



DALC

**Devon Association
of Local Councils**



**ANNUAL
REPORT**

**2021/
2022**

CloudyIT™

Local Government Tech Specialists

Proudly supporting IT services for councils, SLCC, NALC & ALCs



Supporting over 100 councils in England and Wales as well as various council bodies, we specialise in modernising the local government sector by delivering bespoke tech services that address the specific needs of councils.



OUR BESPOKE SERVICES FOR COUNCILS:

Custom apps for Councils

Council Agenda Pack Solutions

Staff Training & IT Support

Broadcasting Council Meetings

Connectivity & Telephony

Accessible Website Design

WHY CHOOSE US?



We tailor to you

We are focused on working closely with you to build a bespoke solution for your organisation.



We innovate

We innovate to serve all our customers' IT, communications, connectivity and digital media needs.



We build trusted partnerships

We work with world-leading partners to build relationships that deliver for you.



We work with the local community

We are a socially responsible company focused on supporting our community and the environment.

CONTENTS

CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD	1
OFFICER'S SUMMARY	2
IMPROVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT	6
VOICE AND REPRESENTATION	10
GOVERNANCE	14
OUR NATIONAL ASSOCIATION	16
YOUR STORIES	20
ACCOUNTS	28
OUR MEMBERS	30

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.

CONTACT US

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

t: 01392 241131 | e: enquiries@devonalc.org.uk | w: devonalc.org.uk
Twitter: twitter.com/devonalc | Facebook: facebook.com/Devon ALC



Visit cloudyit.co.uk/councils for more information
Email info@cloudyit.co.uk or call us on 01280 814684

Introducing an important new service for Parish and Town Councils in Devon:

CouncilHive

By Breathrough Communications



Community Engagement

Discover how to improve community engagement, more sustainably take the pulse of your community and how to communicate more effectively.



Data Protection and FOI

Access professional 1-2-1 advice on all aspects of GDPR and FOI in your local council. Our experts can guide and support you at every stage.



Social Media and Digital

We'll help your council realise the range of benefits that comes with social media, whilst avoiding the challenges that can sometimes arise.



Access our Expert Team

Council Hive gives you access to our experienced team of local council communications and compliance experts, whenever you need us.



Access Latest Content

24/7 access to on-demand bite-size training, masterclasses, resources and templates covering all aspects of your local council. Our experts can guide the support you need at every stage.



Access Best Practice

Stay up-to-date with local council communications and compliance best practice through our regular e-bulletins and printed publications.

A special Council Hive offer for DALC-member councils

We work closely with the Devon Association of Local Councils and with many parish and town councils right across Devon. We are delighted to offer DALC-member councils a 25% discount for all Council

Hive subscriptions. To discover how Council Hive can transform your council's communications and compliance, take a look at our website or give our team a call on 01273 282111.

WWW.BREAKTHROUGHCOMMS.CO.UK/HIVE-DEVON

CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD



Welcome to our annual report for 21-22. Whether you're new to the sector or an old hand, I hope this publication will give you a good insight into the work that the Association does for its members and the wide variety of activities it generates.

On the following pages, the County Officer summarises the advice service which continues to grow and is a significant element for DALC. If you've ever wondered what other councils ask about or how many other councils use our services, here's a chance to find out.

We are keen to know what members think about the services they receive and how they think the Association can best support them. The members' survey tells us a lot about what is important to councils. Have a look at pages 4 and 5 and see if survey results reflect your own.

Training for everyone in the sector is a core activity for the Association. Parish and town councils are being asked to take on more, and this can mean opportunities as well as sometimes onerous responsibilities. Both officers and members should know the basics. DALC training meets that need as well as publicising the wide variety of other courses available and offering bespoke training for individual councils – which can be useful if your council is feeling a bit stuck and aspires not to be.

The breadth of issues that member councils are concerned with is reflected in the Policy Officer's report on the County Committee, which has instigated several consultations with members to get their views and to seek evidence that can be passed on to the district and county councils. Every community is different and every perspective is part of the picture so it helps to have responses from across the membership.

The County Committee has often considered that Devon is probably not alone in some of its concerns. Jonathan Owen, CEO of the National Association of Local Councils explains its current priorities on pages 16 and 17, which aim to ensure that government understands the importance of local councils, what they achieve and their potential to achieve more. Anyone who has been able to take advantage of NALC's on-line events will know how useful it can be for councils across the country to listen to experts in their field and to share information on common issues. It all helps to grow and strengthen the sector.

The support and activity on the part of both the National and Devon Associations aim to assist parish and town councils in their role and help them take practical action to benefit their residents. A good project makes a difference: but it doesn't have to be big and expensive to do that. In the end pages of this report, you can see the wide variety of projects that councils have done – small, large, simple, complex – the whole span is there.

Thanks to all councillors and officers for the work you are doing and the difference you are making for your communities. My personal thanks to all DALC staff for their professionalism and resilience in the face of all challenges, and to my fellow board members for their constructive thinking and commitment to the organisation.

Cllr Elizabeth Brookes-Hocking
Chairman of the Board of Directors



OFFICER'S SUMMARY

By Cara Stobart, County Officer

MEMBER SERVICES

DALC's core member services fall into four main categories:

- Advice
- Information
- Improvement and development
- Representation

For full details of all our services, please see our Service Level Agreement.

In January 2022, we conducted a member survey to ensure our members were satisfied with our services, understand their current priorities, and ensuring our services were fit for the future.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive and you can read more of our findings on page 4.

As we progress through 2022/23, we will be working towards our next business plan and we have a number of ideas on new services we would like to develop such as internal audit, and recruitment support. If you have ideas for new services you would like to see DALC deliver, or suggestions for improvements to our existing services, please get in touch.

ADVICE SERVICE

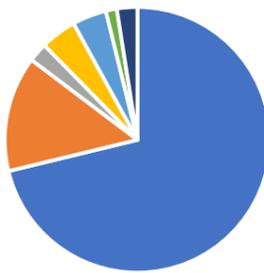
The number of enquiries handled by our team continues to grow. During 2021/22 we received over 2,300 queries from member councils - a 10% increase from the previous year.

On average we received 210 queries a month, from over 100 councils. In May we broke all our records to date with a staggering 351 enquiries resolved.

HOW QUICKLY DO WE RESPOND?

We are pleased to report that during 2021/22, over 70% of queries received a same day response, and over 92% received a response within 3 days (this includes non-working days and weekends!) as per our member service level agreement.

- Same day
- 1 day
- 2 days
- 3 days
- 4 days
- 5 days



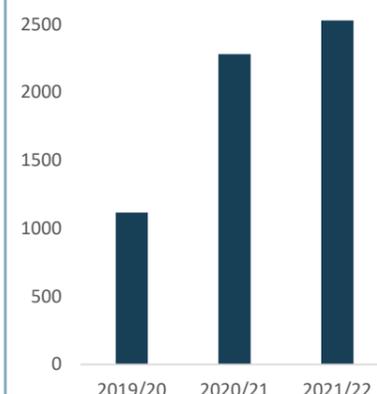
TOP QUERY TOPICS IN 2021/22

Queries regarding meeting procedures continue to dominate our advice service, and account for 1/3 of all queries received.

This year saw an increase in queries regarding civic responsibilities as councils prepare to celebrate HM The Queens Platinum Jubilee, and continued queries regarding Covid-19 restrictions and reopening.

- 1 MEETINGS AND PROCEDURES
- 2 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT
- 3 EMPLOYMENT MATTERS
- 4 FINANCE AND AUDIT
- 5 ELECTIONS AND VACANCIES
- 6 CODE OF CONDUCT

TOTAL NUMBER OF QUERIES



THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

OUR MEMBERSHIP

353

97.5% of town and parish councils, and 19.5% of parish meetings, were in membership during 2021/2022.

ADVISORY SERVICE

2,303

Almost a 10% increase in enquiries from 20/21. 83% of member councils made an enquiry during the year.

NEWSLETTERS

80

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

ANNUAL MEETING

43

43 member councils attended at our remote AGM held in October taking an active role in our governance.

VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

631

The number of individual session attendances recorded at our 3-day conference, from 113 participants.

ENGAGEMENT

88%

311 of our member councils either attended an event or used our advice service during 2021/22.

INFORMATION SERVICES

We continue to collate important information and updates for our members into our weekly e-bulletin. Our mailing list now boasts over 650 subscribers, and both councillors and officers can subscribe.

