



# Devon Communities Together: Measuring Our Impact

Q2 July - September 2022

LOVE  
DEVON

## 6 STRATEGIC AIMS HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED BY DCT FOR 2022/23 AND BEYOND. THEY SIT AT THE CENTRE OF ALL OUR ACTIVITIES.

### DCT WILL ...



### WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY A PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES INCLUDING...



## OBJECTIVE

.....champion diversity and inclusion,  
hear minority voices and respond to  
their needs

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**38** young   
people engaged  
with by DCT to  
understand their  
journeys towards  
employment



**6** meetings with VCSE  
organisations to collaborate  
on the needs of Ukrainian  
refugees and **5** sessions  
to support the new Devon  
Ukrainian Association



**2** Volunteer Connectors  
recruited as part of a  
programme to address  
health inequalities in North  
Dartmoor and Ilfracombe



**1** presentation to the  
Plymouth Health and Care  
Digital Citizen Working  
Group around digital  
inequalities in healthcare



**79** employers received information  
about inclusive employment practices  
including through **3** online webinars

**56** young people engaged with  
to discover their experiences with  
accessing rural services







## SUPPORTING UKRAINIAN REFUGEES

Ukrainian refugees are welcomed collaboratively by the VCSE sector in Devon and the Devon Ukrainian Association is supported to provide cultural and fundraising assistance for refugees.

DCT is supporting the voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) response to people from Ukraine arriving in Devon under the Government's Homes for Ukraine Scheme.

Thanks to funding from Devon County Council and East Devon District Council, we have created online resources (accessed over 200 times during Q2), hosted touchpoint meetings to allow collaboration between VCSE partners, and helped to develop the newly established Devon Ukrainian Association.



[www.devoncommunities.org.uk/devon-homes-ukraine-community-resource-page](http://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/devon-homes-ukraine-community-resource-page)

### CASE STUDY



#### DEVON UKRAINIAN ASSOCIATION (DUA)

Starting from the Exeter Maketank project, the DUA operates the "Conversation Café", which provides support and organises cultural fundraising events for refugees from Ukraine. They were identified as being a key support organisation and a voice for Ukrainians, but required assistance in transitioning from a voluntary organisation into an operating Community Interest Company (CIC), which involved developing procedures and operations to create a formal structure.

DCT helped the DUA by:

- attendance at DUA management meetings
- reviewing processes
- providing initial training
- mediating between directors

Policies and processes are now in place and funding has been released from East Devon District Council and Exeter City Council to allow the DUA to relaunch, with a focus on cultural events and fundraising to support Ukrainian refugees in Devon feel welcome and secure.

[devonforukraine.com](http://devonforukraine.com)



# TACKLING INEQUALITIES IN HEALTHCARE

The views and experiences of different groups of people all over Devon are represented at a strategic level to help to address the causes, impact and solutions of health inequalities and digital exclusion.

We are continuing to work on addressing health inequalities in Devon through a number of initiatives designed to develop a better understanding of the challenges and give a voice to the people who are directly impacted.

## CORE 20PLUS5 COMMUNITY CONNECTOR PROGRAMME

DCT is driving the evaluation planning on this NHS-funded project, which has recruited Volunteer Social Prescriber Connectors in two areas – North Dartmoor and Ilfracombe. These areas have been identified as being amongst those with the highest rate of health inequalities in Devon. The Volunteer Connectors explore the impact of health inequalities at a grass roots level, listening to and highlighting people's accounts of lived experience of key health issues, such as severe mental illness and hypertension. During this quarter, DCT has been working with our partners on reporting and evaluation processes, which will ensure that the evidence we uncover and the recommendations we make are clear, accurate and impactful. We were delighted to attend the national launch of the programme in July.

## DEVON DIGITAL INCLUSION STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Digital exclusion is a long-standing issue the VCSE sector has been working on for many years. On top of that, Covid-19 has forced many aspects of life online, exacerbating digital poverty issues. We

continue to collaborate with VCSE partners on how we can contribute to the delivery of the Integrated Care System's Digital Inclusion Strategy. Our aim is that everyone who wants to can access and benefit from digital healthcare, thereby helping to tackle inequalities in access, experience, and outcomes. Work has included firming up proposals for follow-up initiatives and progressing ideas on related topics such as 'Virtual Wards'.

