Plans).

None of this would have been possible without the support of our funders and partners to whom we are very grateful, our board members who give so freely of their time to ensure we remain a sustainable and vibrant organisation and our staff team whose commitment and expertise underpin everything we do.

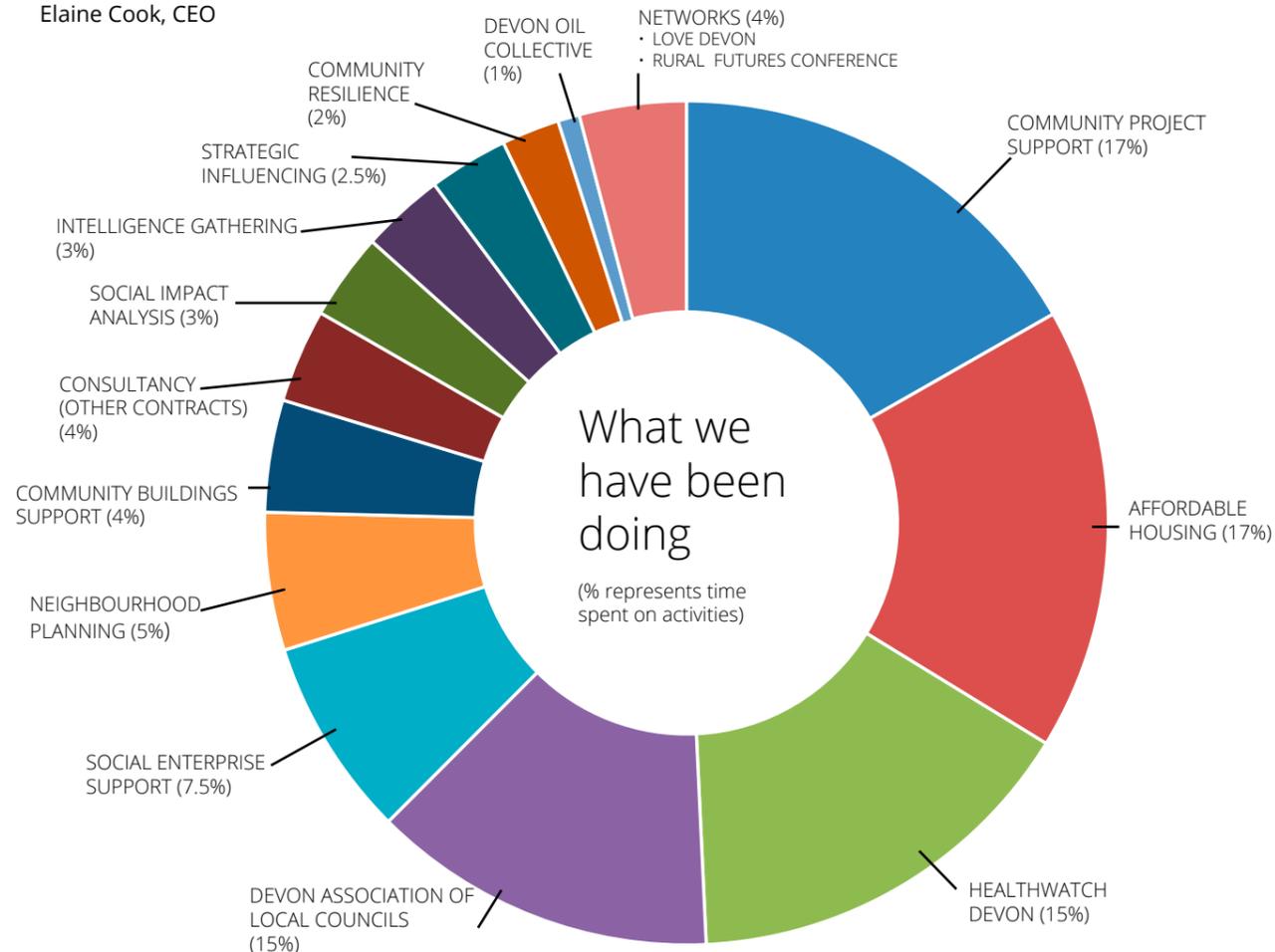
As ever a document of this size can only provide a reflection of the work we have done and our plans for the future.

