

Devon Communities Together: Measuring Our Impact

Q3 October - December 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 ...

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

Community and parish plans

Supporting social enterprise and community businesses

Improving people's health and wellbeing

Reducing fuel poverty

Supporting communities to prepare for an emergency

Helping sport and play facilities

Providing a wide range of training opportunities

Tackling digital inequalities

Helping communities mobilise their assets

Enabling affordable housing

Investigating and addressing health inequalities

Influencing development through neighbourhood planning

Helping communities and organisations reduce their carbon footprint

Tackling rural loneliness and isolation

Supporting village halls and other community buildings

Creating accessible, inclusive training and work opportunities for young people

OBJECTIVE

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

18 young people attended 6 activity days organised by DCT to build confidence and support their journeys towards employment



4 cross-sectoral Digital Inclusion Strategy meetings attended.



8 meetings facilitated to co-design support routes for people accessing healthcare on Virtual Wards

10 employers engaged with to support them with inclusive employment information



1 online resource maintained by DCT as a central reference point for the Devon Homes for Ukraine scheme



HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE REACH THEIR POTENTIAL

Young people are supported to build their confidence, knowledge and experience through a range of opportunities and tools that help them on their journey to employment.

EXPERIENCE WORKS

Experience Works** supports young people aged 16–24 who are not in education, training or employment, or at risk of becoming so. DCT is the support and evaluation partner delivering employer engagement, community engagement and a toolkit to help participants become employment-ready. <https://www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/experience-works-0>



This quarter, four businesses took part in our employer training, which encourages and supports organisations to become more inclusive employers. We also visited a theatre performance and a screening of young people's video work, both of which featured young people in the programme. Meeting the young people and understanding their stories is an important part of our role within the project. You can read and watch one of these stories below.

CASE STUDY



OLIVER

Oliver, at University Technical College Plymouth, talks about the challenges of loneliness and mental health brought on by lockdown, and how Groundwork South supported him in readjusting.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dJWDwFs6sMY>

EMPOWERING ENTERPRISE



Empowering Enterprise* is a partnership of organisations delivering mentoring for the 'hardest-to-reach' 18–24 year olds in Devon to support them towards training or employment. DCT is the evaluation and support partner. Our latest biannual evaluation report can be read here: <https://tinyurl.com/bden72ja>

During Q3, we met with NHS population health management coordinators to share the voices and needs of young people in Devon with a focus on mental health and what support they require. We also created two community calendars sharing local events and volunteering opportunities among our participants to encourage them to connect with others and gain new experiences.

Another major focus for Q3 was organising six activity days/courses, which were attended by 18 young people and five mentors. Read more on the next page...



www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/building-better-opportunities-empowering-enterprise.



* 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.

NEW SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE GAINED AT ACTIVITY DAYS

Activity days for Empowering Enterprise participants were hosted at Dartmoor Zoo, the Mare and Foal Sanctuary, and with the Italian Cooking Association. These sessions were rich opportunities for both the participants and organisations to make connections, build skills and gain confidence.

Most of the 18 participants (across all events) have been struggling with social anxiety and low confidence, and the idea of meeting others in a group setting was intimidating. However, the change in confidence as the days progressed was very apparent. For example, at the Mare and Foal Sanctuary, their growing teamwork skills were apparent as the collaboratively built dens and found firewood. It was wonderful to see one

participant who is a refugee to this country welcomed and encouraged by others.

The sessions also improved other life skills, with two participants on the day with the Italian Cooking Association never having used an oven before, and participants at Dartmoor Zoo learning about everything from feeding animals to fundraising approaches, and gaining customer service experience.

The sessions also benefitted the host organisations, which were not familiar working with this age group, and/or with such challenges. For example, Dartmoor Zoo is more used to working with high school students who are the sole responsibility of the education team. However, by working with us they have developed a new model for their delivery, where people from multiple teams join together to become involved in the educational aspect of the work.



Young participants enjoying their activity days with DCT

UNDERSTANDING LIVED EXPERIENCES OF HEALTH ISSUES

Real experiences of health and healthcare will be collated and shared with key stakeholders to inform and improve future services and policies.

