



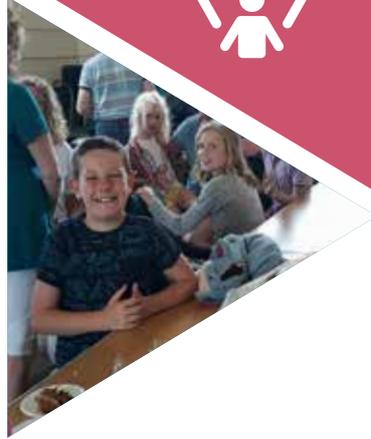
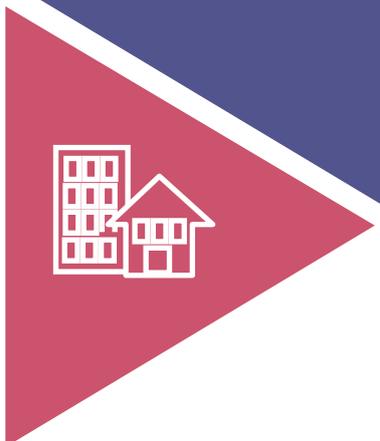
**Devon Communities Together**

helping communities help themselves



# Q2 REPORT 2019/20

JULY-SEPT 2019



October 2019

# KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

We are pleased to report that **LOVE Devon Trading** has been established as a trading arm of DCT, with an impressive board comprising high profile professionals and advisors from Devon businesses. The primary focus is fundraising for DCT, with several initiatives planned for Q3.



## KEY

### DEVON COMMUNITIES OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK:

- ▶ Understanding Community Needs
- ▶ Brokering Relationships
- ▶ Capability Building Within Communities
- ▶ Support for Community Resilience
- ▶ Opportunities for Individuals to Become Active Citizens

## DCT OBJECTIVE

### COMMUNITIES HAVE INCREASED CAPABILITY, SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE IN ADDRESSING LOCAL ISSUES



DCT's Harry Bonnell introduces delegates to the ABCD model of community development.

## DEVON COMMUNITY LEARNING ACADEMY: ABCD TRAINING

We have facilitated 10 learning/networking events this quarter, with a total of 72 participants. As well as using our in-house trainers we collaborated with 3 external providers.

A highlight from September was the Introduction to Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) course, facilitated by our own trainer and project officer, Harry Bonnell, at Whitestone Parish Hall. It was well attended, with 12 delegates including representatives from Devon County Council, several Parish Councils and a health surgery partnership.

Harry enthusiastically introduced participants to the ABCD model in a highly interactive workshop, providing a thorough and inspirational grounding in the concept, which examines strengths and assets that already exist within communities and uses them as a starting point for addressing community challenges. Feedback from the delegates included:

“ [the best part was] Networking and learning from experiences of others through discussion... ”

“ Interactive and engaging learning activities ... Great!! Thank you. ”

“ Great community location. ”

## IMPACT

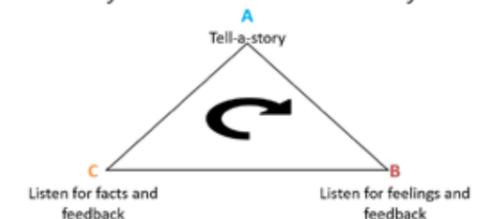
Delegates were inspired to look at new, positive ways of addressing the challenges in their communities and within their organisation's projects and services, and left the session with a good grounding in ABCD.

### The Foundational Truths of ABCD

1. Everyone has gifts
2. Everyone has something to contribute
3. Everyone cares about something and that passion is his or her motivation to act

### Listening Activity - Facts and Feelings

Tell a story for one minute about where you live



Course materials from the Introduction to ABCD course.



## DCT OBJECTIVE

COMMUNITIES HAVE INCREASED CAPABILITY, SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE IN ADDRESSING LOCAL ISSUES



Constructing Futures is partly funded by £574,320 from the Heart of the South West LEP's Growth Deal funding.

