



DALC

**Devon Association
of Local Councils**

DEVON ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL COUNCILS

ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021

Representing and
supporting parish and
town councils in Devon

Supercharging a new wave of start-ups

We have partnered with the UK government to seed the Clean Growth Fund, which aims to pioneer the next generation of innovative, scalable, low-carbon technologies.

Now, the Strathclyde Pension Fund plans to inject £20 million, further boosting the UK's clean-tech companies.



'We decided it was time for CCLA to invest in the very best early-stage technologies to contribute towards the UK's net-zero objective. Through the Clean Growth Fund, we look forward to supporting these exciting young companies aiming to reduce carbon emissions.'

James Bevan
Chief Investment Officer CCLA

www.ccla.co.uk
www.cleangrowthfund.com

The Strathclyde Pension Fund is one of the two largest local government pension schemes in the UK. CCLA Investment Management Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

CCLA
GOOD INVESTMENT



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our thanks go to all who have helped the Association during the year, particularly:

- the National Association of Local Councils,
- Devon County Council,
- District and Borough Councils in Devon,
- councillors and clerks of member councils,
- MPs who have assisted the cause of parish and town councils,
- the officers of the association, the County Committee and Board of Directors.
- Our partners and sponsors

We also acknowledge the valuable part played by television, radio and the press in communications with parish and town councils.

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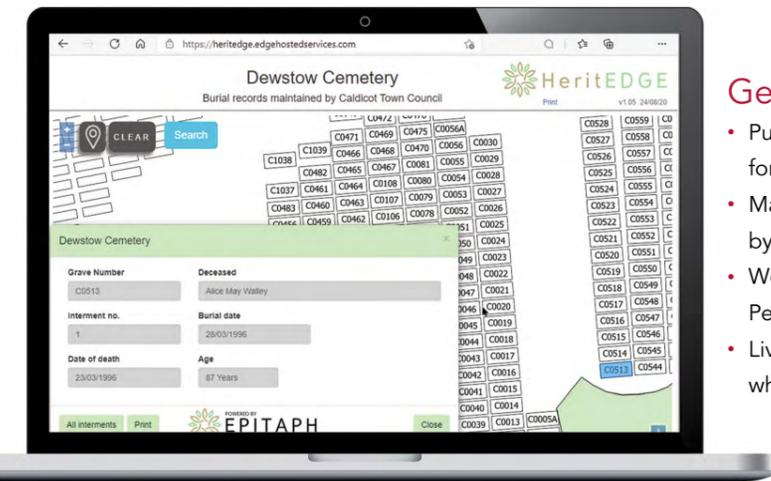
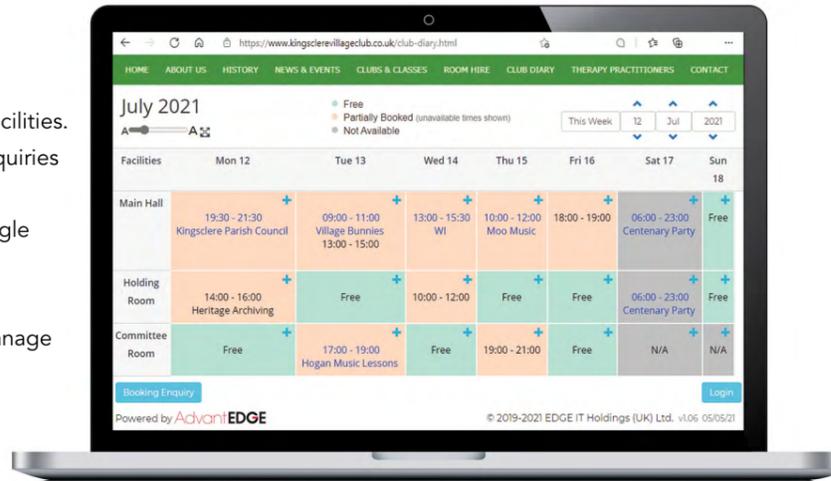
Using AdvantEDGE to Enhance your Website



Our cloud based, administration software provides live content and functionality for your website. Here are two examples for AdvantEDGE Facilities Bookings and Epitaph, and there are more planned for the future.

Online Bookings

- Clearly display the current availability of your facilities.
- Easy access for the public to make booking enquiries with one simple click.
- Access for regular hirers to logon and make single or multiple bookings.
- Advertise class and club details for public view.
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- Maps are created, maintained and hosted online by our specialist mapping partner, Pear Technology.
- We have over a decade's experience working with Pear's geo-referenced maps based on Ordnance Survey.
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We also provide complete IT solutions including hardware, Microsoft 365, IT support and Telavox VOIP.

Our experienced team are on hand and ready to assist you.



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CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD



Welcome to the Devon Association of Local Councils Annual Report.

We hope you will find it both encouraging and informative: encouraging, because it says a lot about moving forward in various ways, and informative because there is up-to-date information for members and news of councils' latest projects.

2020/21 has been an exciting, challenging and very different year for the Association, being its first as an independent organisation with its own elected Board of Directors in charge. Although the change in governance has been profound, we hope that everything has appeared smooth and calm on the surface, even while we've been paddling energetically underneath.

The Board has been clear from the outset that it is you, the Association's members, that are at the centre of present and future plans. All councils want to succeed and be effective. DALC exists to support you in that. In drawing up our business plan, we have thought long and hard about the services that help councils to achieve their ambitions and how we can best offer and improve them.

We have also worked hard on ensuring the stability and resilience of the Association. We have given

attention to best practice regarding our staff, hence the establishing of the Human Resources Committee. We have also paid attention to ensuring good management and sound financial procedures.

While the Board aims to develop more services, we have to be careful not to try to do everything at once. We know we must progress at a steady pace, keeping to best employment practice and supporting staff in achieving work/life balance, particularly through a stressful period for all working parents – the HR committee has been busy. All the same, we are keen to hear from members and welcome your feedback on what works for you and what gaps you feel the Association could fill.

As chairman, I am grateful for the work of all the directors and the way in which every one of them has contributed to making the Association's first year successful and rewarding – no passengers on the Board!

Finally, the Board is grateful for the commitment and sheer hard work put in by our County Officer and all our staff, which are reflected in the Association's remarkable progress in a very short time.

**Cllr Elizabeth Brookes-Hocking
Chairman of the Board of Directors**

OFFICER'S SUMMARY



Cara Stobart, County Officer, provides an overview of DALC activities in 2020/21.

It is difficult to put into words the admiration I have for Devon's parish and town councils who have gone above and beyond to support their communities this past year.

The challenges councils have faced this year has been unprecedented, for the council as a whole and the individuals within your teams. During parts of this year, some of you were working around the clock to support the vulnerable and isolated in your communities. This commitment made a huge difference, and I would like to express my gratitude to every council, councillor and officer who provided time, finance and resource to support the response to the pandemic.

On top of this, councils also embraced a new way of working. As lockdown restrictions prevented council members coming together to conduct their meetings, new regulations opened up a new world of remote meeting possibilities. Though we were all very cautious to start with, I was delighted to see how successfully councils adapted, and how accessible their meetings became for their residents. Hopefully there will be opportunity for this to continue in future.

MEMBER SERVICES

Within DALC our priority this past year was to ensure we could support our member councils to the best of our ability. As you can see from the figures opposite - we were kept very busy!

Advice services

The number of enquiries received more than doubled compared to the previous year. Not surprising the most popular topics were in regard to meetings and procedures as councils adapted to new ways of working. We peaked at over 260 enquiries in one month, far higher than we have completed before.

Information services

To manage the flood of enquiries, we increased the number of newsletters and frequently updated the website by providing a dedicated page for Coronavirus information and resources. Feedback suggests these have been welcome and useful over the past year but we always welcome further feedback if you feel they could be improved.

We also held a number of mini briefings and Q&A's so we could provide timely information in an accessible way. We were delighted how successfully these went and hope to provide regular sessions in future, for both information

sharing and networking. If you have any ideas for sessions you would find useful, please get in touch and let us know.

Training and development

With the demand for our advisory services being so high at the beginning of the year, our training support was put on hold for a few months so we could adapt our training for remote learning. By the Autumn we were back up and running, and by year end we were offering a wide range of courses remotely. Working with our partners we were also able to expand the range of courses and dates available for our specialist courses such as finance. Read more about our courses from page 10.