## RURAL HEALTH INEQUALITIES

DCT is leading on an NHS/VCSE community-based research pilot on remote rural health inequalities, funded by Devon Public Health. We are interested to explore whether bringing practices together from areas where there are high pockets of deprivation can help to address some of the challenges of rural deprivation. DCT is also a leading member of the Devon, Plymouth & Torbay VCSE Assembly Health Inequalities Specialist Hub.

## KINGS FUND INCLUSION HEALTH NATIONAL LEARNING PROGRAMME

DCT is part of a cross sectoral Devon Team taking part in a national Inclusion Health Learning Programme, sharing learning on to how to develop consistently good services and inform co-design of services with people with lived experience, building on learning from the Core20PLUS5 programme.



# DEVON PUBLIC HEALTH EVALUATION

Insights from the team's outreach work will be used to inform future service provision for those groups who are facing health inequalities.

DCT is working in cross sectoral partnership with the Public Health Community Outreach Team to support them to collect insights from, and evaluate, their work.

During Q2 we established a framework within which to gather these insights, looking at the data through different 'lenses'. These insights will be fed back into the commissioning system to meet needs of groups in Devon facing challenges as a result of health inequalities; for example those who are homeless, drug and alcohol dependent, and rurally remote from health services and facilities. We are also working with the Team to gather insights from their work around vaccine clinics for these groups.



Below is an example of the type of valuable insight that DCT is supporting the Team to capture and analyse.



## CASE STUDY



### SERVICES FOR 'PEOPLE WHO WOULD USUALLY RUN AWAY'

We run a small holistic clinic from the South Molton YMCA. It runs once a month on a Thursday. Oral health, drugs/alcohol and sexual health are sometimes there alongside the vaccination team. We share the space with the local foodbank.

Thursday is foodbank day. It is a sad day because so many people need food but also a happy day because the local community come together to celebrate their resilience and strengths.

On clinic days, I like to stand just outside the foodbank door. It's a good place to stand and chat to people as they come in to pick up shopping. There are usually children running around, dogs yapping and people picking through the food stuffs for any extras for their baskets. From the corner of my door, I watch the families that are new to foodbanks. They avert their eyes and keep their heads down, shyly accepting the food with thanks. I offer a smile and a quiet hello. I sometimes get a smile back, but mostly new families just want to leave. They will be back of course, but it will get easier to accept help.

At one clinic, I got talking to a person who uses the foodbank most weeks. About my age, we bonded over our love of reading and having to feed and house grown up children! We laughed at the thought of the coming winter (because what else can you do?) and we chatted some more. Just as the person turned to go, they whispered, 'can I see someone?' and pointed to the sign that said sexual health. I smiled and nodded. Our clinics are for the people who would normally run away.



# SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE INTO EMPLOYMENT

Young people have greater opportunities to gain work and job hunting experience, with the benefit of accessible online resources and support from local employers.

Our Empowering Enterprise\* and Experience Works\*\* projects support young people who face challenges in accessing employment or education. During Q2, DCT hosted three employer workshops with 12 attendees to promote the benefits of becoming an inclusive employer and giving these young people an opportunity to show how they can contribute positively to a business. In total, through our community engagement work including a presentation to the Devon and Plymouth Chamber of Commerce, we reached 79 people with information about inclusive employment.

As part of the Experience Works project, DCT launched the Explore website, which is packed with resources for young people to use when thinking about how to present themselves to employers. As a result of our evaluation of the site with partners and mentors, we produced two short videos of employers' top tips to job candidates: Hospiscare: <https://youtu.be/TRbeWrGC3ZA> and Saddles and Paddles: [https://youtu.be/\\_0fArO0E0Uk](https://youtu.be/_0fArO0E0Uk).

We enjoyed connecting with 38 young people over the past few months, including visits to the Plymouth Ski Centre (pictured above) with our partner Battling On talking with Empowering Enterprise participants and the manager of the centre. The manager has provided excellent support to participants, offering to help them with interview practice. He will soon be sharing his advice with us on video to encourage other young people in Devon!