Find out more by visiting our website [here](#)



*Elaine*

Elaine Cook, CEO



## HEALTH & WELLBEING

### HEALTHWATCH DEVON

In 2012 an organisation totally focused on the consumer experience of health and social care services was merely a concept when Devon County Council awarded Devon Communities Together (DCT) the contract to develop Healthwatch Devon (HWD).

The challenge was, over a three year period, to create a new sustainable organisation whilst developing and delivering the new HWD service.

- Key achievements in 2015-16, the final year of the contract, included enabling 4000 people to share their experiences of health and social care, including 600 young people and supporting 100 older people in Care Homes to speak about their care.
- Reaching 22,000 people with online information and advice and working with our Engagement Partners providing feedback to commissioners on 30 separate health and care topics. Reports were published on a range of subjects including *Leaving Hospital* and *Primary Care Services* and young people were helped to produce a series of mental health films.

Our final achievement took place in March 2016 when HWD was successfully floated as an independent organisation.

*"We are grateful for the support we have received from Devon Communities Together. With their help we have built a strong and forward-looking service that is now able to make its own way in the world."*

**Miles Sibley, Executive Director, Healthwatch Devon**

### DEVON OIL COLLECTIVE

The Devon Oil Collective (DOC) was launched in 2012 as a response to the high levels of fuel poverty in rural Devon. With much of the County being off the mains gas network, vulnerable households were paying high prices to try and maintain a decent living environment. Through the power of collective bulk buying the costs of heating oil for DOC members have been reduced with members seeing the benefits year on year.

The last year saw oil prices falling generally and even in this more competitive environment our 270 DOC members have saved about £12,000 when comparing our oil prices with the market averages.

With the prospect of oil prices starting to rise again the benefits of DOC membership are likely to be even greater in the coming months. We are also looking at other ways we can support DOC members with discounts on a range of products and services.

If you would like to be part of DOC you can find out more and join through our website [www.devoncommunities.org.uk/devon-oil-collective](http://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/devon-oil-collective) or by phoning us on 01392 248919



## GATHERING INTELLIGENCE

**The Impact of Welfare Reform on the health and wellbeing of vulnerable individuals in Devon.**

**AN EXAMPLE:**



In 2015, Devon Communities Together (DCT) was commissioned by Devon County Council to build on a previous piece of research into the effects of changes to the welfare system by undertaking a Prevention and Need Action Research Project.

The research collated both quantitative and qualitative data for anonymous case studies. These studies from 13 Devon voluntary sector organisations related to the health and well-being impact on their clients as a direct result of implementation of welfare reform legislation.

This is only one of many examples of DCT being able to utilise its extensive communication reach across the county to gather and analyse strategic intelligence. The commissioner of this research from Devon County Council said:

*"I see this work contributing not only to the County Council's Care Act responsibilities in terms of identifying 'unmet need' but it can inform many developing policy areas"*

If you would like our assistance with any community based research projects in Devon, please call 01392 248919 or email [info@devoncommunities.org.uk](mailto:info@devoncommunities.org.uk).



For full copy of report visit our website [here](#)

# SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES



## DEVON ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

**357**

TOWN AND PARISH COUNCIL MEMBERS SUPPORTED DALC is hosted by DCT and is pleased to present its 2015/16 achievements:

- A successful election year - nationally and for Local Councils
- New DALC Executive County Committee nominated
- Dartmoor National Park Authority parish representatives nomination process
- Over 40 training and other events held - 184 councils represented
- Transparency Code grants awarded to 93 small councils supporting IT
- Supported member councils with legal and procedural queries
- Worked on major issues including asset transfer and Devolution.



visit the DALC website [here](#).

## NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

In 2015-16, Devon Communities Together (DCT) provided direct support and advice to **20** Neighbourhood Planning groups with:

- Forming a steering group and designing terms of reference
- Applying for grants
- Producing project plans and budgets
- Presenting an overview of Neighbourhood Planning at community meetings, town and parish council meetings
- Guidance on appropriate community engagement
- Community surveys and data analysis

AN EXAMPLE:

We helped the Brixton Neighbourhood Planning Group to design a robust community survey. DCT analysed the data and our team helped to organise a family-friendly event to present the results to the Community.