For regular readers, you may have noticed small adjustments throughout the year as we refine and improve this service to you. For example, we moved publication to a Wednesday to avoid publishing at the same times as other bodies, prioritise DALC content and try to avoid overduplicating notices from the principal authorities.

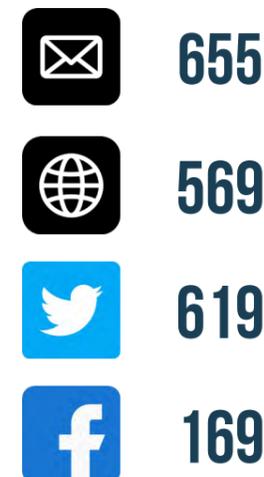
We have many more users on our website now also. Again both councillors and officers can register. We continue to update our [knowledge bank](#) pages so you can access information on demand as and when you need it.

Your stories

We believe our members benefit enormously from being part of a network of mutually supportive councils. An incredible way we can all learn and develop is to learn from one another, sharing our work and experiences. We take great delight in sharing stories of our member councils, demonstrating how you are working to improve quality of life in your communities and inspiring others with your activities. We want to do more of this - but very few of you tell us about your work!

Therefore, a call to action to all our members - celebrate your work, projects big and small. Send us your stories and pictures so we can share them with others. Email us at enquiries@devonalc.org.uk.

OUR FOLLOWERS AND SUBSCRIBERS



DONT MISS OUT!

[SUBSCRIBE TO OUR NEWSLETTERS](#)

[REGISTER TO ACCESS OUR WEBSITE](#)



MEMBER SURVEY 2022

In order to support Devon's 400+ parishes, it is important for DALC to understand its members, to keep abreast of current trends and identify any areas where our members may need additional support.

In January 2022, we introduced an annual mini member survey. The purpose being to:

- be informed and able to represent our members and their interests
- understand local priorities and spending, identifying trends and changes
- explore how local priorities/interests impact precept demands
- ensure DALC has appropriate resources in place to support its members where it is needed most.

98 responses were received, representing approximately 28% of our membership, and here is some of what we learnt.

LOCAL COUNCIL PRIORITIES IN 2022/23

Topics deemed to be highest priority for many councils this coming year included:

- Commemorating Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee
- Developing a Neighbourhood Plan
- Engaging on highways matters

This was followed by topics such as entertainment and recreation. These activities will be most welcomed following the end of covid restrictions.

WHICH OF OUR WORK AREAS ARE MOST IMPORTANT?

We asked you to tell us which of our services were most important to your council. This was to ensure we were putting resource into the right work areas.

- Advice
- Information
- Training
- Representation



COULD OUR SERVICES BE IMPROVED?

Over half of respondents took the time to respond to these questions with the overwhelming majority providing comments with a positive sentiment and being satisfied with our current practices.

We did take away a few suggestions for improvements with our e-bulletins and will be limiting distribution to one per week, and will try not to duplicate content shared by multiple sources as best we can.

TOP TRAINING REQUESTS

You have asked for:

1. New Councillor Training
2. Training on planning
3. Code of Conduct training

This was shortly followed by training in chairmanship, finance and community engagement.

How should we deliver our training?

It looks like webinar delivery is here to stay as it was the 1st choice for many respondents. We also noted the interest in resuming face-to-face courses from many members too, and are looking to reintroduce some courses in the 2022/23.

REPRESENTING LOCAL COUNCILS

We asked you what topics we should prioritise when representing parish and town councils, and parish meetings, in 2022/23. You told us:

- Lobbying for legislation change to enable remotely held meetings
- Greater sanctions for breaches to the Code of Conduct
- Working with principal authorities to represent parish councils in the current 'levelling up' and devolution agenda.

How will we achieve this?

We will continue to debate these important topics through our County Committee and Larger Councils Committee, gathering views and opinions to help shape our understanding so we can share your views with others.

We will prioritise officer attendance at strategic partnerships and meetings which support these topics, ensuring parish and town councils are represented, and views heard by local decision makers. Through our NALC Representative we will share your views nationally, adding our voice to our collective national body, and participate in events such as NALC Lobby Day to engage with MPs and other civil servants.

SHARE YOUR VIEWS

We welcome the views of our members at any time during the year. Please do not wait until next year's survey if you feel there is something we should be taking action on now.

So if you have an idea for a new project or service, would like to contribute content for our website and e-bulletins, or would like to suggest a topic we where we could provide representation - then please get in touch.

Email enquiries@devonalc.org.uk or call 01392 241131.

We look forward to hearing from you.



IMPROVEMENT & DEVELOPMENT



Our events programme is as popular as ever, offering a range of training and development opportunities for both councillors and officers.

This year, we have continued to provide the majority of our courses online via interactive webinars. This was initially due to continued covid-19 restrictions, but feedback has suggested that this is now the most preferred format for training, meaning less time and expense for individuals to attend. But we recognise that a proportion of our members are keen to return to a classroom environment, and we have begun hosting some courses in person once again. As demand increases, we will increase the number of courses held in-person.

In 2021/22 we were delighted to introduce a range of courses on our new e-learning platform. E-learning is bite-sized courses which you can complete in your own time, on your laptop or mobile, and normally takes 45-60 minutes to complete. We offer 18 standard courses on topics such as: equality & diversity, time management, data protection, manual handling and much more. Working with other County Associations in the South West, we are gradually introducing a range of council specific courses. Currently available is an 'Introduction to Local Councils' module - a perfect course for anyone who has just joined the council, or cannot attend one of our other scheduled courses.

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

COUNCILS ENGAGED

174

50% member councils attended a training course delivered by DALC or one of its partners during 2021/22.

TRAINING/EVENTS HELD

74

Including 57 x training events, 1 x induction, 1 x virtual conference, 2 x product demonstration briefings.

We continue to work with a range of partners to expand our training offering, including:

- The Parkinson Partnership, for finance, audit, procurement and VAT.
- Breakthrough Communications, for communication and engagement skills, data protection and freedom of information requests.

EVENT BOOKINGS

1023

446 unique individuals attended a DALC event 2021/22, meaning many people attended multiple events.

E-LEARNING

27

There were 27 enrolments onto our newly launched e-learning platform, with 15 learners participating.

IN-HOUSE TRAINING

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.

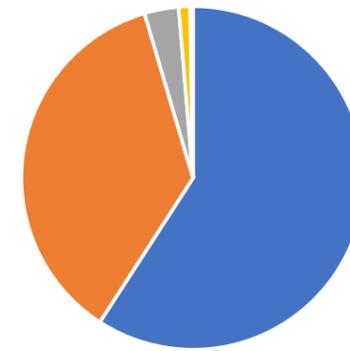
WHAT HAVE INDIVIDUALS THOUGHT OF TRAINING THEY HAVE ATTENDED?

We've undertaken analysis of all feedback received from our training courses.

We are pleased to say that that over 95% rated our course content as either excellent or good. We have received fantastic feedback on how councillors have enjoyed the bite-sized modular structure of the Being a Good Councillor webinar.

Approximately 72% rate our trainers as excellent. There has been high praise for their knowledge, their interactive style and the support and encouragement shown.

COURSE CONTENT



TRAINER



● Excellent ● Good ● Satisfactory ● Poor

OUR CORE TRAINING COURSES

BEING A GOOD COUNCILLOR

Available as either a 4 part webinar or face-to-face short course, our Being a Good Councillor Course offers a solid foundation for any new councillor, or a refresher for those with some experience.

CLERK'S ESSENTIALS

A 3-part webinar covering all the essentials a new clerk needs to know. From essential law and procedures, to council meetings and engaging with the community, with lots of opportunity for discussion and peer support.

CHAIRING LOCAL COUNCIL MEETINGS

The chairman plays a crucial role in ensuring the effectiveness of council meetings. Our webinar guides newly appointed chairmen through their role and to develop deeper understanding of meeting procedures.

SPECIALIST COURSES

We work with a range of partners to ensure our members can access training on specialist subjects. By working in partnership we can provide a variety of subjects and dates, and keep costs down. Check out the courses by clicking the boxes below.

E-LEARNING (VARIOUS TOPICS)



South West Local Council Associations

COMMUNICATION, ENGAGEMENT AND DATA PROTECTION



BREAKTHROUGH COMMUNICATIONS
SPECIALISTS IN CONNECTING TOWN & PARISH COUNCILS WITH THEIR COMMUNITIES

FINANCE, AUDIT AND VAT



PARKINSON PARTNERSHIP

LOCAL COUNCIL AWARD SCHEME

The Award Scheme celebrates the successes of town and parish councils, and 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.