A key part of DCT's role on these projects is to develop case histories to demonstrate how far the participants have come and celebrate their successes and that of the project. We're pleased to share here a case study created with Groundwork South and University Technical College Plymouth which shares some amazing work done with students at the College: [https://youtu.be/7IbuC\\_N8SdE](https://youtu.be/7IbuC_N8SdE)



[www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/experience-works-0](http://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/experience-works-0)  
[www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/building-better-opportunities-empowering-enterprise](http://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/building-better-opportunities-empowering-enterprise)



Thanks to funding from the UK Community Renewal Fund, we have been working with Petroc to provide grants for activities which support unemployed people to make their next steps towards work or education, or to engage with the benefits system. In this period we were writing up the findings, from our 8 partners' research work, into best practice models and data suites. In addition, DCT completed our own research into the rural life for young people, especially their access to services. For this we surveyed 33 young people and nine youth service providers. We also spoke directly with 23 young people (aged 14-25) to gather their stories and interviewed two youth workers.



\* Managed by Petroc, Empowering Enterprise is delivered by a partnership of organisations with a wide range of expertise and experience in working with young people across the South West. This is a Building Better Opportunities (BBO) project funded by The National Lottery Community Fund and the European Social Fund. \*\*Managed by Petroc, Experience Works is delivered by a partnership of organisations with a wide range of expertise and experience in working with young people across the South West. This project is funded by the European Social Fund.

## OBJECTIVE

... identify and work to reduce inequalities to ensure 'rural proofing' of services, and to improve community health and wellbeing



70 bookings for 14 online wellbeing workshops

77 organisations engaged with to promote initiative to tackle loneliness with transport. 2 people supported to use public transport confidently through 'travel training



5 contacts with sports and play facilities to give advice



Equivalent of 1,500 meals redistributed via community fridge scheme

32,263 discounted litres of oil ordered through the Devon Oil Collective, which welcomed 33 new members



4 Outreach Team training sessions for Public Health Community Insight Programme



2 community groups engaged with about affordable, local housing



41 households/people supported to manage their energy bills



## COMMUNITY ENERGY ADVICE

People are supported to save energy, manage their bills and access additional financial support among the uncertainty around energy prices.

The substantial increase in energy prices, including sources not covered by price interventions, has greatly increased the number of people for whom energy and general household expenses are challenging.

As part of the Big Energy Saving Network, DCT is commissioned to provide energy advice to people who are struggling with fuel poverty. Delivery of this year's programme was delayed awaiting the Government announcement on the energy price cap and other support measures. Once there was clarity on these, we were able to ensure our Energy Champion was trained and ready to support people.

We are offering energy advice talks and support materials to communities and



organisations in rural Devon, as well as 1-2-1 consultations, including home visits.

To date, 31 people have attended talks in Whimple and Tiverton, and three further events have been scheduled at Shebbear, Seaton and Beer, with more to follow.

The events and enquiries are a mix of public events, which are being advertised in the respective communities; community groups, such as warm hubs and lunch clubs; and community activists such as Rotarians. They cover basic advice on energy use, heating efficiency and consumer services, augmented with advice on accessing financial support, addressing the cost of living and green energy options.

[www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/big-energy-saving-network-0](http://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/big-energy-saving-network-0)

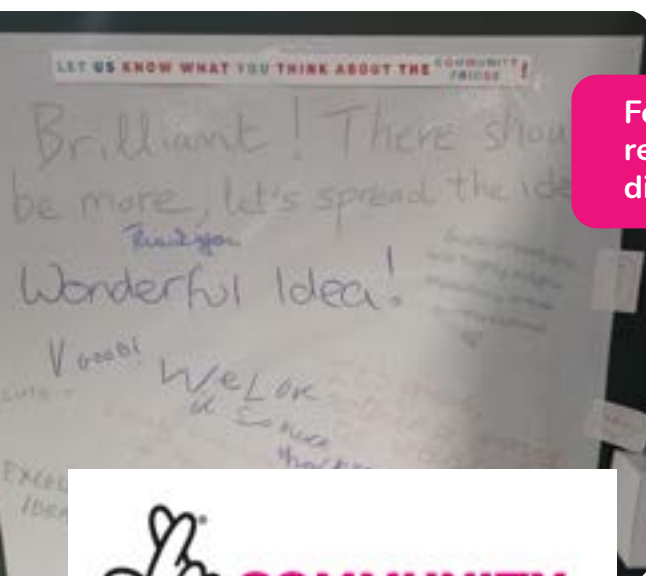


## COMMUNITY FRIDGES

Food waste is reduced and unwanted food is redistributed to people who may otherwise find difficulty in accessing food.