Recognised for our local connections and influence, DCT was invited by the Department for Communities and Local Government to host a local Neighbourhood Planning roadshow in conjunction with CPRE Devon.

**145** delegates attended making it the largest roadshow of its kind in the country.

Sue Crowther, from Thurlestone Neighbourhood Plan Group, on attending a DCT presentation said,

*"I have attended many talks about neighbourhood planning and your one was by far the best!"*

If you would like support with your neighbourhood plan please call us on 01392 248919 ext 7106 or visit our website [here](#)



## DEVON COMMUNITY HALLS AND BUILDINGS

**410** enquiries about community buildings answered in 2015-16



Devon Communities Together (DCT) attends regular meetings where representatives of Village Hall management committees share their knowledge and experience.

By attending these meetings Devon Communities Together maintains its understanding of their issues and is able to offer support.

Collectively we are working to sustain and strengthen the village hall movement and help it to face the challenges of serving Devon's communities.

*"We found Martin Rich at DCT, absolutely invaluable as a guide and sounding board for clarifying issues and ideas as the project progressed...I would endorse as much of Martin's involvement as you can get!"*

**Councillor Gail Flockhart, Chair, Winkleigh Parish Council**

For more information please call 01392 248919 or email [info@devoncommunities.org.uk](mailto:info@devoncommunities.org.uk)



Visit our website to find out more [here](#).

## DEVON OPEN DATA WORKING GROUP

In 2015, Devon Communities Together (DCT) initiated and began hosting a multi-agency working group, made up of partners interested in exploring ways of harnessing the benefits of open data for the benefit of Devon communities.

The Devon Open Data Working Group has 14 members, including Devon County Council; Exeter and Plymouth City Councils; Devon District Councils; Devon Communities Together; Exeter University; Healthwatch Devon; COSMIC; Co- Cars; Dartmoor National Park Authority.

The Group has been looking at practical applications for open data to support community activity and the needs of individuals in rural areas, particularly those who are vulnerable; elderly, disabled, unwell or isolated.

A pilot project was developed which focused on community transport and access to primary health and care services in the absence of a single repository of open source data for community led transport in Devon.

In partnership with Q - Step at Exeter University, DCT has hosted an undergraduate student on placement to progress this work.

If you are interested in joining the Devon Open Data Working Group or finding out more about this pilot project, please call 01392 248919 or email [info@devoncommunities.org.uk](mailto:info@devoncommunities.org.uk)



## RURAL FUTURES CONFERENCE 2015

Our annual rural futures conference tackles topical issues effecting Devon .

Entitled *More Than a Place to Live* the 2015 conference examined the impact of social housing on communities and asked what is needed to make the places we live in more vibrant and sustainable.

The conference was led by Key Note Speaker Lord Best OBE DL. It was hosted by The Met Office, sponsored by Wickstead Playgrounds and supported by 20 exhibitors.

Delegates from all over Devon, representing Councils, organisations and communities were engaged and impressed by the range of topics and calibre of speakers.

Media coverage was provided by BBC Spotlight and Radio Devon throughout the day.



Visit our website to find out more [here](#).

## ECONOMY & ENTERPRISE



### SOCIAL ENTERPRISE 121 ADVICE SERVICE

Thanks to continuing funding from our partners, we deliver free advice to community organisations and businesses and local councils looking to set up or grow a local service or facility.

Over 40 organisations were supported during the year. Notable trends included: a growth in setting up Community Interest Companies (CICs); community take-over of public sector services eg libraries, youth centres and day centres; development of multi-use community owned assets; creative arts, well-being and veteran support initiatives.

### DEVON SOCIAL ENTERPRISE NETWORK (DSEN)



To join, click [here](#).

DSEN was launched in summer 2015, aimed at social entrepreneurs and supporters of the Social Enterprise movement in Devon.

Membership has grown to over 150. There is a members' area of useful resources on our website and a Facebook page which also encourages peer to peer support. We are a member of the South West Social Enterprise Special Interest Group.