To further develop our training offering we expanded our staff team in the Autumn, welcoming Elise Callaghan as our new Training Officer. Elise is already delivering our Being a Good Councillor courses and will be expanding her delivery in the year ahead, with some exciting ideas of her own too.

We were also excited to launch our new CiLCA support programme for officers looking to become qualified in local council administration. Our new programme combines training with mentoring, offering the best possible support package for learners. Read more on page 11.

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

OUR MEMBERSHIP

352

97% of town and parish councils, and 17% of parish meetings, were in membership during 2020/2021.

ADVISORY SERVICE

2,303

86% of our member councils made an enquiry in 2020/21, over double the number from the previous year.

NEWSLETTERS

72

We published more newsletters than ever before, ensuring our members were kept informed.

ANNUAL MEETING

64

The total number of participants, from 49 member councils, attending our remote AGM in October 2020.

INFORMATION BRIEFINGS

11

We held free briefings including topics such as our remote meeting Q&A's and changes to licencing.

ENGAGEMENT

92%

325 of our member councils either attended an event or used our enquiry service during 2020/21.

GOVERNANCE

Behind the scenes there has been a lot happening internally for DALC too. Having registered as a company in April 2020, work continued to ensure that the Association was strong and resilient for its members. This has involved creating business plans, reviewing our finances and taking a closer look at the services we offer to our members.

You can learn more about our board members, the board's achievements so far and upcoming priorities from page 4 of this report.

Annual Meeting

I know our members were disappointed that we could not hold our usual Conference this year, but we did manage to hold our AGM remotely, ensuring important business continued.

The inaugural AGM of the company saw our first Board of Directors elected, and I again thank all our members for participating in the meeting remotely.

It may not have been as exciting an event, but it was essential for the company, and I am grateful for the support of the membership.

LOOKING AHEAD

As we enter this year with Covid-19 restrictions still in place, there is at least light at the end of the tunnel, and hope that normality will return soon.

But the work is not over yet. Parish and town councils will play an important role in rebuilding our communities after the pandemic.

DALC will be working hard to ensure the views of our sector are heard by those working on our County's recovery, and is determined to enhance our policy work generally by working more closely with our County Committee representatives. We also want to engage more with all our members, and remote meeting platforms offer plentiful opportunities for engagement in our large rural county.

DALC will continue to provide our advisory services; supporting our members to make use of their discretionary powers to deliver services and improve community wellbeing; as well as governance support for council decision making.

We will continue to improve our newsletters and website; and expand the range of training and development opportunities, working with external partners where this adds value.

We look forward to welcoming our members to our 3-day virtual AGM and Conference on 5 - 7 October which is promising to be a jam-packed few days of speakers, workshops and panels. Look out for booking details soon!

THANKS

And finally, a special thanks to the staff team, the Board and our committees for all their efforts this past year.

Cara

GOVERNANCE

OUR JOURNEY TO INCORPORATION IS COMPLETE!

Our members will be aware that the Association has been transitioning to company status for the past couple of years, in a move to create an independent and sustainable organisation for local councils in Devon.

In April 2020 our company was born, but we didn't complete our journey until the election of our first Board of Directors, held at our inaugural AGM in October. We would like to express our gratitude to our Shadow Board who held the fort until the elections took place, and helped lay the foundations from which the newly elected board could grow.

Our new Board of Directors is responsible for the operational management of the Association. They will work to a business plan, ensure the association is adequately resourced to meet its objectives and ensure that quality services are delivered to support our member councils, councillors and clerks.

Members of the Board are elected at the AGM and serve 3 years in office. There are 9 seats in total, and one third of its membership must stand down each year. Some members take a leading role on parts of the business plan. Take a look at our members' profiles to discover their current responsibilities.

WHO'S ON THE BOARD?



ELIZABETH BROOKES-HOCKING

**Chairman of the Board
Lead for Member Services**

A Crediton Town councillor for 23 years, Liz is a firm believer in the value of members exchanging information and experience, of promoting best practice and training at all levels to increase the effectiveness of the sector. Liz was appointed the first chairman of the Board in October 2020.

ACHIEVEMENTS SO FAR

As a new company, the board has been working hard behind the scenes this past year to ensure DALC is on a sound footing. This has included:

Development of a new business plan, with a lead board member for each section. There are 5 sections in total: Member Services; Voice, Representation and Strategic Engagement; Finance; HR; and Operational Management and Administration.

Reviewing our financial arrangements including our banking, investments, accountancy support, and creating new financial regulations.

Reviewing our Business Continuity Policy and insurance.

Establishing a HR Committee and adopted a range of policies and procedures to support good employment practices.

Developing a new Member Service Level Agreement, to be clear on what our members get for their membership fee.

Developing partnerships to provide new training and development opportunities for local councils, and investing in remote meeting software so our courses could be delivered online during Covid-19 lockdown.

LOOKING FORWARD

In 2021/2022 the board will be focusing on:

Developing the work of the County Committee, as the voice of the Association and its member councils. To develop a strategy for how we can best engage with our members and represent their views on policy matters to others.

A review of staffing arrangements, to ensure the Association is appropriately resourced to deliver our services to member councils.

Review of our subscription fees. It's been a while since this has been reviewed and

we must ensure our fees and the formulas applied are fair for all our members, as well as providing the resource needed for the Association.

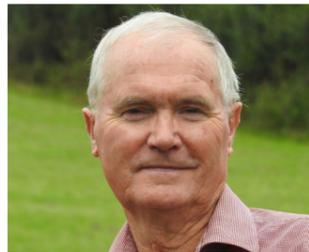
Further developing our training and development services, by introducing e-learning for councillors and officers, and working with new partners to offer more training opportunities. We'll also hopefully see the return of our face-to-face events.

Our Annual Conference will be back! But this time it will be virtual - offering 3 full days of speakers and workshops for clerks and councillors.



TERESA BOWERS

Teresa was a councillor between 2019 and 2021. She is a rounded business professional having refined her skills in incorporation, public sector finance and governance. She has achieved business success through strong financial management and 'engine room' delivery.



KEN BROWSE

Lead for Voice and Representation

Ken has been a Halberton parish councillor for 22 years. He was Chairman of DALC's County Committee for eight years and oversaw the transition to our new company. His aim has always been to help parish and town councils become more effective in supporting their communities.



DAVID CHALMERS

Vice-Chairman of the Board

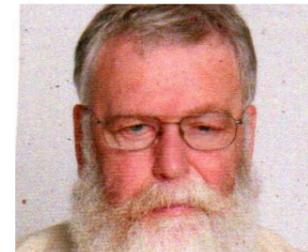
David Chalmers became a councillor on Fremington Parish Council in 2015 and now represents Appledore on Northam Town Council, where he was Mayor last year. With international business experience, David has a strong interest in diversity, employment and education.



IAN COWLING

**Company Treasurer
Lead for Finance**

Ian has been a Bishops Nympton parish councillor since 2007 and has served as Chairman. From his professional life he has experience of business consultancy and IT management. His financial skills are a key element in progressing the Association on a sound base.



PHILLIP DREDGE

Lead for Operational Management

Philip has been a councillor on Ivybridge Town Council since 2005. From his professional career he has skills in business, governance and finance. These were immensely useful in the incorporation process and subsequently Philip contributed to developing policies for DALC.



ELIZABETH HITCHINS

Liz has been a Brixton parish councillor since 2008. She recognises the work done to get DALC to where it is today and feels there is still more to do. She appreciates being part of a developing organisation that members can shape and influence. She has professional experience in the social sector.



MIKE HOCKING

**HR Committee Chairman
Lead for HR**

Mike has been a town and district councillor since 1998 and was the Mayor of Newton Abbot twice and Chairman of Teignbridge District Council. His present role as HR lead fits well with his experience as a shop steward and works convener.