DCT is pleased to be working with Recycle Devon by evaluating its community fridges initiative. So far, two fridges (Exeter and Okehampton) have been established, with over 1,500kg of surplus food having been redistributed, equating to 3,500 meals with a value of nearly £5,000 and a CO2e saving of nearly 5T!

During Q2, the DCT team planned the process by which we will evaluate the fridges' impact on their communities so we can learn what's worked and how to move forward with future initiatives. [www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/devon-food-rescue](http://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/devon-food-rescue)



# TACKLING LONELINESS WITH TRANSPORT

People gain new confidence in using public transport, allowing them to connect with people and services they may otherwise not reach.

‘Connecting You’ is a new Devon-wide project, led by Devon County Council, which seeks to address the issues of loneliness and isolation using transport. It is part of a national Department for Transport funded initiative.

This quarter, DCT has undertaken travel training with two young people to help them feel more confident in accessing timetables, buying tickets and using transport (see below). The partnership has also administered grant funding of £35,552 to initiatives aiming to tackle loneliness with public transport and engaged with 17 other organisations through a mixture of meetings, conferences and events.

To find out more about the travel training or how to apply for the community grant fund, visit: [www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/connecting-you](http://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/connecting-you)



## CASE STUDY

### TRAVEL TRAINING: GROWING CONFIDENCE ON THE TRAIN

C had never travelled by train alone and needed to get from Paignton to attend a training day in Exeter.

I (DCT Community Development Officer) met C at Paignton station where we looked at the electronic boards and I helped C identify the correct train. I then accompanied C to the ticket desk where he

collected his tickets.

On the train we spoke about his time with the Prince's Trust, his previous work experience and his hopes for the future - he'd like to work in IT - plus we shared some cat photos!

C listened to the train announcements and identified

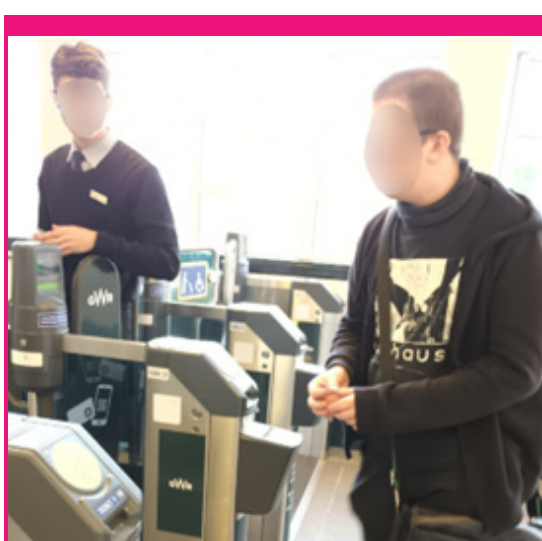
where the electronic screen was which had details of all stops. When we got nearer to Exeter I asked C when he thought our station was coming up and he gave the correct answer and knew when to alight. At Exeter station I explained the purpose of me accompanying him was to help him gain confidence and eventually travel independently on the train. I asked if he could find our way out of the station which he did, successfully navigating the electronic gates with his ticket.

We again identified the screens he would need to look at for the way home and I asked what steps he would need to take if he arrived at a train station. We spoke about the return journey and C said he wanted support at the station and to get on the train but could travel independently. He also said he felt better and more confident about using the train after our journey.

For future support I suggested the GWR app, which C downloaded, and we planned some journeys together as well as looking at 'live updates'.

At the time of writing C has since travelled on a bus alone but not yet had the opportunity to travel on the train.

“[They] found it extremely useful, and it gave them the confidence to travel home on the train alone later on that day.” C's mentor





## ESTABLISHING THE NEED FOR NEW HOUSING

Over 650 households in rural communities have contributed to evidence that suggests 44 new affordable homes are needed for local people.



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

The Devon Community Housing Hub is a partnership of organisations committed to establishing new, affordable housing for local people in rural communities.

A key service DCT provides as part of the Hub is Housing Needs Surveys, which help communities to establish how many additional homes are needed. During Q2, 3 surveys that were sent out in Q1 were completed (Culmstock, Feniton and Chagford). They achieved an average response rate of 24% (659 surveys returned). They will be used to support neighbourhood planning in the respective villages, with provisional results indicating a need for 44 affordable homes.