We are always delighted to hear when one of our member councils has been recognised in the award scheme. Huge congratulations to all the councils who achieved awards in 2021/22.



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 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 TO THIS YEARS AWARDEES

Seaton Town Council
Shobrooke Parish Council

Exmouth Town Council
Newton St Cyres Parish Council

Brixton Parish Council
Crediton Town Council

Brixton Parish Council was one of the first councils in Devon to achieve the Quality Gold Award. Chairman Liz Hitchins, said ...



“Brixton Parish Council is delighted to have received this recognition for our work. Particular thanks should go to our clerk, Kirstie Aldridge, for ensuring that Brixton Parish Council works to an effective and efficient standard to give confidence in our work to our community. Kirstie’s efficiency and thoroughness has significantly contributed to the Council achieving this nationally important award. I would also like to thank all our councillors who give their time voluntarily to improving the work of the council in responding constructively to meet the needs parishioners. Thank you also to our parishioners who engage with the Parish

Council in its work from taking part in the monthly open forum at Council meetings, street sweeping, improving road safety, monitoring the Public Rights of Way, being part of the Community Emergency Plan, taking part in the traffic management group and more recently with our Environment Plan groups including the Bee Wild group. All this involvement with the work of the parish council (and a lot more) was submitted as evidence to demonstrate how the community is engaged with the parish council in making Brixton a good place to live and contributed to the case for the gold award.”

Does your council deserve an award? For more information about the Local Council Award Scheme, [visit our website](#).

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.

CiLCA helps officers to become more aware of the law and procedures for local councils, and is applicable for councils of all sizes. It checks that officers can manage the council’s activities, its finances and community engagement. A CiLCA qualified officer can help your council to achieve standards of good practice and builds the reputation of local councils in a fast changing world.

DALC is passionate about providing the highest quality training for local learners. Our CiLCA Support Programme offers regular training at monthly intervals, taking learners step-by-step through the portfolio. It also offers 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.

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.

Katherine Anness joined our CiLCA Support Programme and achieved CiLCA during 2021/22. She said

To be honest, I underestimated how much would be involved in completing the CiLCA portfolio when I signed up for it! I ended up working harder on it than my undergraduate dissertation years ago and I think that was because so many topics were covered. Having said that, that’s what’s great about CiLCA, it covered a very wide range of material, everything that a clerk would need to know to support their council.



I was delighted to pass the CiLCA with three exemplary submissions; I must say though that I really couldn’t have done it without Rebecca at DALC and the wonderfully supportive group of parish councillors that I have. I opted for one-to-one mentoring support from DALC. This suited me better than the unit training sessions as I felt more confident in some areas than others.

Cllr Paul Reid, Chairman of Mary Tavy Parish Council spoke of Katherine’s success ...

“I know I speak for all councillors when I congratulate Katherine on obtaining her CiLCA qualification. From a council viewpoint this moves us a step closer to being able to exercise the General Power of Competence.

From a career development standpoint, the council were delighted to support our clerk in obtaining her CiLCA qualification and were happy to agree paid study hours to help Katherine achieve her goal. It gives us confidence that the advice and guidance Katherine gives the council is of the highest standard.

Congratulations on your CiLCA success Katherine!

NEW LEARNERS

14

14 officers began their CiLCA journey and/or participated in DALC’s CiLCA Support Programme.

REGISTRATIONS

11

11 individuals registered and were compiling their portfolios for assessment over a 12 month period.

PASSES

8

8 Devon officers have successfully completed their CiLCA portfolios and passed during 2021/22.

Congratulations to the learners who have achieved their CiLCA:

- Andrew Wyer
- Caroline Metcalf
- Elise Callaghan
- Jonathan Parson
- Julia Mutlow
- Karen Chapman
- Katherine Anness
- Lindsey Hubbard

VOICE AND REPRESENTATION

Mark Clapham, Policy Officer, explains how DALC handles its policy work and highlights current topics of interest to our members.



In September 2021 I joined DALC in the new role of Policy Officer, and I would like to thank members and colleagues for providing such a warm welcome. DALC's policy work reflects the issues that concern our members, and it has been extremely useful to hear your interests and concerns over the last few months.

Compared to DALC's core services of answering member enquiries and providing training, our policy work can be a little harder to get a handle on, so I hope you'll indulge me taking a paragraph or two to explain that work.

The what, why and how of policy

DALC's policy work reflects the views of our members on matters of interest to our sector and represents those views to government and other agencies. The policy positions we take aim to be non-prescriptive, flexible and at their core increase the ability of member councils to represent their communities to the best of their abilities – not committing councils to certain actions, but increasing their ability to fulfil their democratic functions as they see fit.

Policy work covers every aspect of how policy matters are discussed, decided and communicated by DALC, and as Policy Officer I lead on this work – in collaboration with the County Officer, DALC colleagues and member councillors, of course. Our process

for making policy is consultative and democratic, reaching out to our members through consultations, correspondence, open meetings and so forth. The final decision on policy matters rests with the County Committee.

The County Committee and its 'TFGs'

The County Committee is a democratically elected committee that meets four times a year, made up of councillors representing all the districts of Devon. All decisions on DALC policy positions are made at these meetings, but the County Committee's work extends beyond the set meetings, with Committee members being asked for views on incoming consultations, as well as meeting in sub-groups known as Task and Finish Groups – 'TFGs' – to discuss specific areas and develop policy positions before they're presented to the Committee.

This year the County Committee has agreed a planning policy position statement and a policy on land management companies, as well as agreeing a policy making statement that sets out why DALC has policies, and how they are made. Our NALC Representative has been attending NALC Policy Committee meetings, providing DALC input into the policy work of our national body. Members of the County Committee have reported back on their representative work,

while the Committee has considered emerging issues including the proposed devolution deal for the county.

You can find out more about the breadth of the Committee's discussions by reading the minutes on our Committees web page. I would like to focus in on a few key issues that have recurred throughout this year.

Speed on rural roads

A Highways/Speeding TFG met in August 2021, setting out an action plan to establish a DALC view on the issue of speed limits on single track rural lanes, an issue of concern to many member councils. Following research and discussions with Devon County Councils Highways Team, the year ended with DALC preparing to launch a member survey on the issue.

Climate Emergency

The climate emergency continues to be a significant issue touching on all areas of DALC policy work, with member councils concerned with how they can approach reducing their climate impact and mitigating the effects of climate change. The County Committee established a Climate Emergency TFG in 2020, which has provided a vital function this year in considering climate related issues and providing focused recommendations to the County Committee.

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 be referred to the County Committee for consideration. To submit a motion for debate, please complete the form on our [website](#).

STAND FOR THE COUNTY COMMITTEE

We currently have a number of vacancies on our committee which may be filled 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 may sit on the Committee. To nominate a councillor, please complete the form on our [website](#).

This year the Climate TFG recommended that DALC endorse the Power for People campaign that seeks to pass a Local Electricity Bill enabling small-scale electricity generation. The County Committee accepted this recommendation and gave DALC's support to the campaign, considering that it fit within our policy approach of expanding the options available to local councils, should they wish to become involved in local electricity generation.

Housing Emergency

Most councils have a strong interest in housing issues, whether it be the ability of local residents to own or rent in their community or concerns regarding the suitability of new housing developments. Over the last year a specific housing issue has come to the fore, a housing emergency taking place in coastal and other tourist and leisure intensive areas hit by a severe shortage of private rental properties, a shortage exacerbated by growth in second homes and short-term holiday lets.

The County Committee established a TFG to establish a policy position on this emergency, and in February 2022 DALC held an open meeting where members could share their knowledge and thoughts. This was a very useful exercise with members raising points and suggestions that have fed into the TFG's thinking on this issue. A position statement was due to be considered by

the County Committee early in the next financial year.

Social Care

An emerging issue for DALC, the County Committee discussed the large number of vacancies in the social care sector in early 2022, with a Social Care TFG meeting for the first time in March. This was a lively session with many concerns and potential solutions raised by members, and social care is expected to be a major policy issue for DALC over the coming year.

Going forward

Going into the 2022/23 year, DALC has an ambitious programme of Policy work, establishing policy positions on issues such as speed limits on single track rural lanes, while continuing to discuss ongoing issues around the climate and housing emergencies as well as emerging issues of concern to our members.