### FUNDING COMMUNITY ENTERPRISE

*'Well informed, well delivered and helpful training'*

Jo Morgan, Devon Link up

We provide support and training to communities planning a community enterprise. Here are two examples:

- In partnership with the national organisation Pub is the Hub (PITH) we launched a campaign of awareness raising and support for pubs in Devon wanting to diversify their facilities and services to better meet the needs of their local community.
- Our training event, *Funding Your Community Enterprise* for community activists and social entrepreneurs was attended by 22 participants. The course focussed on encouraging enterprise and trade to ensure sustainability.

If you are an established or aspiring social or community enterprise and would like support call 01392 248919 or email [info@devoncommunities.org.uk](mailto:info@devoncommunities.org.uk)

### GET UP TO SPEED

Get up to **SPEED**

Working with our partners from Peninsula Enterprise and Cosmic Ethical IT, this work was about supporting the 'roll out' of superfast broadband under the Connecting Devon and Somerset Programme. Devon Communities Together raised local awareness of the programme through our communications channels, our website, publications, emails, social media, networks and events.

We also gave presentations in 6 community venues across the county based on the Digital Villages Toolkit and bringing the world of broadband potential alive for community members.

Aimed at anyone from beginners upwards the sessions demonstrated how to harness digital technology to support Parish Councils, Committees and Community Organisations.

### WOMEN LED ENTERPRISE



**27** different Hub meetings were run in market towns across Devon.

A total of **345** women Entrepreneurs participated.

This contract was delivered by Devon Communities Together (DCT) and our delivery partners in Somerset – The Fruit Tree for Business as part of the Rural Growth Network partnership and pilot programme.

The project ran for 20 months up to December 2015

*"I am very fortunate to have come across DCT's project, including great tips for social media, business planning skills and market penetration techniques."*

*"For me it has been so good to come to realise I am a business woman and that I have a viable business and that I am heading in the right direction. WOOO!! THANKS to all of you!"*

**Marion Frances Eastland**  
LRPS  
@Marion\_Frances



### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

**78** affordable homes were let to local families

**11,500** households received surveys and information

Devon Communities Together (DCT) continues to host the Devon Rural Housing Partnership. The DRHP facilitates the development of affordable housing in rural areas.

In 2015 Lord Richard Best addressed the DCT Rural Futures Conference:

*"Land owners and local businesses as well as local residents are recognising more and more that affordable housing is essential if rural communities are to thrive economically and socially in the years to come."*

**Lord Richard Best OBE DL** *A Fair Deal for Rural Communities*

This year our work contributed to 78 affordable houses being completed and let to local families, including 6 new affordable homes in Dalwood, East Devon.

Said one returning resident:

*"I grew up in Dalwood but had to move away because I couldn't afford to rent privately in the village. The house is lovely and our rent and bills are much cheaper than before so we're better off and feel secure and settled in our new home. We are so much happier living back in the village and the children love living here."*

**Eloise Freeth, Tenant**  
Newbery, Dalwood



### LOVE DEVON

#### SOCIAL PURPOSE/INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIP

This year saw the launch of our new Love Devon campaign. A key objective of this campaign is to enable those who live in, work in or visit our beautiful county to have the opportunity to support the work of Devon Communities Together (DCT) in helping Devon communities to help themselves.

Devon is a county with many small and picturesque market towns and villages which are facing their own challenges around transport/ social isolation/ fuel poverty/ local employment/ loss of services etc.

We know that Devon communities have many enthusiastic and committed people who want their local communities to continue to develop as vibrant, balanced and thriving places.

With the help of funds raised through the Love Devon campaign, DCT can provide specialist advice, guidance and support to an even broader range of community groups and businesses. This can contribute towards the protection and maintenance of our unique rural communities by identifying the challenges and helping to develop solutions.

The scope of this campaign is expanding as we initiate dialogues with key members of the tourism and food and drink industries in Devon, exploring opportunities to work together under the LOVE Devon brand.