A high quality new kitchen has been fitted in the first Constructing Futures property in Torquay.

### CONSTRUCTING FUTURES DEVON: A NEW FAMILY HOME

We have previously reported on the first property to be refurbished by Constructing Futures Devon Ltd; a social purpose business which purchases properties in need of major renovation, transforming them into quality homes with the help of local apprentices from South Devon College who experience valuable training on real-life construction sites.

During Q2 we were delighted to complete the sale of this Torquay property to a young first-time buyer couple, Petyo and Beth. Thanks in part to the hard work of the apprentices and their mentors from South Devon College, Petyo and Beth were able to step onto the property ladder and into a high quality refurbished home.

The couple's mortgage was provided by Skipton Building Society, whose mortgage adviser Laura Dobbin was so impressed with the house and Constructing Futures she nominated it for Skipton's Community Giving Initiative, which could see us receive £1,000 from Skipton.

The Constructing Futures team has also completed and sold a second property and work is underway on a third.

### IMPACT

Overall, more than 38 trainees and apprentices have had valuable on-site experience at our properties, preparing them for the job market and/or setting up their own businesses. Constructing Futures has safeguarded one full time trainer position, with a trainer having been seconded from South Devon College, which in turn has created another full time position at the college. A young couple have been able to purchase a high quality new family home and take their first step on the property ladder.

**“I'm delighted we've been able to help Petyo and Beth with their new purchase. Constructing Futures is a great scheme – improving local properties and helping local students learn valuable skills along the way.”**

**Jon Rawley, Skipton Building Society**



Laura Dobbins (Skipton), Beth and Petyo, Jon Rawley (Skipton)

## DCT OBJECTIVE

COMMUNITIES BECOME ECONOMICALLY STRONGER



### EMPOWERING ENTERPRISE: UNDERSTANDING CHALLENGES FOR RURAL YOUTH

It was identified that the Empowering Enterprise project, which seeks to support NEETs who are hardest to reach and/or furthest from the labour market, had a gap in its provision. The majority of participants (approx. 90%) were from urban centres (Plymouth, Torbay, Exeter, Barnstaple). Devon Communities Together, in its role as a support partner for evaluation and employer and community engagement, sought to address this gap in project provision.

Our project team identified 'representative' rural locations of market towns and surrounding villages, and undertook field research to better understand the context of these areas for 18-24 year olds. Interviews were conducted with young people, community leaders and potential employers.

Summaries of findings were grouped into key barrier themes and we used Design Led Thinking techniques to create five 'personas' of likely young people in these areas (Farmer; Gamer/Musician; SEN and Ill Health; Sporty; 'Off the Rails'). Themes and personas were illustrated with quotes to create empathy inducing and easily accessible introductions to the topic.

The report was shared within the partnership to increase understanding of barriers faced by rural young people and a new project wide strategy was devised to reach more rural young people.

**“ Living here can feel bored and isolated. Nothing to do but going for a walk with the dogs or stay home. It's hard just staying happy. ”**

**“ I'm from nearer Okehampton and the pubs are closing, the travel agent, the bank are closing. ”**

### IMPACT

Project managers will now more closely monitor where young people are recruited from, and their journey. New geographical areas, notably Okehampton and Kingsbridge, will receive focused delivery and recruitment.

Mentors and organisations have been encouraged to think about their rural participation and reach, with organisations adopting 'mapping' exercises to better understand their locations and work more effectively with local services and young people.

Mentors and organisations have a better systematic understanding of rural economies, including the potential for self-employment and the gig economy.



## DCT OBJECTIVE

COMMUNITIES BECOME ECONOMICALLY STRONGER



New Start Devon is receiving funding from the European Regional Development Fund

### ENTERPRISE COACHING FROM NEW START DEVON: CUSTOM HOUSE DESIGN

Custom House Design was started in Topsham in 2010 by Teresa Hamlin based upon her design and retail experience. The business brings interior design and a quality home furnishing studio to Devon. In July 2019 a new high street shop/studio was opened in Cullompton, called Design @ No9.