The aim of the NHS Core 20+5 Community Connectors programme is to recruit volunteer connectors in two areas – North Dartmoor and Ilfracombe – identified as being amongst those with the highest rate of health inequalities in Devon, in order to discuss and bring to the fore people's accounts of lived experience of key health issues, such as severe mental illness and hypertension. DCT has worked with partners to implement our co-designed impact evaluation framework and we produced a report for NHS funders in December 2022.

We also delivered a Wellbeing introduction to volunteers in North Dartmoor, which was a way of volunteers gaining confidence and getting to know each other, and an incentive for them to become - and continue being - volunteers. DCT staged an hour-long training session on creating video blogs to enable the capture of rich, qualitative data from people living with these particular health conditions. [Contact: laura.dixon@devoncommunities.org.uk](mailto:laura.dixon@devoncommunities.org.uk)

CASE STUDY



HOPE COURSE

We joined the end of a local HOPE course focused on "Chronic pain, Fibromyalgia, ME and Long Covid" and asked the group of six participants if they had a direct experience of health inequalities. Their experiences will be fed back to the Devon-wide ICS health inequalities groups. Below are some example responses:

“After I eventually managed to get an appointment with my GP it was a telephone consultation. After describing the symptoms I had been suffering with for a while, they decided that it was due to depression and prescribed me with antidepressants. I wasn't happy with this diagnosis and requested another appointment. Unsurprisingly it was another telephone call but this time luckily the doctor on the end of the phone actually listened to me and my symptoms, advised me to stop taking the antidepressants immediately ... and treated me for Long Covid. If I had listened to the first doctor ... I would still be undiagnosed and taking unnecessary medication. I feel if appointments weren't always over the phone then this situation could have been avoided”

“It took me over 8 years and 2 doctor changes to get a diagnosis. I felt like I wasn't listened to or acknowledged due to my age and past medical history.”

“As a room full of individuals that suffer with multiple disorders or diagnoses a simple 5 minute GP appointment isn't enough. Could there not be a possibility of making a weekly or monthly dedicated day to sufferers of multiple illnesses with extended GP appointment slots so we are able to discuss all our complaints rather than having to treat just one each time?”



DRIVING INCLUSIVITY IN RURAL DIGITAL HEALTHCARE



People across rural Devon will be supported to access and use the digital technology necessary to receive new healthcare services, such as virtual wards. The particular challenges and lived experiences of rural communities are represented at a strategic level to ensure inclusivity in future health policies and programmes.

DCT is working across a number of partnerships and collaborations to improve the accessibility and inclusivity of healthcare services in our rural communities.

1. DIGITAL INCLUSION STRATEGY

DCT's Chief Executive has been invited to co-chair the One Devon NHS Integrated Care Service (ICS) Digital Inclusion Strategy, in recognition of our recent digital inclusion and rural digital health inequalities partnership work.

During Q3, we attended four cross-sectoral Partnership Group meetings, at one of which we gave a presentation on Rural Digital Health Inequalities in Devon. We have also successfully made the case for Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) involvement in delivering the Virtual Wards Pilot Programme (see below).

DCT has co-produced a Digital Inclusion Strategy based on a shared purpose ***“To provide cross-sectoral leadership and facilitate learning across Devon for ICS Digital Inclusion in order to widen participation so that everyone who wants to can access and benefit from digital healthcare, thereby helping tackle inequalities in access, experience, and outcomes.”***

2. VIRTUAL WARDS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

DCT is part of a VCSE alliance formed to participate in the One Devon NHS Virtual Wards Development Programme. Virtual wards allow people to receive healthcare at home rather than needing to be in hospital.



They use technologies by which patients can be remotely monitored by healthcare professionals. They may also receive face-to-face care at home by community teams.

We have facilitated eight meetings to co-design a VCSE-managed referral route to provide additional, non-clinical support for patients who are being treated at home as part of the Virtual Wards Development Pilot, including helping them to access and use the clinical remote digital technology.