We are only able to do this through the engagement of our members, whether that be through contacting us with their concerns, participating in surveys and meetings, or standing for the County Committee. If you would like to discuss submitting a motion, or any issue that you believe the Committee should discuss, please feel free to contact me at mark@devonalc.org.uk.

COUNTY COMMITTEE MEMBERS*

EAST DEVON

T Dumper	D Stewart
R Eastley	C Trudgeon
E Rylance	1 x Vacancy

MID DEVON

E Brookes-Hocking	G Guest
K Browse	A Perris
R Cashmore	

NORTH DEVON

I Cowling	H Walker
G Bell	1 x Vacancy
I Roome	

SOUTH HAMS

P Dredge	J Hodgson
L Granados	2 x Vacancies
L Hitchins	

TEIGNBRIDGE

M Hocking	M Wrigley
J Farrand-Rogers	1 x Vacancy
M Retallick	

TORBAY

1 x Vacancy

TORRIDGE

D Chalmers	D Watson
R Craigie	2 x Vacancies
S Middleton	

WEST DEVON

J Goffey	P Ward
G Hill	B Wood

*all names correct as at 31 March 2021.

LARGER COUNCILS COMMITTEE

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

The year has seen a consistent stream of significant issues for larger councils and it has been helpful to hear the views of members and clerks, and to share relevant information as a means of supporting the sector.

In June 2021 we discussed the compulsory return to face-to-face meetings. Covid-19 was still a significant health issue and meetings were held with social distancing and maximum ventilation. Problems encountered included difficulty for participants hearing each other, especially with masks; technical challenges in live-streaming meetings to an acceptable standard; a drop in participation and viewings by the public; some councillors being unable to attend because of additional health issues; and some reliance on delegation of functions to officers to reduce the need for meetings.

The merits of remote meetings included efficiency of time and travel; significantly increased engagement by the public attending meetings and watching recordings; greater opportunity for diversity of council members such as people with mobility issues or housebound, and those with caring responsibilities. It was felt that the quality of chairmanship is significant, whatever the format.

Post-Covid, many councils were progressing new partnerships formed with their voluntary groups and community organisations during the pandemic. Some were re-starting delayed capital projects while others were reviewing their budgets in the light of lost income during the shutdown.

The Larger Councils Committee is open to any council in Devon with a turnover greater than £250,000 and/or population of more than 4,000. The purpose of the committee is mutual support, exchanging information and discussing issues unique to or affecting larger councils. Read past minutes on our [website](#).

Councils were able to start looking at Climate Emergency activities again, assessing their own carbon footprint as well as partnering with other organisations and the public in reducing plastic use/waste, and planting trees. This is now a standing item for Larger Council meetings and members regularly report on measures they are taking and how they are engaging with their communities.

The focus in November was on Active Travel, following a helpful presentation by Devon County Council at the October conference. There is a very strong demand from communities for cycle paths, though the complex process in getting one was discussed.

A possible Devolution Deal for Devon was explained following the publication of the Levelling Up white paper, with an Expression of Interest already made by the county council. It was agreed that town and parish councils would need to establish their role in any future settlement and look for ways of

engaging with the principal authority and the districts.

In February, Active Travel was discussed with a Devon County Council officer who presented the latest plans and proposals. She explained the concept of quiet lanes, the need for connections between new housing developments to be considered at the outset and the council's intention to respond to the Bus Back Better initiative.

The county council's Urban Renewal Study was also presented, being of interest to members who had contributed evidence to the consultation. The need for a high level of evidence to qualify for funding from the Levelling Up Fund and the Shared Prosperity Fund was explained. Several towns had been identified for support and Regeneration Boards of stakeholders would be formed to progress the projects. The Larger Councils Committee will be keen to hear how this work progresses over the next year.



REPRESENTING PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS

DALC is invited to represent its members at a variety of strategic meetings and partnerships to provide a parish level perspective on strategic matters. The following are reports from some of the meetings we have attended.

HEART OF THE SOUTH WEST JOINT COMMITTEE

The Heart of the South West Joint Committee is a strategic public sector partnership working together to strengthen devolution discussions in the region through a productivity strategy.

Joint Committee discussions in June 21 focused partly on recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. The Build Back Better programme included plans for inclusive growth which benefits everyone. According to research, to achieve that aim, an inclusive economy is needed in which more people are productive and at a higher level. A lot of discussions at the joint committee includes how to achieve that in the face of difficulties that persist. While there are successful schemes for developing skills, it is acknowledged that some sectors of the population are still missing out. The county still has connectivity problems, coastal and rural communities with limited economic activity, low-skilled jobs, lack of staff and rising house prices. By October it was reported by the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) that the recovery was happening faster than expected and businesses were struggling to fill vacancies in higher wage sectors as well as in hospitality and care. Meanwhile, the government was still reviewing the future of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) to see how they fitted into the Levelling Up programme. The question of rural

productivity that is outside the Build Back Better schemes is still an issue for the LEP and local authorities. The rural and coastal areas are the site of the counties' natural capital, a major resource in economic and well-being terms. The question of how these areas become 'productive' without high tech economic activity, whilst retaining their role as the natural capital asset, has not yet been answered.

While everyone's thinking about that, government business continues. In March the Joint Committee heard about Devon's response to the Levelling Up white paper and the proposals for negotiating a Devon Devolution Deal which would determine what powers would be devolved. Again the aim would be to accelerate the county's ambitions to achieve greater productivity, opportunity, sense of place and empowerment of local leadership.

Even if Devon achieves a county deal, the Joint Committee will continue. It is felt that the HOTSU area will achieve more by working in partnership. The review of LEPs allows their inclusion in a future county arrangement. The LEP, the principal authorities and the districts are still following the same direction in their joint plans for clean and inclusive growth.

TEAM DEVON

Team Devon is an informal partnership of all of Devon's Local Authorities, working together on topics affecting Devon and local government.

DALC is a member of Team Devon, providing a voice for parish and town councils when discussing issues affecting the county. For a long period, discussions were largely focussed on the covid-19 response. More recently discussions have included the Devolution Deal for Devon, levelling up and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the housing crisis, and supporting economic recovery post Covid-19.

MEETINGS AND PARTNERSHIPS WE HAVE BEEN PART OF IN 2021/22

**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 Community Resilience Board, and Forum

Devon Climate Emergency Response Group

Devon Local Nature Partnership

Heart of the South West Joint Committee

NALC National Assembly, Policy Committee and County Officers Forum

South West Conference of Local Council Associations

Area Committee Meetings

Representations to MPs

Meetings with district council leaders and officers

Clean Devon Partnership

East Devon AONB

Travel Watch South West Primary Care Network

Local Care Partnerships

Cornwall and West Devon Mining Heritage Partnership

GOVERNANCE

The Devon Association of Local Councils, as a company, is managed by our Board of Directors, but it is our members who are the sovereign body of our organisation. As a member-led body, the involvement of town and parish councils in our governance is significant to our success. This largely takes place through our Annual General Meeting (AGM).

It is at our AGM where our members can propose amendments to our company articles, appoint individuals to the Board of Directors, agree any increases to membership fees, and scrutinise our financial management.

We were delighted to welcome 43 councils to our AGM held in October this year, and thank those councils who voted in advance for their preferred candidates for our Board of Directors, and/or voted via proxy if they couldn't attend.

At this year's meeting, we successfully filled all vacated seats on the Board, agreed a 4% increase to subscriptions, and awarded Cllr Ken Browse, ex DALC Chairman, with a medal in recognition for his past service and exceptional leadership for over a decade.

We also welcomed NALC Chairman, Cllr Sue Baxter, who reflected on her time in the role and some of her achievements, including the setting up of a national networking for female councillors. She highlighted the power of communities and the challenges of raising the profile of the sector, and left us with the important message '*Together we stand, but divided we fall*'.

OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBERS

Members of the Board of Directors 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.

At the 2021/22 AGM, our members elected Brian Bailey and Colin Trudgeon, and re-elected Glyn Richards to the Board.

Any serving councillor or a member council, or chairman of a parish meeting, is able to put themselves forward for election to the Board.



BRIAN BAILEY

Brian is a councillor at Exmouth Town Council, and was previously mayor of Budleigh Salterton Town Council. He has also served on East Devon District Council. Brian is passionate about everything council related, loves meeting people and helping where he can.



COLIN TRUDGEON

Colin is a member of Bishops Clyst Parish Council and has served on DALC's County Committee and the shadow Board of Directors. His working life has involved managerial roles across public services and he was Devon branch secretary of Unison. He also runs his own independent businesses.