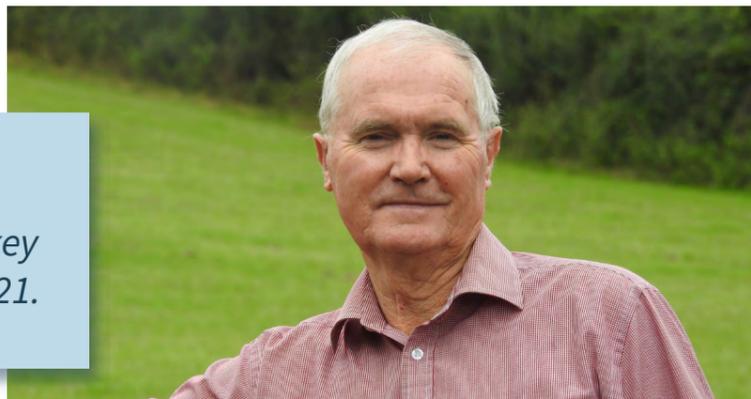
GLYN RICHARDS

Glyn has been a South Brent parish councillor since 1995, served as Chairman of the Council 2005-2009 and was re-elected Chairman this year. He served on the DALC County Committee 2009-2019. Having been a Charity Manager for over 20 years, Glyn has experience of incorporation.

VOICE AND REPRESENTATION

THE COUNTY COMMITTEE

Cllr Ken Browse, Chair of the County Committee, shares the key topics and activities from 2020/21.



The year began in lockdown as the Coronavirus pandemic swept across the country. Council activity as we knew it changed overnight as parish and town councils across Devon stepped up to support their communities. We saw emergency plans activated, information hubs created and local volunteer teams rapidly emerge in response to the crisis, to help the most vulnerable and isolated.

Councils also faced the challenge of adapting to working in pandemic conditions as the usual face-to-face meetings became impossible. In early April, new regulations enabled parish and town councils to meet remotely for the first time in history. Although much concern and hesitancy at first, councils were soon embracing the technology and had successfully adapted their meetings to a remote environment. Many councils saw greater engagement as a result, with some councils having over 1000 views of their recorded meetings!

The County Committee itself also held its meetings remotely, something which is likely to continue in future to reduce unnecessary travelling from all corners of the County 4 times per year.

As time progressed the financial impact of the pandemic became more apparent, particularly for larger councils and those whose income came from other sources than just the precept. DALC supported our National

Association by lobbying for dedicated government funding for our sector, and for councils to be able to access the funds which had been made available to principal authorities and businesses. The County Officer and I regularly spoke to members of Team Devon (principal authority leaders and chief executives) and wrote to MPs to ensure the issues our members were experiencing were recognised. Unfortunately, dedicated funds were not forthcoming, but some councils were able to access the discretionary grant scheme.

By Autumn the Committee began to refocus on other policy matters. We responded to the Government consultation 'Planning for the Future' White Paper and went on to adopt a planning policy position statement which can be viewed on our [website](#).

The committee adopted a motion from the Northampton association regarding land management for new housing developments which called for control of land management charges. We later explored the use of s106 agreements to assist with the issue.

In the Spring we participated in NALC's virtual lobby day. Each year NALC's representatives and County Associations meet with MPs to lobby on matters of importance to parish and town councils. Cllr Chalmers and I met with Gary Streeter, Geoffrey Cox and Selaine Saxby to discuss the continuation of remote meetings;

financial support for vulnerable councils; the elections and active travel schemes.

Throughout all our meetings, our representatives who sit on other bodies have been providing regular reports to the Committee. Cllr Brookes-Hocking kept us up to speed with the Heart of the South West Joint Committee deliberations and changing priorities. To support her contributions to the debate we are currently developing a economy position paper.

We also received reports from Cllr Parker for the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Heritage Site; Cllr Dredge provided Travel Watch South West reports; and Cllr Dumper gave updates from the East Devon AONB.

Looking ahead, the Committee will focus on some new policy areas, including restarting our climate emergency work and exploring diversity and councillor recruitment.

If there are any issues which our member councils feel DALC should be working on, please [submit a motion](#) to the committee by using the form available on our website, or by speaking to the County Officer.

My thanks to Cara Stobart our County Officer for supporting us in this committee.

THE ROLE OF THE COUNTY COMMITTEE

The purpose of the Committee is to consider policy matters related to parish and town councils and the sector generally; and to set the strategic policy objectives of the Association. The committee has a number of responsibilities including:

- To keep abreast of matters affecting town and parish councils and communities in Devon, by engaging with member councils through local meetings and events
- To assist in building knowledge and understanding of our members, building strong relationships and provide consistent two way communication between members and DALC
- To respond to local and national consultations affecting town and parish councils, and communities, providing a high level response reflecting the views of our members

- To consider policy matters of local concern or interest brought forward by our members
- To make proposals to the Board for the improvement and development of member services
- To represent the interests of town and parish councils through appointments to other bodies

The County Committee normally meets 4 times a year. There are up to 37 members on the committee (1 member per 10 councils per district). All members represent the whole of Devon, and all of the association's member councils.

Read more about our committees, including minutes of past meetings, on our [website](#).

GET INVOLVED

SUBMIT A MOTION FOR DEBATE

It is important that DALC is informed of issues that are affecting councils' ability to support their communities so we can take appropriate action. These issues may be identified by a council or a group of councils and referred to the County Committee, as the representative body of DALC's members, for consideration. To submit a motion, complete the form on our [website](#).

STAND FOR THE COMMITTEE

We currently have a number of vacancies on our committee (see below) which we are looking to fill by co-option. In order to put yourself forward you must be a councillor from a member council, and there be a vacancy in your District. No more than one representative per council. To nominate a councillor, please complete the form on our [website](#).

COUNTY COMMITTEE MEMBERS*

EAST DEVON	T Dumper	R Eastley	D Stewart	C Trudgeon	2 x vacancies
MID DEVON	E Brookes-Hocking	K Browse	G Guest	P Heal	A Perris
NORTH DEVON	I Cowling	C McCormack-Hole	I Roome		2 x vacancy
SOUTH HAMS	P Dredge	L Granados	L Hitchins	J Hodgson	2 x vacancies
TEIGNBRIDGE	M Hocking	J Goodey	M Retallick		2 x vacancies
TORBAY	R Haddock				
TORRIDGE	D Chalmers	R Craigie	D Watson		2 x vacancies
WEST DEVON	J Goffey	G Hill	G Parker		1 x vacancy

*all names correct as at 31 March 2020

LARGER COUNCILS COMMITTEE

Cllr Liz Brookes-Hocking, Chair of the Larger Councils Committee, shares the key topics discussed by the group this year.



It's not possible to report on our meetings during the last year without referring to the impact of Covid, particularly on budgets and precepts.

But first, the positive: like many other groups, the Larger Councils have benefitted from being able to meet by Zoom. The distances that some members travel for an actual meeting require a much greater time commitment, especially for clerks. During the last year, far more people have been able to attend which has resulted in a fuller exchange of information.

In July of 2020, many larger councils were assessing the impact of Covid on their income, particularly those whose budgets are dependent on rents and operating services earning funds. At the time, it seemed that restrictions would continue to ease. Plans for recovery were being considered by councils, especially those in the tourist areas that were likely to see an influx in visitors.

By November, councils were continuing to need advice as well as to get their concerns heard. It was a good time to have Justin Griggs, Head of Policy and Communications at NALC, to present further advice. He also explained the lobbying that the National Association was doing to influence government support for the sector and to inform decision makers of the impact on local councils.

By February, councils had set budgets. Some had made significant increases in their precept; some had used reserves to avoid raising the precept; some had employed a combination of the two. Councils were planning for recovery with a better idea of needs in their own areas. Some councils were focused on supporting businesses dependent on tourism. They also had their own tourist facilities and attractions to manage. Many councils were aware of the need to improve support for mental health. Others were investing in community resilience with a focus on parks and open spaces.

Whatever the next year throws at us, we have learned a lot in the last one. We need to be ready to react quickly; we need to listen to our communities and work with them. If someone else has a good idea that will work for you, best use it – no need to have your own wheel design. It's always good to have a Plan B and reserves are more than handy in an emergency.

Many thanks to Cara for her support for this committee. Thanks also to the councillors and clerks who have attended our meetings. They have freely given advice to help solve others' problems. They have reported frankly on the difficulties and challenges they have faced. This has been crucial in gathering evidence to influence decisions of other bodies where DALC has representation.

HEART OF THE SOUTH WEST JOINT COMMITTEE

The Heart of the South West (HotSW) Joint Committee is a single strategic public sector partnership providing leadership and governance to ensure delivery of the productivity strategy for the HotSW area. It has voting members from Devon and Somerset county councils, all the district councils in the two counties, Plymouth and Exeter city councils, Torbay Council, and Exmoor and Dartmoor National Park Authorities. Co-opted non-voting members are the NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups for the two counties, the Local Enterprise Partnership and the Devon Association of Local Councils (also representing Somerset Association of Local Councils).