Our delivery model includes VCSE Community Support Workers/Digital Navigators who will form part of Virtual Ward implementation in rural Devon. DCT is managing a central co-ordination hub, collaborating with VCSE partners, including local digital inclusion/disability support organisations and the British Red Cross. The service is due to go live in February 2023.

3. SW ACRE DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

During this period, we have continued to participate in a South West ACRE (Action With Communities in Rural England) partnership aimed at developing a funding bid for a South West Digital Accessibility Development Programme, based on a partnership framework created and delivered by Network members.

We are co-creating a funding bid built on digital accessibility framework based on three key strands: Accessibility, Inclusion and Innovation. The planned framework will include individual digital upskilling and supporting VCSE organisations to achieve compliance with digital accessibility standards. During Q3 DCT established a working group to look at the redevelopment of our own website, with a major focus on accessibility.

4. RURAL HEALTH INEQUALITIES

DCT has continued to co-chair the Devon, Plymouth & Torbay Health Inequalities Hub and have held three meetings which have fed directly into the One Devon NHS Health Inequalities and Prevention Strategic Partnership. This includes making the case for the inclusion of people living in rural communities and remote rural settlements

with dispersed population as a priority health inequality category in the One Devon NHS Quality & Equality Impact Assessment.

We have also deployed Devon Public Health Contain Outbreak Management and DEFRA funding to begin a community-based practice study in partnership with the Mid Devon Medical Practice to explore some of the themes which have been explored in more urban settings by “Deep End” networks. Deep End networks represent socioeconomically deprived areas, in which provision is under huge amounts of pressure and capacity is stretched (they’re at the ‘deep end’). We hope to examine whether the themes from the urban networks translate across to the deep end of rural healthcare provision.

We have planned a series of three practice study workshops to be held between January and March 2023.



Mid Devon
Medical Practice



PRESENTING PUBLIC HEALTH ‘SNAPSHOTS’

Insight snapshots will help to establish better partnership working between Public Health Commissioners and communities, to drive improvements in public health.

DCT is partnering with the Devon County Council Public Health Outreach Team to collect and analyse insights about the ways in which Public Health could be delivered in the community.

This quarter we have devised a structure for a series of ‘Insight Snapshots’, backed by video material. We have also run two additional workshops for the Outreach Team – one on ‘Writing Effective Funding Applications’ and one on ‘Mapping Community Assets’. These are to support the legacy the Outreach Team will leave in the communities they are working in, when the project ends in March 2023.

We are now finalising the Snapshots as a digital series, illustrating the work of the Outreach Team in communities, with recommendations to Public Health Commissioners about how systems and practices could change to work more collaboratively with communities when procuring services, to facilitate better outcomes for local people. **Contact:** hannah.reynolds@devoncommunities.org.uk



OBJECTIVE

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



72 participants
at 13 online
wellbeing
workshops and
1-2-1 check-ins

25 people from 3 organisations
trained on how to support people
to use public transport with
confidence



4 contacts with sports and
play facilities to give advice



617 households
given the
opportunity to
contribute to a
survey about local
housing need



123 households/people
supported to manage their
energy bills



Equivalent of 8,038
meals redistributed
via community fridge
scheme (to Jan '23)



32,000 litres of oil ordered by 48
households through the Devon Oil
Collective, which welcomed 16 new
members

SAVING ENERGY ACROSS DEVON

People of all ages are more aware of energy usage and how to reduce it, as well as how to better manage their bills and access financial support.

Energy costs remain front and centre of the cost of living crisis, with the colder autumn/winter weather exacerbating the challenges people have in heating their homes affordably.

We have continued to provide support to households in Devon through the Big Energy Saving Network, where we are commissioned to provide energy advice to people who are struggling to afford their fuel bills.

We introduced a programme of community energy advice talks and 1-2-1 advice sessions, including home visits. During Q3 we attended two community 'warm hubs', six community meetings and two drop-in sessions to provide energy advice in rural locations across Devon.