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 last year. He served on the DALC County Committee 2009-2019. Having been a Charity Manager for over 20 years, Glyn has experience of incorporation.

SUBMIT A MOTION TO THE AGM

Any member parish or town council, or parish meeting, is able to submit motions for consideration at the Annual General Meeting.

Motions must be in regard to constitutional business i.e. to propose an amendment to our company articles, or in regard to how DALC operates. Motions must be submitted in advance of the meeting, to be included in the papers which shall be circulated no later than 14 days in advance.

To submit a motion, please [visit our website](#) for details.

MAKING PROGRESS WITH OUR BUSINESS PLAN

The aims in our Business Plan sit across 5 themes as shown below. We are making good progress in meeting our objectives. Some are listed below. We will be reviewing and updating our business plan in 2022/23.

MEMBER SERVICES

- We continue to offer a high quality advice service, and work with reputable external advisors to enhance the range of advice available to members.
- We continue to provide high quality information to member councils through our website, e-bulletins and events.
- We provide a high quality training programme for councillors and officers, delivering core training and specialist knowledge, and working with reputable external trainers where needed. In-house training also available.

VOICE, REPRESENTATION AND LEADERSHIP

- We strive to have a diverse and active County Committee (representative body of DALC's members). The appointment of a Policy Officer has enabled us to facilitate working groups of our County Committee to explore topics in more depth, engage with our wider membership, and to develop policy positions for the Association on behalf of members.
- We continue to raise the profile of parish and town councils and represent the sector at a range of forums, partnerships, events and meetings.

OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

- We continue to put in place various documents, frameworks and policies to ensure both regulatory compliance as well as internal efficiencies. Work has included: reviewing our practices regarding data protection, risk management, work planning and performance monitoring.
- Our work continues to ensure we are meeting our commitments under our declaration of a climate and ecological emergency. We are fortunate that many of our services are offered remotely to our members.

FINANCE

- We continue to have a high percentage of councils in membership
- We are seeking to diversify our income by maximising external funding opportunities, and increasing self-generated income including sponsorship.
- We ensure the safeguarding of company finances through sound financial planning and monitoring, ensuring appropriate reserves and security of banking and investments.

HUMAN RESOURCES

- We continue to monitor the performance and wellbeing of our staff team. We ensure our team are suitably equipped for their roles, and are supported with ongoing professional development and training to meet our objectives.
- We continue to create appropriate policies and frameworks to support our staff team and look after their wellbeing.
- We are developing frameworks to support our Board and Committee members to fulfill their roles effectively.

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 2021/22.

nalc

**National Association
of Local Councils**

Thank you! For giving up time to serve your community and to support your county and national associations. Your work is very much appreciated by your national association.

I am pleased to report that our sector continues to thrive and demonstrate its relevance in an ever-changing world, providing a wide range of services, supporting residents, and championing their community. All for an average band d precept of £74.94 a year; raising around £650m per year. That is why NALC will continue to press government not to impose referenda principles, or capping, on councils; and for them to have access to some of the national grants that are available, so that they can continue to deliver for their residents.

We have a new chair, elected by our national assembly members, Cllr Keith Stevens from East Sussex. He will build on the excellent work of his predecessors, Sue Baxter (Worcestershire) and Ken Browse (Devon).

He has set out his clear priorities.

To ensure that local councils are rightly recognised and respected as the first tier of local government.

NALC is working to ensure that we have a strong voice in parliament, the government, and political parties. We also need them to hear, rather than just listen to what we say, particularly about the sector's potential. He has already met with government ministers and other parliamentarians including levelling up Minister Kemi Badenoch and the Speaker of the House of Commons, Sir Lyndsey Hoyle; who incidentally began on Adlington Town Council in Lancashire. We also have an active parliamentary forum – the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Local Democracy - championing the sector, ably chaired by MPs Richard Holden and Cherilyn Mackrory.

We are pressing them, on your behalf, for remote meetings to continue, for appropriate sanctions where poor standards require them and for the sector to be recognised for their role in the levelling up and regeneration bill currently before Parliament. We hope that bill will strengthen neighbourhood planning, provide funding to improve the sector, make it easier to set up new

councils and put our councils at the heart of place shaping.

NALC would ask you to continue to support those arguments locally, highlighting to your MPs and local media the brilliant things you are doing and pressing MPs to support these campaigns in Parliament. And of course, please do flag up any areas where you would like to see legislative change to make your work easier through motions from your county association to our Policy Committee.

We also work with other national organisations on your behalf. For example, through the rural coalition we are seeking to ensure rural areas are not overlooked and the loss and absence of facilities are addressed including access to broadband, affordable housing, and health care. With other members of the rural coalition, we are also pressing nationally for banks to understand and support the sector more responsively.

To champion good governance in councils supported by material from county associations and NALC.

We are working closely with the society of local council clerks on a project to



NALC Chairman, Cllr Keith Stevens (right), meets Speaker of the House of commons, Sir Lyndsey Hoyle.

promote civility and respect providing resources to enable councils to do that. We will be inviting councils to sign a pledge to commit to delivering this. An important way to demonstrate good governance is to participate in the local council award accreditation scheme and I am pleased that the number of councils getting their award continues to increase. Elections are central to governance and one of NALC's key campaigns is to encourage more people from all backgrounds to get involved in their local council – the "make a change, become a councillor" campaign. There are resources to help this including twenty videos highlighting why people have become councillors.

To highlight the role and potential of councils with the media, public and other national bodies.

Thanks to the brilliant work councils do we have plenty of case studies of how they are helping to address some of the big challenges facing the country including building dementia friendly communities, promoting healthier communities, tackling loneliness, and helping meet the climate emergency. We publish these on our website and use them to demonstrate to government, the media, and other national bodies the potential the sector has to help them with the big challenges the country faces.

You can find these case studies and other support to help you address these issues on our website and our impressive programme of national remote events are designed to give you insights from national experts and leaders. These have gone well and had over five thousand attendees over the last year.

I hope this material will inspire you and encourage you to raise the ambition of your council. And please let us know what you are doing, share case studies, media coverage and participate in our annual star councils' awards.

We continue to work closely with the Local Government Association, which represents counties, districts and unitaries, as it is vital that our role and status as the first tier of local government is fully recognised.

A media highlight this year was the full-page article in the Financial Times on 14 March 2022 entitled "The potential of parish politics" which commented on the growing role of the sector and its potential to revitalise democracy and level up the country. A copy is available on our website.

If we continue to work together to improve the sector and demonstrate its potential then I am sure we will go from strength to strength and deliver for local communities.

NALC FACTS & STATS

A NATIONAL NETWORK

NALC works with 43 county associations to represent the interests of 10,000 local councils and 100,000 local councillors.

PROFILE

Its website receives around 700,000 hits views per year and its twitter account 2m impressions.

QUERIES

NALC's team deals with around 5,000 queries a year from councils and county associations.

QUALITY

There are around 700 councils accredited or working towards the local council award scheme and 3,500 clerks qualified in CiLCA.

RESOURCES

Its suite of guides, legal topic notes and other publications have been downloaded over 250,000 times by members.

DON'T MISS OUT!

You can sign up for a regular bulletin and newsletter on NALC's work here <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/nalc-newsletter>



YOUR STORIES

Celebrating the incredible work of our parish and town councils

MAKING EXMOUTH BEACH WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE

Exmouth Town Council has been developing a beach wheelchair project scheme in which members of the public can hire specially adapted wheelchairs for use on the beach.

The Town Council initiative aims to provide disabled people with greater access to the beach through the provision of specially adapted, all-terrain wheelchairs which will be hired out free of charge from a new premises. The eco-friendly storage unit has been fitted with a wheelchair ramp, solar panels for electricity and collects rainwater to wash wheelchairs after they have been used. It contains five wheelchairs and an electric hoist.

The project has been in development for nearly three years, and the Council hopes to open the facility as soon as possible, hopefully in time for the summer.

The project has been funded through community donations raised via a crowdfunder appeal, with match

funding from Exmouth Town Council, the principal authorities and others. Wheelchairs have also been donated by the Devon Super Team and The Claire Milne Trust.

Speaking of the project, Cllr Pauline Stott who championed the project said 'My ambition with this project has always been to enable as many people as possible to go to the beach with their families and friends, regardless of disability. Just imagine being in a position where you can see our wonderful beach but you are not able to go on it yourself... Well, hopefully, with Exmouth Town Council behind the project, everyone will soon have access and the project will succeed for many years to come.'