Terrified of the risk, Teresa's challenges were to:

- confidently transition from small scale design studio to high street shop/studio
- effectively market a range of curated and bespoke product and design services
- enable the display and sale of community artwork

... and to make it viable - all with limited resources.

Teresa attended and participated in a DCT business 'Launchpad' event held in Cullompton in July, following which a series of 1:1 enterprise coaching sessions commenced at the new shop/studio, as part of our New Start Devon project. They were based on the following themes:

- Recognising the strengths Teresa brings to the enterprise
- What is the three-year plan?
- How to develop a scalable business model

## IMPACT

With support from the DCT enterprise coach, Teresa developed a three-year vision for the business with KPIs and gained a deeper recognition of her creative energy and organisational capability. This work in developing a scalable business model succeeded in upskilling, training, supporting and advising Teresa to start to make changes and give the enterprise the best opportunity to achieve positive outcomes. It is expected that one of these outcomes will include the creation of new job opportunities in the near future.



*“Thank you Matthew, I really enjoy our sessions – I am always left with a real buzz and a re-invigorated belief in myself and my business.”*

Teresa Hamlin, September 2019

## DCT OBJECTIVE

COMMUNITIES BECOME ECONOMICALLY STRONGER



The Heart of the South West Enhance Social Enterprise Programme is receiving funding from the England European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) as part of the European Structural & Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020.

### NEW: ENHANCE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE NETWORK

DCT is delivering a new project to support social enterprise network development across Devon, Exeter, Plymouth, Torbay and Somerset, working in partnership with Devon County Council and social enterprise networks across the HoTSW LEP area.

We are developing an online database to launch in November 2019, with a map and directory showing the array of goods and services available locally from social enterprises across Devon, Plymouth, Torbay and Somerset. We will also produce 16 inspiring local events for social enterprises.

## IMPACT

The network will support the social enterprise sector to strengthen financial planning, develop and launch products, secure new business and investigate digital solutions for future growth.

### RURAL ENTERPRISE SOLUTIONS: LAUNCHPAD EVENTS

Rural Enterprise Solutions is funded by the Prince's Countryside Fund to provide free advice and support to would-be entrepreneurs, new businesses and community enterprises. Two free Launchpad networking events were held during Q2, in Cullompton and Totnes, facilitated by DCT project managers Matthew and Louise. The events were based on facilitated peer support and sharing best practice, with the Totnes session having a particular focus on developing 'brand stories'.

Ongoing peer support was encouraged amongst attendees at the two events and everyone was offered the opportunity to access further enterprise support through the New Start Devon programme at DCT, which was mostly taken up. The Totnes event attracted a representative from the Dartington School of Social Entrepreneurs who was able to offer further support through a women-led enterprise project.

## IMPACT

10 Devon entrepreneurs participated in facilitated networking, with the aim of energising and supporting their business growth. Successful local small businesses will contribute to the local economy and create jobs.

*“Really positive, I came away newly inspired.”* Launchpad attendee



**DCT  
OBJECTIVE**  
COMMUNITIES  
BECOME MORE  
RESOURCEFUL  
AND RESILIENT

Children have their say in the future of Ashreigny Village Hall



**ASHREIGNY VILLAGE HALL “INVESTMENT READY PROCESS”**

The trustees of Ashreigny Village Hall have engaged the support of Catalyst, DCT’s consultancy service, to help them to prepare for a major fundraising campaign to renovate and modernise their much loved but tired Victorian building.

Our first task was to help them to successfully apply for a small grant to cover the costs of community consultation activities, building surveyors and architectural designs in order to collect “investment ready” evidence for future funding bids. On a sunny Saturday in early July a community consultation drop-in event was attended by around 70 people who contributed over 130 suggestions and comments on the hall’s use, including from children, whose ideas included roller skating discos, water gun fights and a hot chocolate machine! However the suggestion that gathered the most children’s votes was the need for an outdoor play space.