In addition to our usual community energy advice sessions we also held a 75 minute session with 38 years five and six pupils

of Tedburn St Mary Primary School. We discussed energy use and saving in the school and decided that the classroom was too hot! We talked about how high energy costs meant that families had less money to spend on nice things. The children engaged enthusiastically in a discussion about fuels, how to use energy efficiently in the home, and how to retain heat. We handed out thermometer fridge magnets that show optimum room temperature for comfort and fuel efficiency.

They each had an information book to take home and were left with some classwork: to make a list of ten energy saving measures they could use at home and to show this to their parents. Also, to find out what a Smart Meter is, how it works and how it helps energy saving.

In total, during Q3 we supported 123 people, with advice on recognising fuel poverty, the financial help available, energy saving measures, green energy options, priority services registration, smart meters, community support measures and more. As well our specific advice, participants shared experiences and ideas with each other, and individual advice was given to help people manage their bills.

www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/big-energy-saving-network-0





HOUSING NEED IN COMMUNITIES

Housing Needs surveys help to ensure that the most suitable housing mix for the local communities will be developed, providing affordable homes for local people.

As part of the Devon Community Housing Hub, DCT conducts Housing Needs Surveys to give every household in an area that chance to contribute their thoughts on

the need for additional housing in their community to enable local people to remain in the area if they wish to, without being priced out, or driven to cheaper housing areas.

During Q3 we conducted one survey in Membury (617 households), completed further analysis of a previously distributed survey in Chagford and planned an additional two surveys for Thorverton and Moretonhampstead, to go live at the beginning of 2023.

www.devonhousinghub.org.uk



FIVE WAYS TO WELLBEING

Through workshops, check-ins and online content, people are helped and encouraged to make time for themselves to focus on their wellbeing and build their resilience.

Wellbeing Works is a Devon County Council-funded programme which provides group and individual opportunities 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.

During Q3 we hosted a total of 13 workshops (including Fika, eating habits and wellbeing at work) and 11 1-2-1 wellbeing check-ins. We also developed a series of short videos on each of the 'Five Ways to Wellbeing', which we hope will have a legacy beyond the project to encourage people to focus on their wellbeing. Take a look at the videos here: <https://tinyurl.com/yb5cksu4>



www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/wellbeing-works



What did people enjoy most about their workshops..?

“I was struggling today and it helped me calm down and give myself time.”

“The ‘permission’ that it was ok to spend 5 mins stopping and just being mindful during the working day.”

“It was amazing to take the opportunity to think about the present moment and was inspiring listening to others.”

CONNECTING PEOPLE THROUGH TRANSPORT

25 VCSE sector workers are now trained to support their clients to use public transport, allowing them to travel to reach family, friends and vital services.

Connecting You is funded by the Department for Transport via lead partner Devon County Council. It aims to reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation using transport, and increase people's confidence in using public transport. DCT delivers travel training to VCSE sector organisations and is evaluating the impact of the project as a whole.



During Q3 we delivered travel training to three VCSE organisations, attended by 25 participants in total. The training shows these organisations how to help their clients gain confidence in using public transport. We've developed resource packs for travel trainers and end users to ensure they feel supported after the training.

Looking to our evaluation role, we have developed our evaluation tools and communicated these with all partner organisations to support rich and effective evaluation of the project. We have begun to observe and record other strands of the Connecting You project, including initiatives to tackle the isolation caused by a lack of public transport in certain areas (see below). www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/connecting-you



CASE STUDY

SURFING SESSIONS WITH PETROC

As an evaluation partner in the project, it's fantastic to be able to examine some of the direct delivery of the project. Petroc, for example, has run some trips for students at risk of isolation, including to a surf school. DCT observed one of the surf sessions.

Using Connecting You funding, Petroc has funded a minibus which has facilitated weekly trips to a surf school on Putsborough Beach. With many of the bus services having

been cut in the area, and with issues with using public transport whilst wet after surfing, the minibus has allowed students to participate in activities which they would not otherwise be able to attend.

One student, Maddie, said it would be difficult to attend surfing without Petroc putting on transport – taking well over an hour to cycle from her home to the beach. She said the Surf Academy trips have allowed her to learn new skills, spend otherwise free periods on the beach, and spend time with friends.



Petroc Students enjoy a surf school thanks to a Connecting You-funded minibus.