A year ago, as restrictions began to be lifted, the county and city councils were starting to put economic recovery plans in place: re-starting the tourism

industry, re-opening town centres and supporting businesses back to work. Alongside this, the LEP's Local Industrial Strategy was still the key document awaiting government sign off. Six months later, with a second wave in progress and recognising the post-pandemic challenges to come, the government's favoured phrase 'Build Back Better' became the title of the LEP's productivity plan for an area already badly hit by Covid-19. The challenges that communities would face clearly sharpened the focus for all councils, who wanted to know how this plan would affect or benefit their areas. It was necessary to ask what the proposals would mean for town and parishes, too.

With some amendments the Build Back Better document was approved, post-budget, when the National Industrial Strategy had been scrapped, the future

of LEPs was under review and the Local Industrial Strategy document had become side-lined. Attracting government funds to the south west seemed as difficult as ever.

Step forward the HotSW Skills Plan. If you can't get infrastructure, invest in people. The productivity plans have all identified the region's potential for clean and inclusive growth centring on sustainable industries. As a low skill area, this requires training for young people and for older people retraining. The HotSW area is one of three chosen for pilot projects to help develop the best methodologies. It is widely agreed that the region needs to shed its low skill, low productivity image as well as its low wage reality outside the productive cities and other sites attracting innovative industries.

Cllr Elizabeth Brookes-Hocking

TRAVELWATCH SOUTH WEST

TravelWatch South West, a social enterprise company, is the representative body and Government consultee for public transport users throughout the south west of England. It operates at a strategic level in discussions with Government. It has formed close links with the Department for Transport (DfT), seeks to influence thinking by pre-emptive action and is consulted by the DfT at franchise pre-specification stage.

DALC is a member of TWSW which gives it the right to have a representative attend all meetings and it has a vote at AGMs.

The current TWSW Chairman is Christopher

Irwin, who is an acknowledged authority on matters relating to public transport in the United Kingdom and further afield. He is ably supported by a board whose expertise includes sustainable public transport, rural mobility, integration, delivery modes, user engagement and climate change and represents all corners of the south west.

Normally, in addition to the AGM there are two business meetings each year based at Taunton (which attract in excess of 100 attendees) although should the need arise more specialised meetings, for important topics such as a change in legislation or the process of awarding a new rail franchise

being underway, may be called. The format of the meetings involves speakers, who are experts in their field and include senior managers from the region's train and bus operators and senior politicians including ministers as well as local politicians, leading discussions. There is an increasing focus on environmental issues connected with public transport.

Throughout the year, individual directors and the company secretary take part in working parties and other meetings with operators, Network Rail and local government..

Cllr Phillip Dredge

REPRESENTING OUR MEMBERS

The Association represents its membership at a variety of strategic meetings and events, working with a range of partners to ensure the voice of parishes is heard by key decision makers. Here are some examples from 2020/2021:

Team Devon
(Leaders and CEOs)

Local Outbreak
Engagement Board

Team Devon & VCSE
Response and Recovery
Task & Finish Group

Devon County HATOC and
Locality meetings

Devon County Council
Communities Team

Devon Communities
Together COVID-19
Response Team

Devon Community
Resilience Board

Devon Community
Resilience Forum

Devon Local Nature
Partnership

Heart of the South West
Joint Committee

NALC National Assembly

NALC Lobby Day

South West Conference of
Local Council Associations

Area Committee Meetings

Representations to MPs

Clean Devon Partnership

East Devon AONB

Travel Watch South West

Primary Care Network

Local Care Partnership

Cornwall and West Devon
Mining Heritage
Partnership

IMPROVEMENT & DEVELOPMENT



As the pandemic hit at the beginning of the year, all our training courses were on hold as DALC's resources were stretched due to the unprecedented circumstances we were working in. By the Autumn we were back up and running with all courses being delivered remotely for everyone's safety.

It was fantastic to see so many councillors and clerks embrace this new way of learning. Online courses are likely to remain a permanent part of our programme moving forward, though we look forward to hosting some face-to-face events when it is safe to do so. We understand online learning is not for everyone, and the opportunities for networking are usually limited at remote events too.

By working with our partners, The Parkinson Partnership and Breakthrough Communications, we have been able to increase access to training without increasing our costs. More courses and more dates are available than we have ever had before.

Here are some of the courses we have delivered this year:

- Being a good councillor
- Chairing remote council meetings - **NEW**
- Clerks' essentials
- CiLCA support
- Budgeting
- Finance for councillors
- Introduction to VAT
- Internal controls - **NEW**
- Role of the internal auditor - **NEW**
- Year-end accounts and audit
- Social media - **NEW**
- Data protection - **NEW**

Full details of all our courses can be found at www.devonalc.org.uk/events

COUNCILS ENGAGED

199

57% of member councils attended a training course or briefing delivered by DALC during 2020/21.

UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS

976

There were 484 unique individuals, so almost 50% of participants attended more than one event.

TRAINING/EVENTS HELD

93

Including 82 remotely delivered training events, and 11 free information briefings.

CILCA PASSES

4

4 officers completed their Certificate in Local Council Administration during 2020/21.

DID YOU KNOW ...

We can deliver in-house training directly for your council. It's a great opportunity to provide learning, tailored to your council's needs. We can deliver all our core courses or design something bespoke. You can even invite neighbouring councils and share the cost!

Contact us at enquiries@devonalc.org.uk to make your booking.

LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME

The Award Scheme celebrates the successes of our town and parish councils. It provides a framework to support local councils to improve and develop to meet their full potential. The scheme has been designed to provide tools and encouragement to those councils beginning their improvement journey, as well as recognising councils that are at the cutting edge of the sector.

The **Foundation Award** is for councils who want to show they meet a set of minimum standards to deliver effectively for their communities. These councils have the required documentation and information in place, and training policies for councillors and officers.

The **Quality Award** demonstrates that a council achieved good practice in governance, community engagement and council improvement. Quality councils go beyond their legal obligations leading their communities and seek opportunities to improve and develop even further.

The **Quality Gold Award** demonstrates that a council is at the forefront of best practice and achieves excellence in governance, community leadership and council development. They highlight the very best we, as a sector, can achieve for our communities.

CONGRATULATIONS GO TO ...

We are always delighted to hear when one of our member councils has been recognised in the award scheme. Congratulations to the following councils who achieved awards in 2020/21.



FOUNDATION AWARD:
Axmouth Parish Council
QUALITY AWARD:
Brixton Parish Council
Dunkeswell Parish Council

GETTING STARTED ...

For more information about the Award Scheme, take a look at our website and download the guide. We believe every council can achieve the Foundation Award - why not make that your goal for the coming year?

CERTIFICATE IN LOCAL COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION



The Certificate in Local Council Administration, more commonly known as CiLCA, is the foundation qualification for local council officers. The nationally recognised Level 3 qualification (equivalent to an A-Level) is administered through the Society of Local Council Clerks.

DALC is passionate about providing the highest quality training for local students. This year our staff provided training and mentoring support remotely to ensure learners could continue to make progress with their portfolios during lockdown periods.

Our CiLCA Support Programme offers regular training at monthly intervals, 12 months mentoring support and access to our small online learning community.

If you are thinking about undertaking CiLCA please visit our website further for details about our programme, or contact us for an expression of interest

pack. We will help you determine whether you are ready to get started and help you plan your learning.

In 2020/21, 9 individuals began their CiLCA journey by registering; and during the year 4 individuals have passed.

Congratulations to this year's students:

- Sally Smale
- Maria Weston
- Sue Petters
- Caroline Ellis

Our support programme is essential for any council officer looking to gain their CiLCA, and do so with continuous support throughout.

If you are interested in starting your CiLCA journey, please contact enquiries@devonalc.org.uk.

Sally Smale, Clerk to Ringmore, Modbury, and Diptford Parish Councils, shares her CiLCA experience. . .

"I will not deny that CiLCA is a huge undertaking and does require commitment to put in the hours and read around the topics. However, I would thoroughly recommend going through the process. I'd been clerking for a year (2nd time round) when I started and knew I still had a lot to learn. The discipline and structure of CiLCA guided me through all the aspects of the role of the clerk and enabled me to explore my weaker areas. The knowledge I acquired and, in particular, finding out what I didn't know and when I need to check things / seek advice has given me far more confidence in my work and I find I am enjoying it all so much more."