## FOCUSING ON WELLBEING

Participants are able to take time out to focus on their wellbeing and learn new techniques they can use going forward to improve their overall wellbeing.

Wellbeing Works is an opportunity for Devon based businesses, employees and individuals to benefit from the tools, techniques and inspiration we need to prioritise and develop our wellbeing and resilience via workshops and 1-2-1 wellbeing check-ins. During the past quarter we hosted 14 workshops, attended by 70 individuals, as well as nine 1-2-1 wellbeing check-ins with trained volunteers.



We also produced an interim report, which can be viewed here [www.devoncommunities.org.uk/health-and-wellbeing](http://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/health-and-wellbeing)



[www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/wellbeing-works](http://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/wellbeing-works)



“

*In my three wellbeing check-ins with Alan, he helped me to reflect on my strengths, values and my goals for the future. After each session I left feeling like I could make them a reality! It was brilliant to be able to voice what was on my mind and have support in taking positive next steps. Having someone to listen to me and bring optimism to our conversations left me feeling happier and more hopeful. I'd recommend this service to anyone!”*



## OBJECTIVE

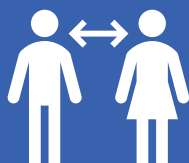
...support Devon's rural economy, local entrepreneurs and businesses to develop and thrive, and promote community wealth building

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**18** new clients signed up for free enterprise coaching

**6** clients completed 12 hours' 1-2-1 coaching



**241** members of Devon Social Enterprise Network



**81** attendees at training and peer support events for enterprises



**2** enterprise themed workshops delivered



**44** individual support consultations facilitated for small businesses/ social enterprises

# SOCIAL ENTERPRISE AND SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT

Social enterprises, start-ups and small businesses have new skills and confidence to move forward and achieve their ambitions.

[www.devoncommunities.org.uk/enterprise-and-business-support](http://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/enterprise-and-business-support)



## FREE 1-2-1 SUPPORT AND TRAINING WORKSHOPS

We have now completed our programme to support social enterprises, community groups and small businesses, with funding from the UK Community Renewal Fund.

Q2 activity has included hosting business breakfast meetings, workshops on innovation and decarbonisation, 1-2-1

support sessions and additional online seminars delivered on 'Finding Funding and Finance'. Highlights from the programme included:

- Our Devon Social Enterprise Network membership increased by over 25%
- We engaged with 200 individuals and organisations
- We delivered three funding workshops to 50 organisations
- We facilitated a total of 16 events and engagement activities

### Devon Social Entrepreneurs Programme



school for  
social  
entrepreneurs



UK Government



*Devon Social Entrepreneurs Programme was led by the School for Social Entrepreneurs (SSE) in partnership with Devon Communities Together, Stir to Action and New Prosperity Devon. It is funded by the UK Government through the UK Community Renewal Fund, which is managed by Devon County Council within the Devon area.*

## ENTERPRISE COACHING

New Start Devon, which receives funding from the European Regional Development Fund, provides 12 hours' free coaching and enterprise support to give people skills and confidence to develop their business ideas.

In July, DCT held two 'Where Does the Money Come From – From Asking to Earning' workshops with a total of 67 people signed up.

From September, we redeveloped the format of the programme, to include an intensive online 'bootcamp', 1-2-1 coaching and optional additional workshops. The first bootcamp was held in September and was made up of a series of workshops on topics designed to kickstart and re-energise enterprises with essential business skills. These workshops will now run monthly and allow greater numbers of budding entrepreneurs to benefit from the programme.



HM Government



[www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/enterprise-coaching-new-start-devon](http://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/enterprise-coaching-new-start-devon)

## OBJECTIVE

...work with communities to develop innovative ways to achieve community resilience and a positive impact for climate change and sustainability

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34 attendees at workshops to look at the future of the Devon Land Use Framework



Facilitated or contributed to 13 environmental/climate change events



39 community groups engaged with about Community Emergency Plans, including from 11 'new' communities



20 communities represented at Devon Community Resilience Forum event



£2,987 in grants awarded to fund community resilience initiatives



# COMMUNITY ACTION FOR WILDLIFE

Devon's wildlife is protected and restored, and people are engaged with our natural environment and the need to preserve it.