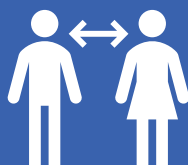
OBJECTIVE

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



3 full-day bootcamps and **3** workshops hosted to support Devon-based micro businesses and social enterprises

5 clients completed 12 hours' 1-2-1 coaching



249 members of Devon Social Enterprise Network



47 social enterprises surveyed about what they want and need from the future of the Devon Social Enterprise Network



24 attendees at training and peer support events for enterprises

FROM BUSINESS BOOTCAMPS TO ENTERPRISING HALLS

Micro businesses, social enterprises and community buildings are supported to build resilience and grow, contributing to the local economy and providing important products, services and spaces for their communities.

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

The redeveloped programme launched during Q3, offering three one-hour coaching

sessions along with a six-hour bootcamp and a choice of three 'deep dive' workshops on business planning, finance and governance, as well as support with market research or a grant/loan search. We have 20 individuals on the programme currently, with 13 having signed up during Q3. .

During Q3 we diversified to create a bespoke programme for village halls and community buildings. The 'Enterprising Halls' programme provides the same support structure as the main New Start Devon programme but the content is tailored specifically to helping halls to develop as social enterprises, for example creating new income streams, undertaking major capital projects and looking at their legal structures - all of which will help them to continue benefitting their communities into the future. The first Enterprising Halls cohort joins us from January, with 24 halls signed up so far.

CASE STUDY



PIGMENT ORGANIC DYES

Sophie Holt leased land to develop a project that will grow, make and sell seeds, dyestuffs, fabrics, furniture and other products online and through local retailers.

She also actively practices social therapy and provides supported employment for adults with learning disabilities, autistic spectrum disorder and mental health disorders, as well as training and mentoring for adults with particular support needs.

As a sole trader she was feeling overwhelmed and joined New Start Devon to learn how she could develop her project into a social enterprise. We helped her to develop a business model for her enterprise and advised on the appropriate legal structure, in this case a Community Interest Company (CIC). We also coached her for a presentation to the social investment agency,



Pigment's website www.pigment.org.uk went live in December 2022. (c) @PigmentPlantDyes / Instagram

Unltd, from which she went on to obtain £5,000 of start-up funding to grow her business.

OBJECTIVE

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

Engaged with **20** stakeholders about Property Flood Resilience measures in local areas



40 attendees at event to listen to the community-produced vision of their future net zero community



4 new or redeveloped Community Emergency Plans in progress



66 communities represented at Devon Community Resilience Forum event, with **313** attendees and **617** receiving session recordings



£8,301 in grants awarded to fund community resilience initiatives

A group of volunteers from a community project in North Bovey that benefited from a Wild About Devon grant (credit: North Bovey Parish Council).



Devon
County Council



FUNDING WILDLIFE INITIATIVES



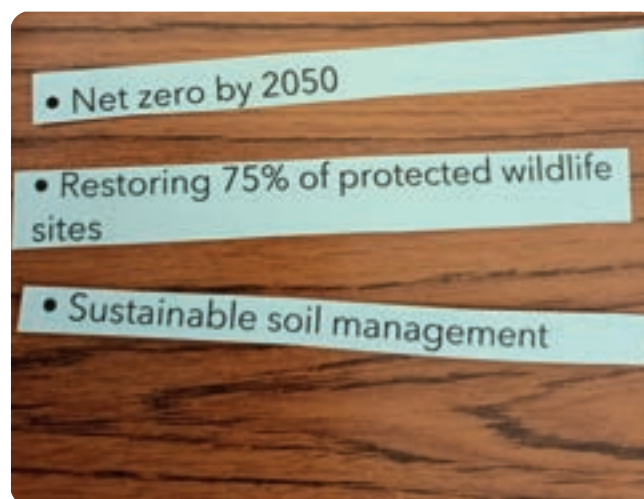
As previously reported in Q2, we were delighted to allocate £5,000 in funding for community wildlife projects as part of the Wild About Devon Grant Scheme. During Q3 we published the final report, which can be viewed here: <https://sway.office.com/xfvk4twp4j7jAEbB?ref=Link>. Thanks to new funding, we're pleased to be able to extend this project to many more exciting community wildlife projects into 2023. Watch this space!