The training and support from DALC was invaluable and I would not have succeeded without them."

Congratulations Sally!

OUR NATIONAL ASSOCIATION



NALC represents the interests of parish and town councils across England. Dr Jonathan Owen, NALC's Chief Executive, shares their highlights and key events from 2020/21.

nalc

**National Association
of Local Councils**

It's been another challenging year for us all. One positive has been the way parish and town councils have responded, supporting their residents in these most difficult of times; and thank you for the work you have done to help this.

NALC's collection of over 500 case studies show the breadth of our sector's contribution to the pandemic response. It's good that local councils' role has been recognised by Ministers and many national organisations. A great example of this is a report from the Royal Voluntary Service that noted: "There's nothing more local than the Parish or Town Council. They know their local community street by street and to say they inspired and supported local volunteering in response to Covid is an understatement."

It's been estimated that a massive 12.4 million people volunteered during the pandemic, 4.6 million of them for the first time, of whom 75% would volunteer again. So the challenge for us is to retain the interest from these new volunteers and put councils at the heart of recovery and building back better.

There is much support for developing our role in this way, with many think tanks and national reports stressing the importance of building community resilience with a focus on place. The sector continues to grow with many new councils being created including this year one of the country's largest - Northampton Town.

Illustrative of this is new research on local communities from the think tank Centre for Social Justice which backed NALC's Prospectus for Ultralocalism, and in particular measures aimed at creating more local councils. Their Pillars of community: why communities matter and what matters to them report says "Parish Council-level representation provides a vital, highly local level of democratic accountability and decision-making".

We are expecting a levelling up and recovery white paper later in the year which we hope will support these developments and recognise the important role the sector can play in levelling up; if given the necessary support to do so.

The sector has responded professionally to the pandemic and clerks have done a brilliant job. No-one

would have expected us all to take to remote meetings so successfully and it is to be hoped that the Government will listen to NALC and allow us the freedom to continue to meet in this way when and if councils want to.

There were some big financial challenges especially for larger town councils who lost income. We didn't get as much access to government grants as we would have hoped. But generally the sector's finances are healthy. Precepts have increased at the lowest rate for a decade, at 2.8%. NALC will continue to press government not to introduce referendum principles, or capping, and provide fair funding including direct access to government support and grants.

NALC and County Associations have helped councils through all this, and we've seen ever closer joint working including fortnightly remote meetings of county officers.

County representatives on our National Assembly, like DALC's Cllr Ken Browse, have continued to direct our work remotely. Indeed there have been real benefits from this new way of working, saving time and resources and enabling more frequent meetings and the setting



Ian Sherriff, Boris Johnson MP and Angela Rippon at the launch of NALC's Dementia Friendly Communities Publication. Credit: NALC.

up of new national networks including one for coastal councils.

NALC has continued to focus on its key campaigns including

- Getting more people to stand in elections and increasing diversity through #MakeAChange. It was good to see better coverage of parish and town council elections by the BBC this year.
- Promoting the role of the sector in health and well-being with Devon colleagues showcasing Councils' work building dementia friendly communities in a [booklet](#) presented to the Prime Minister at No 10!
- Providing a range of resources from carbon and plastic reduction to tree planting to help local councils play their part in tackling the climate emergency.
- Our most recent theme is promoting engagement with younger people and I'd encourage you to watch the recording of our remote conference (one of many we've held over the last strange year, with over 1700 attendees) on this subject with some really inspiring stories and ideas.

NALC has continued with your support to make representations to MPs and peers, with our remote lobby day working well: please do all engage

regularly with your MPs and participate in lobby day - telling them about the brilliant things you're doing and the issues that concern you. We can't win every battle but this year business rates on public conveniences - the toilet tax - were removed saving councils millions of pounds per year.

NALC continues to provide a wealth of resources for county associations to use including legal topic notes, finance advice and HR templates. This year we've added a risk assessment tool to help you make buildings covid secure. Our Good Councillor Guides continue to be well used and we've added one on cyber security.

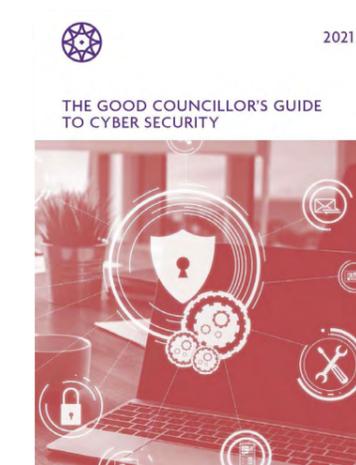
And finally, civility and respect should

be at the heart of public life and good governance is fundamental to ensuring an effective and well-functioning democracy at all levels. As the first tier of local government we must play our part in making this happen. NALC is working together with county associations and the SLCC to promote civility and respect in public life, good governance, positive debate and supporting the well-being of councillors, professional officers and staff.

If we can achieve this the sector's future will be secure and at the heart of building back better communities.

**Dr Jonathan Owen
NALC Chief Executive**

**Download the Good Councillor's
Guide to Cyber Security**



**Sign up for NALC's flagship
quarterly magazine, LCR**



YOUR STORIES

Celebrating the incredible work of our parish and town councils

A SENSORY GARDEN IN THE MAKING FOR OKEHAMPTON

In 2019 West Devon Borough Council devolved ownership of public toilets and a garden area in the centre of Okehampton to the Town Council. The area, which already contained seating and flower beds, has been redeveloped as a sensory garden.

The Borough Council have contributed £1,565 to the scheme from s.106 funding, and a flowering Chinese Dogwood tree was donated as the centre piece during the hot spell in the summer of 2020. Its survival was touch and go for a while, however it is now flourishing and flowering well.

The aim of the project was to improve the space, making it an attractive accessible area in the centre of the

town for people to visit and reflect in. It contains a variety of sensory type planting that is bee and insect friendly.

Being located immediately opposite a residential home, it is hoped it will be frequented by the residents and their visitors as well as those visiting the area. The area will help to enhance a town centre area by bringing colour, smell and interest.

In conjunction with this project a new leaflet highlighting the area and that of the nearby council owned Simmons Park is in the process of being developed.



BISHOPS CLYST OPENS ITS NEWLY REFURBISHED PLAY AREA

Bishops Clyst Parish Council was delighted to open its newly refurbished play area in Clyst St Mary in April this year. Keen to open in time for the Easter Holidays, there was no time to arrange an official opening, but it was well publicised and the play area was busier than it has ever been over the Easter weekend and during the holidays.

A number of schemes were presented to children at the local primary school and they were asked to vote for their favourite. The most popular included a zip wire, Ninja Warrior Trail, trampoline, castle tower and climbing walls, among other things. Some of the existing equipment was retained and refurbished and a new surface laid, and

there are now several picnic benches where the adults can chat and relax while the children enjoy all the exciting new activities. The play park has never been so busy and much enthusiastic feedback has been received. Cllr James Leverton oversaw the project which was funded with s106 monies.



EXMOUTH'S TOWN MAINTENANCE TEAM IS FOCUSED ON THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY



Since the Town Council declared a climate emergency, focus has been on looking after our environment, providing plants to encourage wildlife and working with the community and Wild Exmouth to plant trees and create orchards.

Exmouth Town Council has continued expanding on the work and responsibilities of the supplementary street cleaning team. Although the pandemic affected some work, the team were able to continue providing a much broader service including clearing overgrown and unkept areas in well-used footpaths and back alleys and maintaining our many public realm assets such as flagpoles, bus shelters and finger post signs.

Road weed clearing in the outlying parts of Exmouth now takes place on a regular cycle with the help of a new weed ripping machine. This machine has helped reduce the need to weed spray and increase the speed at which the kerbsides are cleared. Inevitably, there are roads where the weed ripping machine cannot be used and for that reason, minimal weed spraying has been carried out using a reliable system that provides precise, targeted weed spraying reducing waste and harm to the environment.

Our contracts for providing plants for the flower towers throughout the year continued as well as the provision of flowerbeds in roundabouts and entrance points to the town and grass cutting. This work, equating to approximately £40,000 per annum, was

delivered within budget. Following a tender exercise in December, it was agreed to bring grounds maintenance work that was previously contracted back in-house.

With more work devolving down to local parish and town councils, and the decision to deliver grounds maintenance work in-house, the Town Council took the decision to expand the Supplementary Town Maintenance team and welcomed two new members to the team.