The Wild About Devon Grant Scheme, was set up to help communities across Devon to take action for wildlife as part of the Local Nature Partnership's Wild About Devon initiative and the urgent need to tackle the Ecological Emergency.

Having closed our Wild About Devon community wildlife grant scheme in June, after allocating £5,000 to recipients, we spent time during Q2 working with the recipients to understand the impact these grants are having on their communities. Headlines include:

- **204,006.65 square meters of land will be protected or restored. This includes wet and dry meadow & woodland; also, land used to create ponds**
- **420 people within communities across Devon have been engaged in the projects**
- **24 volunteers have been engaged across 9 of the active projects**



The project was featured on ITV Westcountry! [www.itv.com/news/westcountry/2022-10-09/thousands-of-endangered-bats-put-on-spectacular-show](http://www.itv.com/news/westcountry/2022-10-09/thousands-of-endangered-bats-put-on-spectacular-show)



## CASE STUDY

### BEBUCKFASTLEIGH BAT WATCH GUIDED TOURS

BeBuckfastleigh purchased three Magenta Bat5 detectors and began guided walking tours of the town in June 2022 after receiving £300 funding from the Wild About Devon Grant Scheme.

project leader Pam Barrett explains:

"The tours have become very popular with residents, visitors, and groups. A total number of 230 people have participated in the tours. These include groups such as Riverford Farm staff whose farm borders the bats' habitat. This tour allowed the group to discover the impact their farming has on the bats and the importance of the hedgerow network to their wellbeing/survival (their numbers being under threat).

"The purchase of the detectors ... has now directly contributed towards an increase in awareness of the bats and [the challenges] they face, such as protecting their habitat from development."

There have also been intangible outcomes such as friendships being formed by people coming on the walks, showing how the project has impacted upon social cohesion in the town whereby people become more connected to one another.



## WHAT WILL DEVON LOOK LIKE IN THE FUTURE?



Key stakeholders and members of the public have the opportunity to contribute to the future land use framework.

The Devon Land Use Framework project brings together a wide network to design, test, develop and review a Land Use Framework for Devon. The Devon pilot is informing the national framework and has particular visibility in Government.

During Q2, DCT has led on engagement with key stakeholders and by talking to local people at summer shows. A hands-on activity at the Chagford Show proved a huge

success with one young woman, who used the different materials we provided to lay out her 'ideal world' and explain why the landscape would bring a variety of benefits. You can watch here here on this video: <https://youtu.be/CzmZEMwpSsM>



As part of the discussions to decide which test sites to take forward this Autumn, we have engaged with a wide range of key stakeholders, including local councils, voluntary organisations and agricultural businesses. As a result, the testing programme has been narrowed down to 7 key areas/themes: The wider Exe Catchment; Exeter Food Hub; Crediton; Exmoor; The Culm and the Clyst Valley area; and an individual farm. [www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/devon-land-use-framework](http://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/devon-land-use-framework)



## ENCOURAGING RESILIENCE

People are upskilled, inspired and supported to protect their communities from the impact of emergencies, particularly flooding.



### FLOOD WARDEN TRAINING

DCT continues to facilitate the Devon Community Resilience Forum (DCRF), which supports communities to create and maintain their Community Emergency Plans.

The East Devon Community Emergency

Planning and Flood Warden training event in September was a real success, attended by 30 people. Attendees really appreciated the opportunity to meet, learn about resilience and network with others. Feedback from delegates included welcoming the chance to hear about initiating emergency planning from scratch, the invaluable swapping of ideas for engaging volunteers and an opportunity just to sit together and ask questions about all aspects of emergency planning.

As a result, an additional session on engaging volunteers for flood groups is planned for the November forum event, four groups are preparing grant applications and two new target communities have been engaged and will receive further support.



[www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/devon-community-resilience-forum](http://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/devon-community-resilience-forum)





## DEVON RESILIENCE INNOVATION PROGRAMME

This project, funded by DEFRA and the Environment Agency, aims to make local communities more flood resilient by using nature-based solutions to slow the flow of water. DCT is encouraging communities to take ownership of these natural flood management assets through stakeholder engagement.

For example. Building Resilience in Flood Disadvantaged Communities (BRIC) used a variety of stakeholder engagement techniques to engage with their urban community about surface water flooding.