DEVON LAND USE FRAMEWORK

The new Land Use Framework will include input from – and be tested with – a broad range of stakeholders, ensuring inclusivity and effectiveness.

The Devon Land Use Framework (DLUF) brings together a wide network to design, test, develop and review a Land Use Framework for Devon.

Funded by DEFRA and DRIP (see pg. 18), DLUF now has additional funding from the Geospatial Commission. The Devon pilot is informing the national framework and DCT has led on engagement with key stakeholders, planning meetings for sites for testing the new framework and the Leadership Round Table.



The DLUF team attended the Connecting the Culm forum event in November, where we engaged people in a prioritising activity of the Government's key land use targets, an example of which is pictured here. All of the results from these engagement activities will form part of the testing process.



www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/devon-land-use-framework



Food, Farming
& Countryside
Commission

FLOODING AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

People, property and landscapes are better informed about and protected from risks, such as flooding, through practical interventions and support with emergency planning.

DEVON COMMUNITY RESILIENCE FORUM

During November 2022, we facilitated an ambitious online Devon Community Resilience Forum event, which was live streamed across three days and evenings. 23 sessions were hosted, covering a broad variety of topics from flooding prevention to designing simple posters – all to support communities to work towards developing their own Community Emergency Plan. Over 900 bookings were made for the sessions, with over 300 people attending and over 600 people sent recordings of the sessions. In total, 66 Devon communities were represented across the three days, all of which are better placed to protect people and property in the event of an emergency situation, for example extreme weather.

Although a major focus this quarter was the event, our resilience team also supported



Budleigh Salterton to produce a new Community Emergency Plan and we produced the latest in our new format newsletter, which can be viewed here: www.devoncommunities.org.uk/dcrf-newsletter

Additionally, we have awarded a total of £8,301.15 in grant funding to six communities (Uplyme, Lypstone, Chardstock Eco Group (see below), Bishops Clyst PC, Ide and Bampton) to enable them to purchase equipment or further develop their Community Emergency Plans.

CASE STUDY



CHARDSTOCK ECO GROUP

Through the Devon Community Resilience Forum, we awarded a grant for a one-off natural flood management pilot to Chardstock Eco Group. The funding will be used for interventions in the Kit Brook Catchment at two sites: one in the headwater tributaries and the other closer to the confluence with the River Axe.

With expert support, the group has been out with local landowners identifying high risk areas of water run-off and erosion, places that would be ideal for natural flood management interventions to slow the flow. They will be undertaking a range of activities with the funding, including installing leaky dams, goyle dams, ponds and buffer strips to better protect properties from flooding in an area that, in 2021, suffered flood damage to properties and road bridges. The future flood risk should be significantly reduced thanks to these interventions.



The work we will be able to undertake will mitigate the risk of flooding in Chardstock, and may assist with reducing flooding in the Axminster area."



www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/devon-community-resilience-forum



DEVON RESILIENCE INNOVATION PROGRAMME

DRIP is part of the Flood and Coastal Resilience Programme funded by DEFRA. The project focusses on rapidly responding catchments in predominantly rural areas, seeking to identify what level of protection can be afforded to a community using nature-based interventions, tailored flood warning systems and Property Flood Resilience (PFR) measures. We currently have 35 projects across Devon, aimed at small commercial and community facilities with the aim of protecting these community assets as much as possible.

DCT is responsible for the stakeholder engagement aspect of the project.

During Q3 we've attended 14 meetings and events and engaged with 20 contacts regarding stakeholder engagement plans, events and activities. During this work, we have gathered a range of community

engagement tools, for example a 'home and dry' game, to ensure we can engage with communities at all levels. This is important as we want communities to have ownership of the nature based interventions and engage in co-creation where possible.

DCT also developed a Parish Council stakeholder proposal to survey the Councils twice per year to check how well the key messages are being received and understood. For example, a key message is that the interventions cannot stop flooding but can increase the community's resilience and decrease bounceback time. The survey, which was approved by the project Board, will identify where further engagement may be needed to support the community's understanding of the project.