SOUTH BRENT AWARDS THEIR COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

Awards schemes are a wonderful initiative recognising and celebrating the outstanding individuals and groups in our communities.

South Brent Parish Council's Community Champion Awards invite the public to nominate the individuals they wish to see celebrated.

This year they received two nominations for **Community Champion** and gave the award to South Brent Pharmacy. Although Community Champion is historically awarded to an individual, the council was so impressed by the community spirit and excellent service demonstrated by the pharmacy, they broke with tradition.

The pharmacy is an extremely important facility in the community, giving excellent service with staff of the highest quality. The pharmacist puts himself out to serve the community; during a period of very bad weather, he stayed in the flat above the shop so the pharmacy could open as normal.

The **Young Community Champion** was awarded to Holly Chapman-Burden who is part of Dartside Explorers, always giving one hundred percent. She also volunteers as a young leader with the Ivybridge Scout Group, setting an excellent example and taking care of others in the unit.



Cllr Glyn Richards and Holly Chapman-Burden

A NEW SPOT TO GET TOGETHER OR REST IN TOTNES

A new bench has been installed outside The Mansion, Totnes, to make it easier for people to stop and chat. Funded by a £1,500 grant from Totnes Town Council, the bench has been crafted by local charity Landworks and is part of a project by Inclusive Totnes to help bring people together to tackle loneliness. As well as encouraging people to talk more, it also provides a comfortable place to stop for anyone needing a rest as they walk through the town.

Jeff Chinnock from Inclusive Totnes said: "We are grateful to Totnes Town Council for the Community Grant – this project would not have been possible without it.

We wanted to install a bench outside the Mansion for two reasons: to promote the bench as a place for people to chat to others – whether they know them or not – as a way of bringing people together particularly after the last 2 years. Age UK and the ONS designate Totnes



(l-r) Jeff Chinnock, Cilla Doyle, Emily Price and Jeremy Doyle

town as an area at a very high risk of people being lonely, so this is a small but important way to better connect people. In addition, Totnes Fore Street and High Street are steep and the bench will provide a place to stop and recover for people living with mobility issues or long-term conditions as they walk up the hill."

Cllr Emily Price said: "What a fantastic addition to the town, thanks to the vision from Inclusive Totnes and the craftsmanship of the team at Landworks. I'm delighted the Town Council were able to contribute towards this stunning community bench and I hope citizens of the town will enjoy a moments rest, respite or conversation here for many years to come."

VEHICLE ACTIVATED SIGN TO HELP REDUCE SPEEDING IN MARY TAVY

Mary Tavy Parish Council wanted to address the issue of speeding vehicles on the A386, a busy road in the centre of the village. Several residents had contacted the parish council with concerns regarding vehicle speeds on the road which doesn't have a pavement all the way along. Some parts of the A386 have a virtual footpath rather than an actual pavement and residents that needed to use the virtual footpath felt vulnerable.

A well-attended public meeting was held (before the Covid-19 pandemic). Parishioners were presented with a series of solutions to the problem including:

- two village gateways (to raise motorist awareness that a village is being entered),
- a community speedwatch scheme and,
- a vehicle activated sign (VAS).

Residents largely agreed that the parish

council purchase a mobile VAS. The aspect that appealed most was that a modern VAS could both display vehicle speeds as well as collecting data. The data can be fed regularly to authorities such as Devon County Council and Devon & Cornwall Police as evidence of the speeding problem in the village.

Once an appropriate make and model of VAS had been decided by the council, they made contact with the Neighbourhood Highways Officer to outline the proposal. As part of the process, the council had to supply a map of potential locations on the A386 for placement of a mobile VAS. The process of gaining approval was very time consuming; it took almost two years to gain the necessary permission from the highways authority, despite assurances from the parish council that they would purchase the VAS solely from its own funds, would conduct its own risk assessment, and be solely responsible for maintenance and insurance.



You can read more about Mary Tavy Parish Council's project [on our website](#), including how they determined what powers they needed to undertake the project.

CRANBROOK CELEBRATES WELLBEING

Here at Cranbrook Town Council (CTC), 2021/2022 has been a year of great highs with periodic stalls from the pandemic, but this has not stopped the exciting work which has taken place within Cranbrook. The year kick started with feedback from our Covid Community group expressing concern about mental health across the town. CTC responded by externally funding a self-esteem course and a heads-up cafe for our teens. This then led to better engagement from our most vulnerable young adults within their home, school and community settings.

CTC swiftly moved to creating the extraordinarily successful Mindfulness Trail in Cranbrook Country Park, which used audio QR codes to navigate families around the trail. This activity assisted our residents to move and learn about our natural environment, all the while undertaking mindfulness activities. Over 750 residents took part in this trail with small children enjoying scanning the codes, families made it a day activity with picnics and there was the notable increase in park use. Residents fed back about how calm they had felt doing the activity, in what was described, as a very unstable period.

The summer was then quickly upon us, and we had the wonderful opportunity of running a holiday club (Holiday Activity Food – HAF funding). Our teens had four days over four weeks to move, eat healthily, make friends and go on experience days. We had great fun with BBQs in the park, Canoeing, Go Karting, Laser tag, dodgeball, art and so much more. Young adults had life changing experiences as it had been the first time they were included in a mainstream activity, low- income families had access to healthy meals and Covid lead parents got well-earned breaks.

This prompted the first ever Cranbrook Mental Health Survey to try and understand how our town was dealing with the



Installation of the Mindfulness Trail

effects of the pandemic. As a brand-new town, connecting services often proves difficult and so a new resource hub and community signposting directory were established within the Younghayes Centre. Thus, giving our residents the tools to empower themselves when change is needed. This hub is now a gateway to information for residents to use, with free internet access, printing and resources to reduce barriers to vital services. Although mental health is foremost, we believe CTC has taken some significant steps to improving our town's wellbeing for the future.

A BUSY YEAR FOR SHILLINGFORD PARISH COUNCIL

Shillingford has had an unusually busy year.

The first really positive event was success in purchasing Shillingford Wood. This wood had belonged to two local organic farmers. They offered it to the village at a discount but although the Parish Council itself declined to go through the process, a charity was formed and the trustees set about getting the money. This process was a great success and the purchase went through in April. Many events are planned including a dawn chorus walk in early May.

The second and much less cheerful thing to happen was a

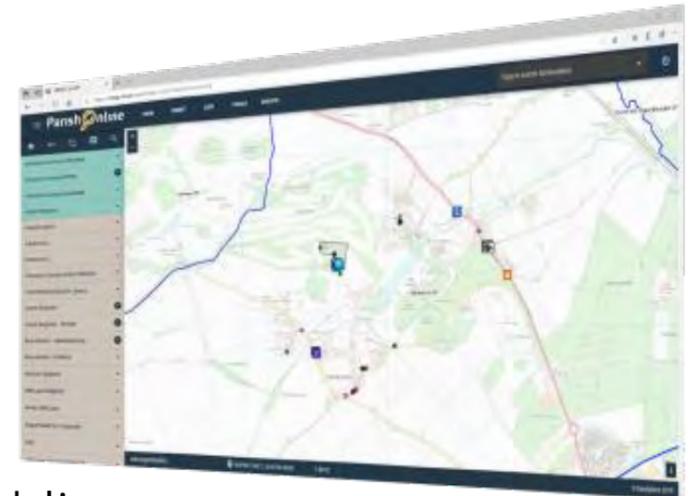
planning application for an inert landfill site just 300m from the edge of Shillingford St George. The result was that our villages, St George and Abbot, were galvanised into action along with neighbouring Kenn Parish. Many posters were put up and some really effective objections were sent in to Devon County Council. The result is that the application was withdrawn about a week before the planning meeting. It is not known whether it will be resubmitted but we are ready for it!

Finally, new road signs with flower troughs are soon to be erected in honour of the Queen's Jubilee.

Digital Mapping for Local Councils

Main Uses Include:

- Digital asset register
- Neighbourhood plans
- Engagement with the public
- Climate Plans



System Features:

- Web-based System
- Unlimited users
- All data stored securely

20% discount for DALC members with code DALC20

www.parish-online.co.uk/signup

Now also offering a Website Hosting Service!