They met people out on the street to discuss the issue as it was felt that, as flooding doesn't happen every week, it wasn't high on peoples' agendas when day to day, they were struggling to feed their families. The outcome of this stakeholder engagement was that a community that started with virtually no understanding of flood risk, became engaged and educated in flood risk awareness, keen to protect the community spaces they enjoyed.

Property flood resilience measures for community assets are also being piloted as part of this project, with 31 pilot projects either underway or planned.

<https://tinyurl.com/2p87uud5>



## ENVISIONING A NET-ZERO RATTERY



People are trained and inspired to envision how their small, rural community can contribute to Devon's target of becoming net-zero by 2050.



The Explore Award is funded by the University of Plymouth. It is intended to pilot approaches to visioning a sustainable future as a way to engage and involve communities. We are working in Rattery, a small, rural parish setting which is in the process of reinvigorating its parish plan. Learnings will be relevant to similar communities regionally and nationally.

DCT worked with a steering committee of councillors and representatives on the parish planning committee, training eight people in how to use visions for engagement. We also attended Rattery's annual sports and garden day, engaging people in visioning the future of their local area. 60+ people have been reached through this pilot; 30+ visions created and 40+ ideas gathered. One such vision is around tech-aided shopping...



*"Looking in my fridge I realised I was running low on several things so decided to restock. Checking the app I could see that the community shop had most of what I needed; what they didn't would be added to next day's automated delivery by e-truck. Taking an e-scooter I headed for the village hall. There I grabbed a coffee with some friends before picking up some groceries – both a mix from the 'Tescmart' and locally produced veg, eggs and meat. I was in credit from the hand-caught scallops I'd picked up on my last diving trip so my bank balance was unaffected. Finally I arranged to go to Dartington with my friend to go to the cinema, sharing an e-bus using the share-app."*



## OBJECTIVE

...develop community capacity building, through local facilities, spaces, services, people and their skills

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Engaged with **1** new community about creating a community plan

**239** people came along to our **25** training, learning and networking events



**56** contacts with village halls to support them with specialist advice, including **24** pieces of funding advice



**91** survey responses received about a potential community benefit fund in Rockbeare, Aylesbeare and Marsh Green

**33** village hall audits undertaken to date



**16** applications received for resilience-building community initiatives

# PUTTING DEVON'S VILLAGE HALLS ON THE MAP

A first ever asset map of village halls will celebrate the stories and achievements of the halls and provide evidence about how they can contribute to healthy, thriving communities of the future.



With funding from DEFRA and Devon Public Health, DCT is undertaking an audit of village halls in Devon to share their stories and understand their potential to respond to the ever changing challenges of rural life.

Beginning in September, we conducted five audits during Q2, visiting the halls to engage with the committees to understand their hopes and challenges, as well as logging the facilities, for example, wifi connectivity, rooms and parking spaces.

Early insights from our visits include evidence that wifi connectivity looks to be a major problem, with halls finding suitable providers for their areas difficult. As well as signposting them to potential suppliers to help the individual halls where we can, we are also gathering evidence that could be used to demonstrate the need for additional support and funding. [www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/village-halls-community-buildings-audit](http://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/village-halls-community-buildings-audit)



# UPSKILLING OUR COMMUNITIES

239 people have acquired new skills, knowledge and connections.



We facilitated 25 online learning and networking events for 239 people during Q2. Highlights included a session taking participants

through the benefits of Asset Based Community Development (ABCD), which encourages people to work with the existing strengths of communities to support them to make positive, sustainable changes. This course was attended by 22 people who can put this form of community development into action throughout Devon. [www.devoncommunities.org.uk/courses](http://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/courses)



# CONSTRUCTING FUTURES DEVON



Young construction learners have acquired real site experience.

Constructing Futures Devon Ltd purchases dilapidated properties and renovates them with the help of local construction learners.

During Q2 we were pleased to welcome prospective buyers around a new family home that has been renovated by our team including young construction learners who have now seen their hard work come to fruition and on to the housing market. We have also been planning new marketing and branding to inspire more organisations in Devon to get involved. Watch this space! [www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/constructing-futures](http://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/constructing-futures)



HM Government



# COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS

The opinions and ideas generated by people are captured and shared so that communities have a direct say in matters that affect them.

During Q2 we have completed our analysis of two community consultations we've been facilitating this year.