For more information, please visit the Love Devon webpage [here](#). Like us on Facebook [here](#). Join the conversation [@DevComsTogether](#) #LoveDevon



# DEVON COMMUNITY RESILIENCE



## SOCIAL IMPACT

### DEVON COMMUNITY RESILIENCE BOARD (DCRB)

#### OUR VISION

To work with communities and individuals to develop and enhance their ability to harness local resources and expertise, to help themselves plan for, respond to and recover from emergencies.

Encouraging communities to create a local Community Emergency Plan is a prime objective of the DCRB.

#### Be Prepared . Respond . Recover

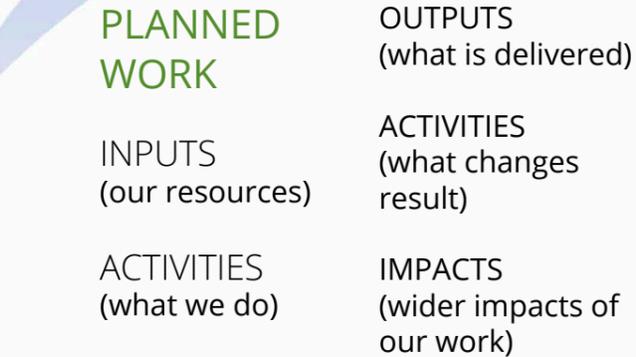
Devon has established the DCRB comprising members from the Local Authority, the Environment Agency and the Emergency Services. The Board is a strategic group working across Devon, coordinating Community Resilience activity, learning lessons and ensuring best use of resources

Last year Devon Communities Together (DCT) was invited to join the DCRB with the specific task of developing a Devon Community Resilience Forum to support communities with Community Emergency Planning. The Forum enables dialogue between communities and relevant agencies, so that communities can raise issues and receive advice and support.

The Forum now has a membership of 240 individuals and has held two very successful events attended by 150 delegates with over 40 communities represented at each event.

DCT also manages the Devon Emergency Flood Resilience Fund (provided by Devon County Council) which has awarded £30,000 in grants to communities across Devon for the immediate alleviation of flood risk.

There are many free resources available on the DCRB website visit [here](#).



If you are interested in measuring Social Impact and using the power of the Theory of Change we would be pleased to share our experience with you.

Please contact: 01392 248919 [info@devoncommunities.org.uk](mailto:info@devoncommunities.org.uk)



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#### WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Creating Social Impact is what Devon Communities Together (DCT) is all about.

Funded by an Impact Readiness Grant from Social Investment Business, we have been working with consultants from Investing for Good with the goal of improving the way we measure, articulate and report on the impact we make. It starts from the Theory of Change.

#### WHAT IS A THEORY OF CHANGE?

A detailed picture of how a desired change is expected to happen. It looks behind why and how an organisation creates impact.

An organisation first looks at its intended long term goals (impacts) and then examines activities, outputs and outcomes that need to be delivered along the way.

Having completed the groundwork in the summer of 2016 we will introduce a full Impact Measurement System of DCT's Strategic Objectives in spring 2017

The result will be an evaluation methodology designed to measure the overall impact of our work and a clearer demonstration of the link between our activities and our long-term goals.



### DEVON REMEMBERS

**£150K** investment on the restoration of over 70 memorials

The Devon Remembers project continues to commemorate and remember all those affected by the First World War from Devon communities.

DCT managed a grant fund to renovate war memorials dedicated to those who died as a result of the First World War.



Ashburton Memorial Restored



### COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING (CCB)

Devon Communities Together (DCT) has been chairing a partnership of emergency services, local authorities and other agencies across Devon and Cornwall on a CCB.

The vision was to work jointly with communities, developing and mentoring them to become more self-resilient, reduce risk, save life and improve wellbeing.