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



EXPLORE RATTERY: A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Local people have the opportunity to collaborate on what the net zero future of their community could look like and are inspired to make it happen.



This project, with the University of Plymouth, is intended to pilot approaches to visioning a sustainable future as a way to engage and involve communities. The project is explicitly working in a typical, small, rural parish setting (Rattery) which is in the process of reinvigorating its parish plan. As such, learnings from this pilot will be shared widely and will be relevant to similar communities regionally and nationally.

After a summer of gathering 'Visions of Rattery in 2035' from local people, we passed these on to a professional storyteller who lived locally – Steph Bradley. Steph weaved these community-sourced visions into a 20-minute tale of what Rattery could look and feel like in the near future, and how actions taken today would get us there. You can watch the vision here:

<https://tinyurl.com/47dehw26>



The story was shared at the annual Harvest Supper event, where 40 people listened to the collaborative vision. Although there was a mixed reaction to how readily people were able to 'see' the vision fully, there has been strong local debate ever since, with more people wishing to engage with the local environmental group. A vision booklet and feedback survey was created and distributed to 200 households in the community. We look forward to watching what the community does next and looking at how we can translate this exciting visioning model to other places in Devon.

OBJECTIVE

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

631 people came along to our **37** training, learning and networking events



80 contacts with village halls to support them with specialist advice



95 village hall audits undertaken during Q3



2 bespoke courses on supporting claimants to navigate the benefits system delivered to local charities



DEVON'S FIRST EVER VILLAGE HALLS MAP

Data from our Village Halls Audit is already bringing to the fore the incredible potential of halls to become inclusive rural health and wellbeing hubs – as well as highlighting issues that need addressing with extra support.

DCT, funded by Devon Public Health & DEFRA, is continuing with our innovative new Village Hall Audit project, which is developing the first ever assest map of Village Halls in Devon. We are aiming to understand and celebrate the services they currently provide, as well as examine their aspirations for the future, with particular emphasis on the physical and mental wellbeing of their communities and their potential to become rural wellbeing hubs with a range of vital services.

During Q3 alone we visited 95 halls to conduct their audits, often providing additional support to the committees we were speaking with, for example advice on funding, policies and energy. In total we have now visited over 110 halls in Devon, with new halls being added to our assest map every week.

Some of our findings so far include:

- 59% of Village Halls would be interested in being Warm Hubs
- 45% of Village Halls would be willing to offer a confidential space for online medical appointments
- 17% of Village Halls would like to offer a food bank to their community

BUT ...

- 19% of these halls have no Wi-Fi
- 15% of Village Halls have no website
- 10% of Village Halls have no social media presence

An example of the aspirations of one particular hall demonstrates the potential for halls to provide hugely valuable services for people in rural areas:

“We would like to create a network for other Village Halls/Community Buildings in the area- facilitating event co-ordination and long term effectiveness of Village Halls/Community Buildings.

There are many things we'd like to do to improve the hall to ensure it serves all community members – currently this is prohibited by availability of volunteer time and lack of funding.

[We] would like the second room to be used as a medical satellite facility, e.g health screening, diabetes clinic, mental health support and vaccinations. Local community and school nurses could use this facility for appointments as a neutral environment. Villagers have to travel a long distance for medical appointments at the moment.

We want to provide a variety of regular social and wellbeing activities so there's something for everyone to get involved [with]. [Also, an] IT hub to help elderly with various IT issues. Perhaps an affordable community shop so people can walk to it, and a Health Hub for those who can't get to a surgery easily.”

www.devoncommunities.org.uk/projects/



INCREASING COMMUNITY SKILLS AND CONNECTIONS

631 individuals have acquired new skills, knowledge and connections that they can cascade into their communities, and organisations, as well as use to directly support their clients and services users.



We facilitated 37 online learning and networking events for 631 people during Q3.