## COMMUNITY BENEFIT FUND

DCT was funded by Low Carbon Alliance to conduct an independent community consultation on a proposed community benefit fund as part of the proposed Ford Oaks Solar and Green Infrastructure Facility in Marsh Green. We developed a survey which generated 91 responses, and hosted three community focus groups, in total engaging with 101 individuals to seek their views.

The final report has been shared with Low Carbon Alliance. It includes ideas from the community around improving community facilities, improving open spaces and looking at green energy.

## TAVISTOCK NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Over the past few months we have supported the Tavistock Neighbourhood Development Plan steering group to engage with their community about what they would like to see in a formally adopted document setting out the future development of their town. During Q2 we completed our analysis of the survey and community engagement activities that had previously taken place, with a full report produced that gives a voice to 861 people who formed part of the consultation. Read the report here: [www.devoncommunities.org.uk/community-consultation-publications](http://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/community-consultation-publications)



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“

*I really love the local community and I love shopping in the local shops. I can see opportunities with the population growing with the developments, but I can see that the new housing is not being built to a particularly high environmental standard. Traffic is placing an enormous stress on the road system. Responding to this survey is my way of making my voice heard.”*

“

*We are all a community, we are individuals of course, but [we've] got to share this town and try to make the best of it. Not only survive but to thrive and take the opportunity to contribute whenever we can.”*



# GROWING OUR COMMUNITIES

Communities become more resilient thanks to community driven initiatives.

We are working in partnership with Devon County Council to administer a pot of funding within the wider Devon County Council Growing Communities Fund, with the aim of supporting and funding local collaborative community resilience projects in rural communities in Devon.

During Q2 we received 16 applications, including improving accessibility, providing 'warm hubs' and developing community kitchens.

At the time of writing, two grants have been awarded, with several others pending and although we haven't seen the impact yet, there are some exciting initiatives in the pipeline!

[www.devon.gov.uk/communities/growing-communities-fund](http://www.devon.gov.uk/communities/growing-communities-fund)



[mark.brownbill@devoncommunities.org.uk](mailto:mark.brownbill@devoncommunities.org.uk)



## CASE STUDY



### TAVISTOCK COMMUNITY GARDENING

The group has worked with Tavistock Town Council over the last 10 years, growing edible plants in unused spaces, together with increasing the number of planters containing seasonal vegetables around the town centre. This funding will build four community demonstration planters and will be available to people who have no access to outdoor space.

The demonstration planters will show how much food can be grown in a small space - crops will feed an estimate of between four and six people, although the number of people actually benefitting from the planters, through education and awareness, is much higher. The project site is adjacent to Tavy Fridge, a community-run initiative, which aims to reduce waste from supermarkets and local businesses.

By using saved seeds, seed swaps and encouraging affordable sales, the planters will help build self-reliance and increase food security.

## OBJECTIVE

...flourish as an agile, flexible, learning organisation, responding positively to the evolving needs of our communities, stakeholders and staff



DCT staff are better connected with each other, our stakeholders, partners and the communities we support.

## SUMMER SHOWS

We enjoyed meeting lots of different people at our stands at the Mid Devon, Okehampton and Chagford Shows this summer. In total, we engaged with 369 people, which gave us a real opportunity to talk to people about things that matter to them and understand better how DCT could evolve to help their communities. Of these chats, 89 were taken forward with various members of staff, demonstrating the value of these shows in allowing us to respond positively to people's needs.

## MAKING BEST USE OF OUR DATA

A major focus for DCT during Q2 was preparing our contact data for migration into our new customer relationship management system. The entire staff team pulled together to verify and cleanse our data so it would be ready to drive our new system, which has now officially launched!

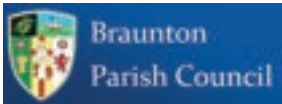
The system will help DCT to harness the huge amounts of data we gather through our projects, and work more effectively and collaboratively to benefit our stakeholders and the communities we support.

## CONNECTING WITH COLLEAGUES

To support our staff wellbeing, we have scheduled regular wellbeing sessions. Our summer session was based on one of the 'Five Ways to Wellbeing' - connection. It was held at our office where we met over coffee and cake and took part in a fun quiz that allowed us to get to know our colleagues better and connect with those we don't work with on a day-to-day basis.



# THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS AND PARTNERS...



European Union  
European Regional  
Development Fund



European Union  
European  
Social Fund