The issues and ideas generated at the event have been used to design a household survey, which was delivered to every household in the parish to ensure that parishioners have the opportunity to help influence the future of their Hall.

**IMPACT**

The community in Ashreigny has been engaged and involved in the process of developing evidence which will be used to inform grant applications and fundraising campaigns. They feel a sense of ownership and are motivated to fundraise.



**VILLAGE HALLS FUNDING SUCCESSES**

DCT’s specialist village halls advisor has been supporting a number of hall committees to prepare and shape their applications to Defra’s Village Hall Improvement Grant fund. We’re delighted that several of Devon’s village halls have so far been successful in their applications, including £34,190 to Woolacombe Village Hall and £20,250 to Abbotskerswell Village Hall. As well as having provided support with these two successes, DCT is also involved in two more applications which have now been invited to stage two: Teign Valley Hall in Christow and Ashwater.

**IMPACT**

Village halls are hugely important to Devon’s rural communities, providing multi-functional spaces to support many aspects of community life. Maintaining and improving them ensures they will continue to be accessible and valuable for generations to come.

**DCT  
OBJECTIVE**  
COMMUNITIES  
BECOME MORE  
RESOURCEFUL  
AND RESILIENT



Ivybridge’s community emergency plan is set to be updated  
Photo credit: Lewis Clarke

**SUPPORTING COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLANS**

Community Emergency Plans (CEPs) help communities prepare for an emergency and are uploaded to the government gateway Resilience Direct to enable first responders to access details of planned local response in an emergency.

In Devon 80 CEPs exist out of a potential 422 parishes. The Devon Community Resilience Forum, for which DCT is a delivery partner, is committed to increasing this number.

In Q2, 12 presentations were made by DCT to parish and town councils.

**Local example:** Ivybridge Town Council had not reviewed its emergency plan for ten years. We identified a significant shift in the balance of risks and the impact of development since the plan was drawn up. Four Councillors have undertaken to work with the community, local organisations and businesses, to draft a new plan. They will also attend our information and training events.

The Council has committed to ensuring that the regular review of a new emergency plan is a standing item in the Town Council business cycle.



**IMPACT**

Communities are enabled to address local resilience needs, to understand how to support each other in an emergency, and have access to opportunities for skills development through our resilience events and online toolkit.

9 out of 12 councils that DCT presented to have indicated they will proceed with the development of plans. CEPs mean that communities directly address their resilience to cope with an emergency - by responding in a coordinated and pre-planned way, the impact of a local disaster such as fire or flooding is potentially reduced.





**DCT OBJECTIVE**  
COMMUNITIES BECOME HEALTHIER, MORE VIBRANT AND INCLUSIVE WITH IMPROVED WELLBEING

Members of the Chulmleigh Devon Highlights group enjoy cake and board games

**DEVON HIGHLIGHTS: CHULMLEIGH GROUP IS GROWING**

Our Devon Highlights project, designed to tackle rural loneliness and isolation, is building momentum. Progress continues in our inaugural Highlights group, in Chulmleigh, where we are building a group to address loneliness among over 55s and support the individuals who attend.

During Q2 we have welcomed 12 unique participants to the groups, and:

- Reached out to an existing social group 'Board Games for Seniors' and encouraged its 'merging' with Highlights
- Followed up connections from the local medical practice and worked to establish a referrals partnership (two new referrals attended sessions from the four who were contacted)
- Facilitated six Highlights sessions, with themes chosen by participants (including a nature walk; church tower climb; cream tea at a member's farm; fudge making; board games; pet stories)
- Contacted each previous participant by phone during the week to build connections and encourage attendance
- Organised the SeeHear on Wheels service to visit Chulmleigh, to help those at risk of eyesight and hearing loss. We promoted via local media to over 15,000 readers

We are continually building our relationships with 28 (and growing) local and regional 'connectors', including local services and Councillors who can promote and refer into the group, ensuring the widest possible reach.