<https://www.parish-online.co.uk/services/parish-council-website-package>



Inclusive Play

Our Services

- Product design
- FREE site visit and design service
- Consultation support
- Playground installation
- Playground inspection

WICKSTEED

• SINCE 1918 •



Fitness Legacy Range

"Scan the QR Code using your smart phone to access videos on how to use each item from our Fitness Legacy Range"

'SHOCKING' SUCCESS FOR WEST HILL COMMUNITY



Working with the South Western Ambulance Service, West Hill Parish Council has installed two Community Public Access Defibrillators (CPADs).

Following a "shout out" to the community for suitable sites, West Hill's Royal British Legion Club kindly agreed to one CPAD being located on their building. The second device is positioned on a residential property. The RBL and householder have agreed to be the Guardians for their devices to ensure they are kept in good order.

The Parish Council wanted everyone in the village to know where to find the de-fibs in an emergency so we took every opportunity to publicise their

locations in our newsletter, website, Facebook, twitter.....!

The de-fibs are easy and straightforward to use but sometimes individuals may lack the confidence to use them. A free familiarisation session for residents was run by SWAS at the British Legion Club with nearly 20 residents in attendance. Attendees learnt about the 'chain of survival' steps, the importance of CPR and how defibrillators actually work.

Also, SWAS with council support have worked to establish a Community First Responder Scheme which will become operational from May 2022.

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!

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](#).



Case Study: Courtenay Park Salcombe, South Hams District Council & Salcombe Town Council

Wicksteed were awarded the tender for Courtenay Park, competing with several other play companies for the contract. Part of the tender was to carry out consultation in conjunction with South Hams DC and Salcombe TC. Wicksteed spent a day consulting at the park and an afternoon in the playground of a local school. Wicksteed also attended the open day with goodie bags to give out to the visitors.

Customer Comment: Salcombe's Mayor, Cllr Nikki Turton, attended the reopening and said: "After suffering so many years of neglect, it is wonderful to at last be proud of what we have all achieved in the shape of a totally rejuvenated Courtenay Park. Working alongside South Hams District Council and Wicksteed Leisure to plan and create the new play area was as exciting for me as I hope using the new equipment will be for our younger residents and visitors."

"Considering the huge constraints of the sloping site, I am still amazed at how many pieces of equipment Wicksteed has managed to provide, and yet we still have plenty of grass which brings the whole park together naturally."

“ It is wonderful to at last be proud of what we have all achieved. ”

Before



After



BUCKLAND BREWER HOST CLIMATE CHANGE COMMUNITY CONFERENCE



Buckland Brewer Parish Council held a Climate Change Awareness Day for their community on 23 October, and were delighted with the turnout.

Featuring a range of speakers and exhibitors from the public, private and community sectors, participants learnt about community energy, electric vehicles, recycling, river water quality, benefits of shopping local and more.

The event prompted lively and healthy debate, and attracted some new volunteer sign ups.

TOTNES SUPPORTS LOCAL FOOD BANK

Stepping Stones Totnes is one of 11 community groups that received a grant from Totnes Town Council. The grant for £2,400 will enable the group, which runs Totnes Food Bank, to purchase new IT equipment.

Town Cllr Ben Piper joined Cllr Emily Price, Kit Stevens and Belinda Taylor to see first-hand how Stepping Stones Totnes makes a difference to so many local people.

Cllr Ben Piper said: *“If organisations like Totnes Caring, Citizens Advice and Stepping Stones Totnes were not there, we’d be very much the poorer in our community. Fortunately, we have been able to give them robust financial support. So, I am able to say, on behalf of my fellow councillors and staff: ‘Thank you for all the work you do and thanks be you are still there doing that work.’”*

Kit Stevens, Stepping Stones Totnes said: *“Stepping Stones Totnes will now*



(l-r) Kit Stevens, Emily Price, Ben Piper and Belinda Taylor

be able to work with IT equipment that is efficient, versatile and long-lasting, which will cope with all our communication and admin needs, and it will also help us to enable vulnerable clients who either don’t have the technology or the know-how to get the

help they need, and contact friends and family that they haven’t been able to see during Covid. This grant will make a huge difference to how we run the company and the services we can offer the community.”

MOVIES ON THE SQUARE IN KINGSBRIDGE

Kingsbridge Town Council’s Movies on the Square series is an innovative project to help bring the community together and rebuild the town’s economy post-Covid, which has been a key topic for many of Devon’s councils as restrictions come to an end.

The council had two main aims with Movies on the Square; they wanted to encourage people to arrive into Kingsbridge early on a Friday night to watch the film, helping to give town’s night-time economy a post-Covid boost. The movies were also intended to give both locals and visitors to the town a morale boost, by providing a fun event to enjoy with families and friends in a Covid-safe outdoor space. Many communities are enjoying coming back together to spend time with



friends and family, and this one of the fantastic ways that councils can help support that with a joint benefit of boosting the economy. It’s also a great way of showcasing the town itself and using the community square which is accessible to all.

When deciding how to promote the event, the council consciously decided to use their social media rather than

traditional press releases in order to appeal to their anticipated audience. As well as using Facebook, the council has an active Instagram page where they can post photos, videos and stories. Their social media has seen lots of engagement, with members of the public excited about the project and suggesting more movies for the future; the council are already keen to continue the movies next year!

PLANTING TREES FOR THE JUBILEE

Many parish and town councils have taken the opportunity to plant trees as part of the Queen’s Green Canopy Project. The project will create a network of individual trees, avenues and whole woodlands in honour of The Queen’s service and legacy she has built.

Tree planting has also supported many councils green initiatives, and is helping replace trees lost to disease.



Newton Popleford and Harford planted an oak tree. Its planted near an established oak tree thought to be 200 years old - hopefully this one will live a similarly long and healthy life.



Councillors from Moretonhampstead planted 7 oak trees, one for each decade of the HM The Queen’s reign. They also supported the local primary school to plant a tree in their grounds.



Bampton Chairman, Cllr Simon Fouracre was planting trees in their recreation field despite all of March’s wind, rain and mud!



Cllr Matthew Charlton-Ann, Colebrooke Parish Council, planted a birch and an oak tree for HM The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee.



Pupils from Sandford Primary School assisted with the planting of a flowering cherry tree, alongside longstanding councillor Michael Lee.



Ogwell Parish Council added a commemorative plaque to their newly planted oak tree.

THERE’S STILL TIME TO GET INVOLVED

If you have planted a tree for the Jubilee, its not to late to have your tree added to [The Queen’s Green Canopy website](#). There is still time to order free trees from the Woodland Trust to plant this Autumn to add to this legacy project.

YOUR STORIES >>>

LESLEY'S WOOD, IVYBRIDGE

Some thirty years ago Ivybridge Town Council had the foresight to purchase on behalf of the town, a large area of fields and trees known as Filham Park as a leisure facility.

In 1999 it had built the intriguingly named Silver Mine Suite building which became the clubroom of the Ivybridge Cricket Club. In around 2005 largely through the efforts of Town Clerk Lesley Hughes, the Council commissioned the excavation of a fishing lake within the park which became managed by the Plymouth and District Course Angling Club. In 2010, again as a brainchild of Lesley, a woodland copse was planted with the help of the community on the edge of the park.

Lesley Hughes was forced to retire through a very serious illness in December 2020. However, she fought her illness bravely and maintained contact with the council for as long as she was able.

In the summer of 2021 it was agreed to name the wooded area she had helped to plant and was now maturing as 'Lesley's Wood' and she was able to attend a naming



ceremony as part of a picnic also attended by members of staff and councillors.

Lesley was a driving force behind many projects in Ivybridge including the Watermark Leisure Centre which attracted many visits from other town councils looking to use it as an inspiration for their own projects.

Sadly, she passed away in March of this year. The town will always have a memorial to her and a reminder of just how much she did for Ivybridge.

CHUDLEIGH INSTALLS A PUMP TRACK

It started with a written request for dirt jumps from a 10-year-old resident and finished with a fantastic pump track facility for the community.

This £95,000 project will be primarily paid for from Section 106 funding that was provided specifically for sports infrastructure. The main chunk of those funds emanated from the Rivendell development. The final chunk of funding has been provided by British Cycling following a successful application for £16,000 to the Places To Ride programme. Delivered through a unique partnership between British Cycling, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) and Sport England, the Places to Ride programme has made £15 million available to ensure a lasting legacy in England from the 2019 UCI Road World Championships.

The pump track was designed and installed by Forte Trailscapes. Kye Forte said "Using our many years of experience the track has been designed to make the most of the space adjacent to the play park & concrete skatepark, catering to all abilities, whilst challenging experienced riders & being safe for beginners".