From 1st April 2021, Exmouth Town Council will be taking on responsibility for a balanced and controlled grass cutting regime to supplement the work of both Devon County Council and East Devon District Council.

This is in addition to the provision and maintenance of roundabouts and flowerbeds in key locations around the town. New hanging baskets and troughs with built-in reservoirs to minimise

water usage have been purchased for the Magnolia Centre and by the train station. By working with Exmouth in Bloom, the Town Council will be providing wildlife friendly, bright and colourful displays all year round.

The Town Council is also supporting the work of the Ride-On Scheme based in Exeter where unwanted bikes are recycled and refurbished to encourage users to use bikes as an alternative mode of transport. The supplementary street cleaning team is helping by picking up unwanted bikes from residents in Exmouth and delivering them to Exeter.

In summary, the Town Council is working hard to reduce the environmental impact, starting with many small changes such as using environmentally friendly products, developing environmental policies and working closely with the community to deliver initiatives to promote Exmouth as an environmentally friendly clean, tidy and colourful place to live and visit.



Fantastic work in extreme heat

Recently, two gentlemen arrived in Trinfield Avenue from Exmouth Town Council with a fantastic machine which cleaned out all the gutters and the pavement along the front of the properties.

Amazing and efficient work by them in the extreme heat. The whole street looks great now. Big thank you to them.

Denise Morris
Exmouth

A NEW COMMUNITY CENTRE FOR BOVEY TRACEY

From this



Bovey Tracey Town Council is celebrating the opening of their newly developed Riverside Community Centre, a project which has been many years in the making.

to this!



The new building sits on the site of the former Old Thatched Inn which burnt down in 2009. As a listed site, a process ensued to get the site delisted, but once complete the council had a blank canvas to build a new centre.

The Town Council had previously occupied the old Town Hall which has since been disposed of and turned into a new visitor attraction (Dartmoor Whisky Distillery) and has helped regenerate the top of the town.

The sale of the Town Hall, council reserves, and a public sector loan went on to fund the new build centre.

The centre was designed with help from the community through local consultation and is now home to the Town Council, the library, the information centre, public toilets as well as 4 individual professional office spaces for hire.

BRAUNTON IS BUZZING!

Saunton Park residents in Braunton have planted a fantastic garden along the wide verge on the Saunton Road. This verge is not only pleasing to the eye of all who pass and pause a while, it also feeds the soul and eases the mind with its array of beautiful flowers and gentle hum of attending insects. The wide variety of flowers provides an easily accessible nectar rich banquet for pollinating insects as well as a habitat and refuge for many other beneficial insects. These insects in turn provide birds, bats, small mammals and slow worms with a much needed food source.

All plants on this verge have been grown and donated by local residents, and volunteers have given their time to plant and maintain the verge for the enjoyment of the wider community.

Braunton Parish Council are



encouraging community groups to plant up highway verges with wildflowers. With equipment gifted to the council last year, they are able to loan it out to community groups to help them prepare the ground ready for wildflowers to be planted. To help educate the public and increase the number of volunteers, Braunton Parish Council have put up signage and ran an article in a local monthly magazine explaining what they were trying to achieve by leaving areas uncut

and have received an overwhelming positive response from residents and visitors. Their grounds maintenance team have found that only mowing a strip running along pavements and roads to avoid long wet grass flopping into the path of pedestrians and road users, frees up enough time to create and seed wildflower planting islands at intervals along the unmown verges, as a little extra to what is already there. And it is surprising what is popping up after only two months!

NEWTON'S PLACE: A COMMUNITY SPACE



Newton's Place is an accessible community building, celebrating the heritage of the local area and its people.

The former St. Leonard's Church, a Grade II listed building, was built in 1835 to replace the medieval St. Leonard's chapel. The building was later extended in 1876 with the addition of the chancel and vestries. In the late 20th century, with a falling congregation, its ecclesiastical role was coming to an end. It was officially closed in 1995 and used as an antiques emporium. However, from 2011 the building, in its dilapidated and deteriorating state, stood empty. Thanks to the incredible vision of the Town Council and funding and support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, local businesses and the community, Newton Abbot Town Council purchased St. Leonard's Church with the intention of converting it into "Newton's Place" - a community space combined with a new and larger home for the town museum, and new offices for the Town Council.

This £2.2m project began in 2016 with the conservation of the rich architecture and beautiful features of the building being a key part of the project. The upstairs gallery that ran around the edge of the church has become a mezzanine upper floor. Now home to a flexible, community space that can be used for Town Council sessions, external meetings, classes, workshops, temporary exhibitions and much more. There is also a small area where you

can sit with a coffee from our vending machine and admire the appropriately themed Madge Mellor display.

The ground floor has been converted into a purpose-built accessible museum and fitted out by designers, the Creative Core and the Museum team (thanks to an enormous amount of enthusiasm by Curator Felicity Cole). You will see bursts of colour throughout the Museum as vibrant colour themed displays tell the story of the history of Newton Abbot and the surrounding areas, including the Great Western Railway with working signals you can try out. You will also see a range of community artworks and curated projects on display and 'behind the scenes' the vestry has been turned into a museum store with purpose-built racking.

The building has accessible facilities including accessible toilets with hoist and adult changing table, a lift and there is ramp access throughout the Museum.

Impressively, the final stages of this project were achieved during a global pandemic! Newton's Place was able to open its doors on the 3rd October 2020 and, following various lockdowns, reopened on the 17th May 2021 to include the bookable community rooms.

To find out more, please visit www.newtonsplace.org

LETS CONNECT!

We like to share council's projects in our newsletters, on our website and on our social media channels throughout the year.

Visit our [website](#).

Sign up for our [newsletters](#).

Find us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

ALSO IN NEWTON ABBOT ...

FULL STEAM AHEAD!



Maintenance engineers have been trying out their new Foamstream jet blaster to clean the streets, removing grime, chewing gum and weeds from the pavements in Courtenay Street, Newton Abbot.

This nifty piece of kit uses a mixture of steam and environmentally safe chemicals to shift the muck that inevitably builds up in what is usually a busy town centre.

The transformation is quite remarkable with dirty grey walkways replaced in moments by bright clean surfaces.

Town Clerk, Phil Rowe said: "We're keen as a council to make sure that Newton Abbot is an attractive destination not only for residents but people living elsewhere too. ... Having a clean and tidy street scene is an important part of our strategy."

DAILY TRAIN SERVICE SET TO RETURN FOR OKEHAMPTON

After many years of agitating, pleading, lobbying and writing reams of documents, Okehampton are about to see the return of a daily rail service to and from Exeter.

But the work goes on. Although there is a lovely Victorian Station in excellent condition, thanks to volunteers, there is a need for an Okehampton East Parkway on the eastern edge of the town beside the A30.

The current station is ideal for those cycling the Granite Way, trekking on Dartmoor, visiting Simmons Park and our town; but the council do not think it is suitable for commuter traffic due to its location in the town centre, away from the houses being built on the eastern edge. The temptation for those residents will be to drive the 20 minutes to Exeter rather than battle traffic into town.

Campaigns continue for Devon County Council to build an additional station on land at Hameldown, with parking for sufficient cars to encourage rail travel for workers, students, shoppers



and visitors. Two stations will provide choice in either the quaint historic station, or the modern accessible parkway, to travel in or out of town.

The council also has ideas to reduce freight lorries into the town and its rural

hinterland by having a freight depot in nearby Sourton. However, there are numerous challenges such as listed structures which may prevent that from happening.

Work continues ...watch this space!

CELEBRATING GREAT TORRINGTON'S HERITAGE WITH 3 NEW TOWN MAPS

Great Torrington Town Council have been working hard to attract visitors back to their town after the pandemic.

Three new town maps have been published to encourage people to shop local, explore the attractions and celebrate their local history.

Their marketing working group are looking to produce an interactive map, a heritage calendar and more; and work with neighbouring organisations, groups and businesses such as RHS Rosemoor to boost promotion of the area.

AVAILABLE IN APRIL 2021

THE TREMENDOUS TOWN TRIO

Great Torrington has just the right pick-you-up for the post-Covid lockdown moment!

New and updated information on the town's heritage, it's attractions and wonderful independent shopping in 3 free maps to help you enjoy exploring Great Torrington.