Our work with communities confirmed that they are able to mobilise local volunteers and the best way we can support them is with:

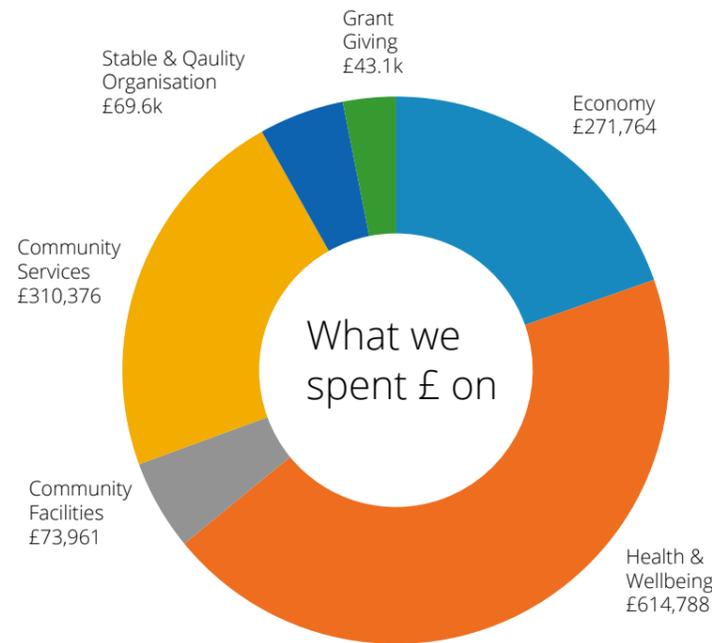
- Reduced bureaucracy – eg the need for specific training before signs can be put out on the highway
- Clarity about liability – eg if a member of the public misuses a defibrillator and someone decided to make a claim against them
- Bespoke training – eg. some form of conflict management for those wishing to assist in community affairs
- Practical resources – Shovels, pumps, grit

There is a growing interest for supporting communities in this area, if you would like to discuss this further with us please call 01392 248919 or email [info@devoncommunities.org.uk](mailto:info@devoncommunities.org.uk).

# SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATION

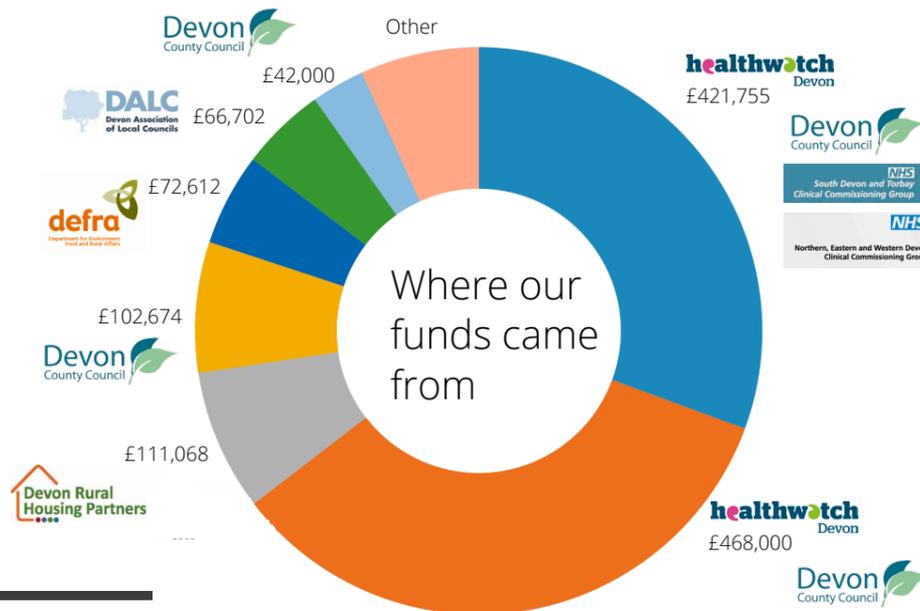
## WHAT WE SPENT BY ACTIVITY £1,383,677

- ECONOMY - £271,764
- HEALTH & WELLBEING - £614,788
- COMMUNITY FACILITIES - £73,961
- COMMUNITY SERVICES - £310,376
- STABLE & QUALITY ORGANISATION - £69,627
- GRANT GIVING £43,161



## WHERE OUR FUNDS CAME FROM £1,387,036

- £421,755 - HEALTHWATCH DEVON (engagement work)
- £468,000 - HEALTHWATCH DEVON (statutory functions)
- £111,068 - DEVON RURAL HOUSING PARTNERSHIP
- £102,674 - DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL
- £72,612 - DEFRA (rural community action network)
- £66,702 - DEVON ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS
- LOCAL COUNCILS
- £42,000 - DEVON COMMUNITY RESILIENCE BOARD
- OTHER



## TRAINING HUB

In 2015, we launched a new online Training Hub

With over 20 years' experience of designing and delivering a broad range of learning events, we wanted to provide a virtual "shop window" of affordable and relevant training and learning events. Planned to be open to all, but specialising in the capacity building and development needs of community groups, the social purpose sector, social enterprise and micro businesses at all stages of their development.