Highlights included the very well attended Devon Community Resilience Forum (see pg. 17), as well as a wide variety of online wellbeing sessions (see pg. 11). In conjunction with Citizens Advice Devon, we also facilitated two bespoke, in-house sessions on the benefits system for two local charities, enabling them to better support their clients to successfully navigate the claims system. www.devoncommunities.org.uk/courses

FUNDING COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

£50,000 is now with grass roots community organisations to directly benefit people in their local areas.

We worked in partnership with Devon County Council (DCC) to administer a pot of funding within the wider Devon County Council Growing Communities Fund.

The Growing Communities Grants fund

was promoted to regional organisations across Devon, focusing on village halls and community groups to distinguish it from other DCC grants.



We allocated £50,000 of grants to 21 not-for-profit community groups and organisations, including warm hubs, cycle repair and community bike rides, community gardens, tackling isolation in stroke survivors, warm packs for homes, and updating village halls around disability and inclusivity. www.devon.gov.uk/communities/growing-communities-fund



CASE STUDY



EXMOUTH STROKE SURVIVORS CLUB

The Exmouth Stroke Survivors Club is a place for people who have survived a stroke to get together to share and discuss their experiences.

Growing Communities funding has allowed the club to run a series of events to combat isolation in their support group, including offering a Christmas meal, which over 25 people attended.

The survivors often have communication and travel issues, and the grant has allowed them to meet in a secure, friendly environment where they can discuss their rehabilitation with other survivors. It is also important for their carers to meet and receive mutual support. Other funded activities include seated exercises and games events.

OBJECTIVE

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

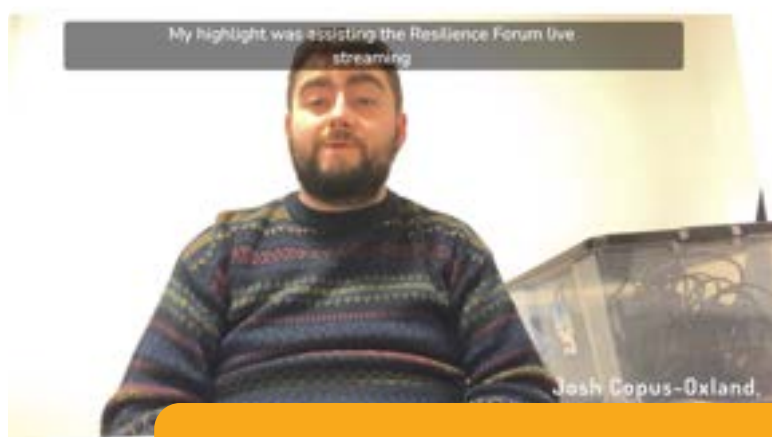
DCT staff have learned new skills and are enabled to make connections and forge partnerships to better respond to the needs of communities.

DEMONSTRATING IMPACT

A group of DCT staff came together in October to understand how to better capture and develop video case studies, enabling us to better demonstrate the impact of ours and other organisations' work with communities.

LEARNING AS PART OF THE VCSE ASSEMBLY

DCT has been involved in developing the Devon, Plymouth and Torbay VCSE Assembly throughout 2022. The Assembly brings together independent charities and community-led organisations across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay, to support, complement and add value to local VCSE networks and partnerships, including Local Care Partnerships. You can read about some of our work as co-chairs of the Health Inequalities Hub within the wider Assembly on pg. 8. As well as this strategic work, DCT as an organisation is also benefitting from sitting on the Assembly Leadership and Design Groups, with valuable opportunities for peer learning, sharing best practice, and forging closer relationships with colleagues



We gave staff the opportunity to reflect on their favourite moments from 2022. Take a look here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=SUS1t_iLzA&t=28s

in the VCSE sector. During Q3 we supported the Assembly to recruit a paid co-ordinator and began work on a communications campaign. For further information, contact dptvcseassembly@gmail.com

CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT

We were pleased to launch our bespoke new CRM system during this quarter, with an extensive training programme for all staff. This system brings with it greater opportunities for DCT to improve the way we deliver services by better harnessing our extensive and varied data, and we are excited to build on our use of this system in the coming months.

THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS AND PARTNERS...