More information inside...

www.onegreattorrington.co.uk

BAMPTON OPENS A NEW PLAY AREA



Bampton's new play area was driven by a group of Dads who considered that the town needed somewhere for older children to play and have fun. This amazing group came to the public session of a Bampton Town Council meeting. With their request they brought ideas, plans and thoughts for the town council to consider. This group also offered to be the project managers alongside the council as the landowner.

Plenty of work went into this, with a grant of £100,000 to cover the bulk of the cost of equipment and installation sourced from Viridor Credits, together with some allocated S106 monies and Council reserves.

SHARE YOUR STORY!

We love to hear stories about our member councils' projects and activities, and to celebrate your achievements.

You can tell us your stories at anytime by emailing enquiries@devonalc.org.uk, and we'll share your activities with our network.

You never know - you might just find your council featured in next year's annual report!

AMAZING PHONE BOX TRANSFORMATIONS

The humble red telephone box is an iconic community asset in parishes up and down the country but many are falling into disrepair as they are longer needed.

For some lucky communities, their parish and town councils are transforming these pre-loved structures to provide new innovative community purposes.

In Hennock, they have transformed their phone box into a community library with bespoke water resistant shelving. The

library will be looked after by volunteers.

Chudleigh Knighton have brought the history of their village to life by creating a phone box museum.

Brixham created a wildlife haven with a telebug hotel, lots of planting, and a beautifully painted mural.

Moretonhampstead held a mini art exhibition and raised funds for local charities.



Community Library
Hennock



Phone Box Museum
Chudleigh Knighton



Telebug Hotel and planters
Brixham



Art Gallery
Moretonhampstead

CREDITON'S 'SHARE IN THE SQUARE' INITIATIVE

In the summer of 2020, Crediton Town Team approached Crediton Town Council regarding the siting of 12 picnic benches on the Town Square to celebrate the first easing of lockdown restrictions. They were a welcome addition to the town, providing a safe space for people to take a break, meet friends and catch up. The 'Share in the Square' initiative was aimed at reducing loneliness and revitalising the town centre.

Building on this, collaborative working between the Town Team, Crediton Arts Centre and the Town Council enabled a schedule of live music on Fridays and Saturdays through the summer. The impact of such a simple idea surpassed all our expectations, lifting the spirits of local residents and visitors, as well as increasing footfall in our shops and cafes.

When Christmas arrived, and with the Town Council knowing that the usual large-scale event could not take place, it was a relief that restrictions allowed for two performances of an adapted Russian folk tale 'Baba Yaga' to go ahead. When speaking about the Christmas 2020 event, Lisa Blake, Crediton Town Council's Project Officer said, 'We know how popular the picnic tables and benches have been this



Residents and visitors enjoying the square during the summer

summer. They were a Town Team initiative which the Town Council has been keen to support. Now, we are keen to see them back for the winter and spring. We can't have our usual Christmas lights switch-on parade but the Arts Centre has come up with an exciting new Christmas in Crediton event for the square. The tables will provide seating for socially distanced audiences at the outdoor performances of Baba Yaga, a new family show for Crediton.'

A second lockdown saw the tables put into storage from January to April, but

'Share in the Square' will take place throughout Summer 2021. Coinciding with the Town Council taking ownership of the tables, it contracted The Turning Tides Project to undertake maintenance work within public areas in Crediton, but most importantly the Town Square. The Turning Tides Project is a non-profit making Community Interest Company that aims to make equal access a reality for people with 'learning disability' or 'autism' labels, and the partnership demonstrates the valuable contribution that people who are part of The Turning Tides Project can make in this community, when given an equal opportunity.

The Share in the Square initiative has been an opportunity for town organisations and groups to work collaboratively for the good of the Crediton community during a period like no other. Huge thanks must go the volunteers who have made it a success, particularly Crediton Town Team for initially leading the project, the Rotary Club for providing social distancing stewarding and sanitising in the early weeks and to Jack Robson, Crediton Arts Centre manager for coordinating the event and providing technical support to acts.



Russian folk tale 'Baba Yaga' being performed on the square

A BUSY YEAR FOR BRIXTON PARISH COUNCIL

Like many other town and parish councils Brixton Parish Council activated its Community Emergency Plan at the time of the first lock down. Volunteers were recruited to provide a prescription delivery service to people who were self isolating and shielding. A weekly newsletter was produced by the Parish Council updating residents on what was happening with signposting to other services i.e. funding, shopping services etc. Volunteer local leaders were recruited to be alert to any changes in their neighbourhood and to inform the coordinator of the Emergency Plan or the relevant emergency services if required. These volunteer services were very much appreciated by the community. The Plan was stood down on the 10th July 2020 and since then our community has become more self sufficient.

Our projects continued to progress during the year. These include improving land at Cofflete Creek, purchased by the Parish Council in 2019 as an amenity space in the South Devon AONB on the River Yealm for the parish, the restoration of an historic dry stone wall along a public right of way has been completed and in one of our play areas a major piece of play equipment has been replaced.

Our 'Owl seat' and stepping stones have been renovated as part of the village play trail. We have worked with Yealmpton & Brixton WI and the landowner in agreeing the site for a seat to mark the 100th Anniversary of the WI on a community path which links the villages of Brixton and Yealmpton.

The Parish Council has been proactive in responding to the Climate Change and protecting our environment agenda. With 6 other parish councils in the catchment of the River Yealm we have set up a Water Quality Group specifically addressing the issue of the spillage of raw sewage into the River Yealm at times of high rainfall. We held a public open meeting to look at the impact of climate change and what we as individuals and as a community can do. One of the outcomes is that we have a monthly article in the 'Brixton Magazine' with top tips for parishioners



to consider in playing their part.

A Bee Friendly Brixton group has been set up to promote pollinating plants and trees across the parish.

In collaboration with St. Mary's Primary School, Sherford School and Surfers Against Sewage we are working on two art projects to promote the reduction of use of single use plastics.

During the past year, Brixton Parish Council along with our 4 neighbouring parish councils, continued our work as a dementia friendly parish council, and as a member of Dementia Friendly Parishes around the Yealm, have continued to reduce isolation and loneliness for people living with dementia and their families. This project has received international recognition.

CHULMLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL BRINGS CHRISTMAS CHEER TO THEIR VOLUNTEERS



Chulmleigh Parish Council wanted to express their gratitude to their team of volunteers who worked so hard during the Covid, so they provided each member with a 'Christmas Cheer Parcel'.

Each box contained cheese, shortbread (made in Chulmleigh) and chutney, and was delivered with a Christmas card and letter.

All items were purchased from local shops, and the project was funded by a grant from the 'In this together' fund.

ACCOUNTS

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2021

INCOME	31/03/2021	31/03/2020
Advertising	700	400
AGM, Conference and Exhibition	(325)	6,769
Bank Interest	72	162
Grants	19,000	8,450
Investment Interest	1,030	1,047
Member Services	1,335	2,629
Subscriptions	93,079	91,622
Training and Events	12,402	37,599
TOTAL INCOME	127,292	148,680

EXPENDITURE	31/03/2021	31/03/2020
Staff Costs	52,100	39,626
Other Staff Costs	1,867	2,412
Premises Expenses	4,331	3,565
Office Expenses	4,054	9,051
Governance Costs	3,518	11,223
Subscriptions	38,196	36,641
AGM, Conference and Exhibition	0	6,494
Training and Events	2,966	18,084
Grants	110	110
Depreciation	935	998
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	108,076	128,204

Net Income/(Expenditure)	19,216	20,475
Unrealised Gain/(Loss) on Investment	(164)	(862)
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) FOR THE YEAR	19,052	19,614

COMPANY TREASURER'S COMMENTARY

I am pleased to report that despite the challenges of the year 2020/21 we were able to maintain a similar surplus (net profit) to the previous year.

There were significant changes to our income and expenditure driven mostly by government restrictions on activity during the Covid pandemic. We secured Covid business rates relief and grant support and retained the Devon County Council annual grant to the organisation.

Our training and events were severely curtailed with no face to face training during the first six months of the year and the annual conference was cancelled. However, our staff were able to deliver on-line training and advice sessions some of which attracted large audiences. We were able to increase our staff numbers with the addition of a training officer.

Our governance costs reduced significantly since meetings were held remotely.

The Board has developed financial regulations and considered our future reserves and funding strategy. The proposals that emerge from this work will be presented to the AGM in October.