We have also established and are supporting similar groups in Totnes and Paignton, with other Devon locations in the pipeline.

**IMPACT**

12 individuals in the communities have regular opportunities to socialise and access advice and support in other areas. Our work with the local connectors means word continues to spread throughout the community, leading to an understanding of the purpose of the group and the need for its provision. This includes GPs, who increasingly have the confidence to refer into the group and raise the issues of loneliness and isolation in patient consultations.

**“It's good that the group is unstructured, I have enough structure in my life with my daughters bossing me around. Not many places you can come and just chat.”**

**Devon Highlights Chulmleigh participant**



**DCT OBJECTIVE**  
COMMUNITIES BECOME HEALTHIER, MORE VIBRANT AND INCLUSIVE WITH IMPROVED WELLBEING

Some of the activities and outputs of the Parent Carers Devon marketing workshop

**PARENT CARERS FORUM DEVON**

DCT is working with this new membership group, which has been established to bring together and empower parents and carers of children and young people with additional needs.

Our role is to help this parent-led group set out its working practices, governance and marketing strategy, supporting the members to establish and grow the group successfully.

On 20th September we delivered a marketing workshop using a mixture of Design Led Thinking techniques and digital marketing know-how to inspire and encourage the parents to think about the group's new identity and branding. The workshop was highly successful, with creativity and practical thinking flowing in equal measure, and lots of progress made towards a visual identity, 'brand story' and key messages. We have also supported the members to set up a new steering group and will provide ongoing assistance with this important new forum.

**“...the marketing workshop was fantastic, really well organised and very productive. It felt really inspiring to be part of it!”**

**Julia Bonell, Parent Carer Forum Devon**

**IMPACT**

With DCT's support, this parent-led group will provide a much-needed network for those caring for young people with additional needs. The group will 'connect, empower and influence', supporting the wellbeing of both parents and young people.



**GEORGEHAM COMMUNITY LAND TRUST**

DCT carried out a Housing Need Survey for the Parish of Georgeham in North Devon, which identified a need for 14 new additional affordable homes for local people. Our Rural Housing Enabler presented the findings to the Parish Council and to a public meeting, attended by 45 people, and worked with Wessex Community Land Trust to explain the potential of establishing a Community Land Trust. We have also worked with a number of local people to explore site availability and next steps, with the aim of supporting people to deliver the new homes.

**IMPACT**

12 people have since signed up to their commitment to being on the CLT steering group, which will aim to drive the development of new community-led affordable housing.



Community and parish plans

Advice & training for parish & town councils

Supporting social enterprise and community businesses

Supporting communities to prepare for an emergency

Providing training and skills opportunities for young people

Reducing fuel poverty

Tackling rural isolation and loneliness

Providing a wide range of training opportunities

Enabling affordable housing

Helping with sport and play facilities

Influencing development through neighbourhood planning

Helping communities mobilise their assets

Enterprise start up and small business support

**COMMUNITIES BECOME HEALTHIER, MORE VIBRANT AND INCLUSIVE WITH IMPROVED WELLBEING**

**COMMUNITIES BECOME ECONOMICALLY STRONGER**

**COMMUNITIES BECOME MORE RESOURCEFUL AND RESILIENT**

Supporting village halls and other community buildings

Improving health and wellbeing for people

**OUR OBJECTIVES**

**COMMUNITIES HAVE INCREASED CAPABILITY, SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE IN ADDRESSING LOCAL ISSUES**

**OUR ACTIVITIES**

**OUR VISION**  
is of dynamic communities shaping their own futures.

**OUR MISSION**  
is to inspire and support communities to be thriving, resilient and inclusive.

DCT has adopted four social objectives.

All of our key activities are measured against one or more of the objectives to enable us to assess impact and to share the evidence with funders, stakeholders, policy makers and commissioners.