The Hub offers a mix of training opportunities delivered by external partners and in-house specialists within Devon Communities Together.

If you are interested in promoting your learning events through the Training Hub, please contact [ncorkery@devoncommunities.org.uk](mailto:ncorkery@devoncommunities.org.uk)



Visit our website to see the latest available courses [here](#).

## GD3 - SETTING A PRECEDENT

Devon Communities Together is leading on an innovative youth construction skills initiative "Constructing Futures" in partnership with South Devon College. The project has been included in the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership Growth Deal 3 European Funding final submission "A Growth Deal for Productivity" published on 28.07.16.

It has been listed under the 3rd of 3 strands "Unlocking & Enabling Growth Potential" setting a precedent, we believe, for the first third sector led project to be listed in a Heart of the South West LEP Growth Deal funding submission.

For more information, please contact [ncorkery@devoncommunitiestogether.org.uk](mailto:ncorkery@devoncommunitiestogether.org.uk)

# GREAT TEAM

## THE SUCCESS OF OUR COMPANY

JOHN LEE OBE

PRESIDENT



TERESA BUTCHERS

CHAIR



ELAINE COOK

CEO



### TRUSTEE BOARD

NIGEL ARNOLD

VICE CHAIR

LINDA BEALEY

BOB BRYANT

TRUSTEE (2013 - 2016)

KEVIN FINAN

HON. TREASURER

CLLR GAY HILL

FRANK LETCH

TRUSTEE (2014 - 2015)

ALAN QUICK

DENNIS SMITH

MIKE WHARTON



### STAFF TEAM - NOVEMBER 2016

JANICE ALEXANDER - RURAL HOUSING ENABLER

ISAAC BUTTERFIELD-KENDALL - APPRENTICE

NORA CORKERY - HEAD OF BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

GREG DAVIES - DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

DAWN ECKHART - SOCIAL ENTERPRISE MANAGER

HUW EDWARDS - CUSTOMER SUPPORT OFFICER

PETER HARDING - DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

PAULINE MOORE - FACILITIES COORDINATOR

JESSICA OATES - MARKETING EXECUTIVE

MARTIN PARKES - SENIOR PROJECTS OFFICER

KAREN REED - FINANCE MANAGER

MARTIN RICH - COMMUNITY PROJECTS OFFICER

COLIN SAVAGE - RURAL HOUSING ENABLER

LESLEY SMITH MBE - SENIOR MANAGER/DALC COUNTY SEC

SUE SOUTHWELL - RURAL HOUSING TEAM LEADER

CARA STOBART - COMMUNITY PROJECTS OFFICER

AGGIE SZPINDA - COMMUNITY PROJECTS OFFICER

CAROL TOMPKINS - HR & SUPPORT SERVS MANAGER

# MANY WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

- [BECOME A MEMBER OF DEVON COMMUNITIES TOGETHER](#)
- [JOIN DEVON SOCIAL ENTERPRISE NETWORK](#)
- [DONATE TO LOVE DEVON](#)
- [JOIN THE DEVON OIL COLLECTIVE](#)
- [BECOME A COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER](#)
- [BECOME A TRUSTEE](#)
- [DELIVER OR ATTEND A TRAINING COURSE](#)
- [SIGN UP TO VILLAGE GREEN MAGAZINE](#)
- [BOOK OUR MEETING ROOM IN EXETER](#)



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## 01392 248919

[info@devoncommunities.org.uk](mailto:info@devoncommunities.org.uk)

[www.devoncommunities.org.uk](http://www.devoncommunities.org.uk)

Devon Communities Together is the operating name for The Community Council of Devon

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