I would like to thank the work of our staff and our accountant for the day to day management of our financial affairs.

Cllr Ian Cowling

BALANCE SHEET FOR YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2021

FIXED ASSETS	31/03/2021	31/03/2020
Tangible Assets	3,745	3,978
Investments	23,074	23,240
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors	6,358	7,973
Cash at bank and in hand	81,529	61,023
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Creditors	7,747	8,307
NET CURRENT LIABILITIES	80,104	60,689
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	106,959	87,907
RESERVES		
General Fund		
Balance at 1 April	87,907	98,293
Surplus/(deficit)	19,052	19,614
Balance at 31 March	106,959	87,907
County Training Partnership Fund		
Balance at 1 April	1,516	1,516
Surplus/(deficit)	0	0
Balance at 31 March	1,516	1,516
BALANCE AT 31 MARCH 2020	106,959	87,907

GOVERNANCE

The directors present this report of the financial statements of the company for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Directors:

The directors shown below have held office during the whole of the period from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

Elizabeth Brookes-Hocking
Ken Browse
David Chalmers
Ian Cowling
Phillip Dredge
Michael Hocking

Other changes in directors holding office are as follows:

Resigned 7 October 2020:

Susan Hill
Jacqueline Pateman-Jones
Colin Trudgeon

Appointed 7 October 2020:

Teresa Bowers
Elizabeth Hitchins
Glyn Richards

Registered Office:

The Devon Rural Hub
Amory Building
Cheriton Bishop
Exeter, Devon
EX6 6JH

Registered Number:

12545316 (England and Wales)

Accountants:

Merlin Accountancy Services Ltd
2nd Floor, 33 Longbrook Street
Exeter, Devon
EX4 6AW

OUR MEMBERS

EAST DEVON

All Saints
Awliscombe
Axminster
Aymouth
Aylesbeare
Beer
Bishops Clyst
Brampford Speke
Branscombe
Broadclyst
Broadhembury

Buckerell
Budleigh Salterton
Chardstock
Clyst Honiton
Clyst Hydon
Clyst St George
Colaton Raleigh
Colyton
Combe Raleigh
Combpayne Rousdon
Cotleigh

Cranbrook
Dalwood
Dunkeswell
East Budleigh
Exmouth
Farringdon
Farway
Feniton
Gittisham
Hawkchurch
Honiton

Kilmington
Luppitt
Lypstone
Membury
Monkton
Musbury
Newton Poppleford
Northleigh
Offwell
Ottery St Mary
Payhembury

Plymtree
Poltimore
Rewe
Seaton
Sheldon
Shute
Sidmouth
Southleigh
Stockland
Stoke Canon
Talatton

Uplyme
Uppottery
Upton Pyne
West Hill
Whimble
Widworthy
Woodbury
Yarcombe

MID DEVON

Bampton
Bickleigh
Borden Gate
Bow
Bradninch
Burlescombe
Cadbury
Cadeleigh

Chawleigh
Cheriton Bishop
Cheriton Fitzpaine
Clayhidon
Coldridge
Colebrooke
Copplestone
Crediton Hamlets

Crediton
Cruyws Morchard
Cullompton
Culmstock
Down St Mary
Halberton
Hemyock
Hittisleigh

Holcombe Rogus
Kentisbeare
Lapford
Morchard Bishop
Morebath
Newton St Cyres
Nymet Rowland
Oakford

Poughill
Puddington
Sampford Peverell
Sandford
Shobrooke
Silverton
Stoodleigh
Templeton

Thelbridge
Thorverton
Tiverton
Uplowman
Wembworthy
Willand

NORTH DEVON

Ashford
Barnstaple
Berynarbor
Bishops Nympton
Bishops Tawton
Bratton Fleming
Braunton
Brayford
Brendon & Countisbury

Burrington
Chittlehamholt,
Warkleigh & Satterleigh
Chittlehampton
Chulmleigh
Combe Martin
East Down
East & West Buckland
East Worlington

Filleigh
Fremington
Georgeham
Georgenympton &
Queensnympton
Goodleigh
Heanton Punchard
Horwood, Lovacott
& Newton Tracey

Ilfracombe
Instow
Kentisbury & Trentishoe
Kings Nympton
Knowstone
Landkey
Loxhore
Lynton & Lynmouth
Marwood

Mortehoe
North Molton
Parracombe
Pilton West
Rackenford
Romansleigh
Rose Ash
Shirwell
South Molton

Swimbridge
Tawstock
West Down
Westleigh
Witheridge

SOUTH HAMS

Ashprington
Aveton Gifford
Berry Pomeroy
Bickleigh
Bigbury
Blackawton
Brixton
Buckfastleigh West
Buckland-tout-saints
Charleton

Chivelstone
Churchstow
Cornwood
Cornworthy
Dartington
Dartmouth
Dean Prior
Diptford
Dittisham
East Allington

East Portlemouth
Ermington
Frogmore & Sherford
Halwell & Moreleigh
Harbeton
Hardford PM
Holbeton
Holne
Ivybridge
Kingsbridge

Kingston
Kingswear
Littlehempston
Loddiswell
Malborough
Marldon
Modbury
Newton & Noss
North Huish
Rattery

Ringmore
Salcombe
Shaugh Prior
Slapton
South Brent
South Huish
South Milton
South Pool
Sparkwell
Staverton

Stoke Fleming
Stoke Gabriel
Stokenham
Strete
Thurlestone
Totnes
Ugborough
Wembury
West Alvington
Yealampton

TEIGNBRIDGE

Abbotskerswell
Ashburton
Bickington
Bishopsteignton
Bovey Tracey
Bridford
Broadhempston
Buckland-in-the-Moor

Christow
Chudleigh
Coffinswell
Dawlish
Denbury & Torbryan
Doddyscombesleigh
Dunhideock
Dunsford

Exminster
Hacombe with Combe
Hennock
Holcombe Burnell
Ide
Ideford
Ilsington
Ipplepen

Kenn
Kenton
Kingskerswell
Kingsteignton
Lustleigh
Mamhead
Manaton
Moretonhampstead

Newton Abbot
North Bovey
Ogwell
Shaldon
Shillingford St George
Starcross
Stokeinteignhead
Tedburn St Mary

Teigngrace
Teignmouth
Trusham
Whitestone
Widecombe-in-the-moor

TORRIDGE

Abbotsham
Alwington
Ashreigney
Ashwater
Beaford
Bideford
Black Torrington
Bradford & Cookbury

Bradworthy
Bridgerule
Broadwoodwidger
Buckland Brewer
Buckland Filleigh
Clawton
Clovelly
Dolton

East & West Putford
Frithelstock
Great Torrington
Halwill
Hartland
High Bickington
Holsworthy Hamlets
Holsworthy

Langtree
Little Torrington
Littleham & Landcross
Luffincott & Tetcott
Merton
Milton Damerel
Monkleigh
Northam

Pancrasweek
Parkham
Peters Marland
Roborough
Shebbear
Sheepwash
St-Giles-in-the-Wood
St-Giles-on-the-Heath

Sutcombe
Thornbury
Weare Gifford
Winkleigh
Woolsery
Yarnscombe

WEST DEVON

Beaworthy
Belstone
Bere Ferrers
Bratton Clovelly
Brentor
Bridestowe
Broadwoodkelly
Buckland Monachorum

Burrator Group
Chagford
Dartmoor Forest
Drewsteignton
Exbourne & Jacobstowe
Germansweek
Gulworthy
Hatherleigh

Highampton
Horrabridge
Iddesleigh
Inwardleigh
Lamerton
Lewdown Group
Lifton
Lydford

Mary Tavy
Meeth
Milton Abbot Group
Monkokehampston
North Tawton
Northlew
Okehampton
Okehampton Hamlets

Peter Tavy
Plasterdown Group
Sampford Courtney
Sourton
South Tawton
Spreyton
Sticklepath
Stowford

Sydenham Damerel
Tavistock
Throwleigh

TORBAY

Brixham

NON MEMBERS

East Devon
Otterton
Rockbeare

Mid Devon
Loxbeare
Uffculme
Washfield
Washford Pyne
Zeal Monachorum

North Devon
Arlington
Atherington
East Anstey
Meshaw
Molland

Teignbridge
Buckfastleigh

Torrige
Alverdiscott &
Huntshaw
Ashreigney
Petrockstowe
Pyworthy



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