Mayor Martin Tinkler presented Oliver James with a certificate of appreciation nearly 2 years after he wrote to

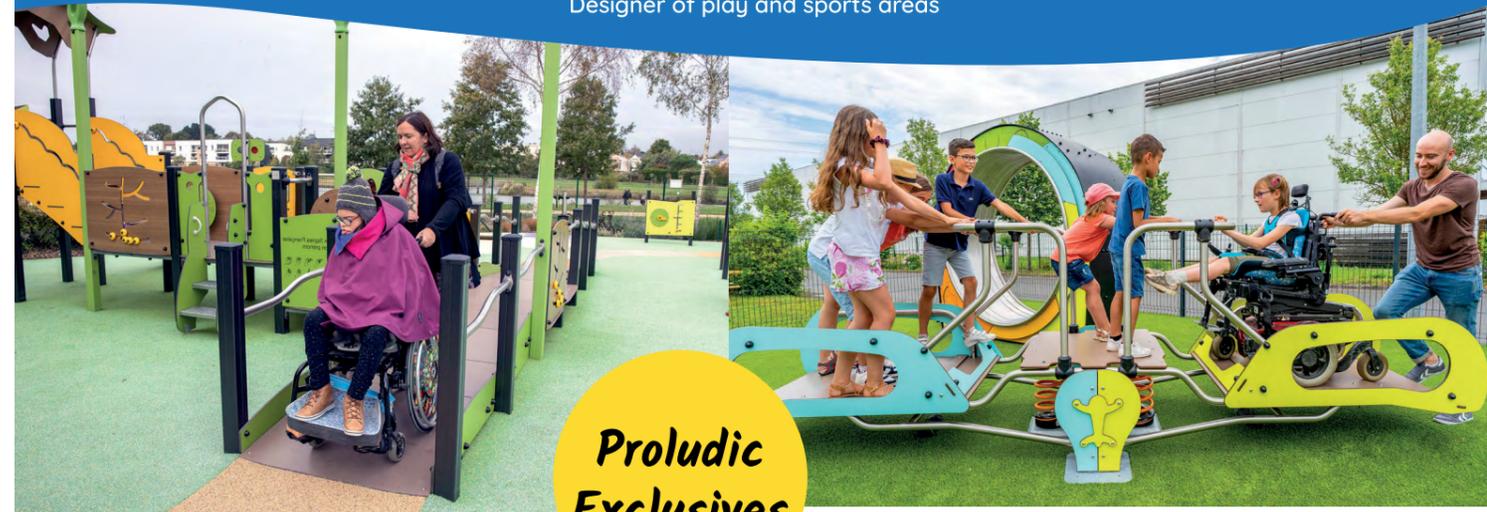


the council, with the request to create dirt jumps in the open space. Stating "it has been a delight for a young person to take an interest in the Town" and that the project "nicely completes the facilities for play, sport and recreation at Millstream Meadow"

Ollie is really delighted with the outcome as he just "wanted somewhere where he could hang out with his mates and ride bikes". This project has certainly achieved that and more, bringing benefit and enjoyment to the whole community.

Proludic®

Designer of play and sports areas



**Proludic
Exclusives**

Scan here to
order your 2022
catalogue



WE STRIVE TO MAKE EVERY PLAY AREA ACCESSIBLE FOR ALL CHILDREN

Whatever your needs, Proludic have more than 20 years designing inclusive play and sports areas.

Our unique creations come to life in the most varied play environments with themed and personalised products.

**Free
design
service**

GET IN TOUCH TODAY



ACCOUNTS

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2022

INCOME	31/03/2022	31/03/2021
Advertising	620	700
AGM, Conference and Exhibition	2,615	(325)
Bank Interest	242	72
Grants	12,000	19,000
Investment Interest	1,302	1,030
Member Services	1,232	1,335
Subscriptions	93,537	93,079
Training and Events	21,583	12,402
TOTAL INCOME	133,131	127,293

EXPENDITURE	31/03/2022	31/03/2021
Staff Costs	64,372	52,100
Other Staff Costs	2,170	1,867
Premises Expenses	4,089	4,311
Office Expenses	10,058	4,054
Governance Costs	3,090	3,518
Subscriptions	40,257	38,196
AGM, Conference and Exhibition	477	0
Training and Events	3,960	2,966
Grants	200	110
Depreciation	864	935
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	129,537	108,077

Net Income/(Expenditure)	3,594	19,216
Unrealised Gain/(Loss) on Investment	4,183	(164)
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) FOR THE YEAR	7,777	19,052

COMPANY TREASURER'S COMMENTARY

I am pleased to report that during 2021/2022 we were able to return to a more typical level of activity after the effects of the pandemic lockdowns. We achieved a surplus of £7,777 for the year and although this was down from £19,052 the previous year, this was due mainly to less pandemic related grant aid being available and some higher expenditure items.

Our virtual AGM and conference achieved a surplus of £2,138 and there was a strong recovery in training and events income to £21,583.

Our expenditure increased significantly driven mainly by increased staff and office costs. We had a 'full year' including our additional staff, now providing 11 days per week in total to meet the higher level of activity supporting members and providing training. The increase in office costs reflects various one-off equipment set-up items to support our staff.

Since most of our fixed assets are investments that can be realised at 95 days' notice or less, we have about £100,000 available to support the business which exceeds our financial strategy criterion of having resources available to support at least 6 months expenditure.

I would like to thank our County Officer and our Accountant who carry out the vast majority of the work necessary to maintain financial control.

Cllr Ian Cowling
Company Treasurer

BALANCE SHEET FOR YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2022

FIXED ASSETS	31/03/2022	31/03/2021
Tangible Assets	3,461	3,745
Investments	37,258	23,074
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors	9,914	6,358
Cash at bank and in hand	76,320	81,529
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Creditors	9,217	7,747
NET CURRENT LIABILITIES	74,017	80,104
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	114,736	106,959
RESERVES		
General Fund		
Balance at 1 April	106,959	87,907
Surplus/(deficit)	7,777	19,052
Balance at 31 March	114,736	106,959
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	114,736	106,959

GOVERNANCE

The directors present this report of the financial statements of the company for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Directors:

The directors shown below have held office during the whole of the period from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

Elizabeth Brookes-Hocking
David Chalmers
Ian Cowling
Phillip Dredge
Elizabeth Hitchins
Michael Hocking
Glyn Richards

Other changes in directors holding office are as follows:

Resigned 6 October 2021:

Ken Browse
Teresa Bowers

Appointed 6 October 2021:

Brian Bailey
Colin Trudgeon

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
Axmouth
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
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
Stoodleigh
Templeton
Thelbridge

Thorverton
Tiverton
Uplowman
Wembworthy
Willand

NORTH DEVON

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

Burrington
Chittlehamholt,
Warkleigh & Satterleigh
Chittlehampton
Chulmleigh
Combe Martin
East Anstey
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
Kingswear
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
Yealmpton

TEIGNBRIDGE

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

Christow
Chudleigh
Coffinswell
Dawlish
Denbury & Torbryan
Doddyscombesleigh
Dunhideock
Dunsford

Exminster
Haccombe with Combe
Hennock
Holcombe Burnell
Ide
Ideford
Ilsington
Ippepen

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
Alverdiscott &
Huntshaw
Alwington
Ashreigney
Ashwater
Beaford
Bideford

Black Torrington
Bradford & Cookbury
Bradworthy
Bridgerule
Broadwoodwidge
Buckland Brewer
Buckland Filleigh
Clawton

Clovelly
Dolton
East & West Putford
Fritthelstock
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
Silverton
Uffculme
Washfield
Washford Pyne
Zeal Monachorum

North Devon
Arlington
Atherington
Meshaw
Molland

Teignbridge
Buckfastleigh

Torrige
Petrockstowe
Pyworthy

Fixed Fee Legal Advice Service

Our fixed fee Council Legal Advice Service allows us to advise you on any and all legal issues which your council may encounter.

Whether you need advice on planning and housing, employment and contracts, or governance and policies, our fixed fee service is a genuinely innovative way to deliver fast, cost-effective and practical legal advice to you, on retainer.

We put our clients first. We're Tozers, thoughtful legal partners for a changing world.



01392 207 020

enquiries@tozers.co.uk

www.tozers.co.uk

TOZERS

Helping local councils face their future with confidence.

Gallagher offers specialist insurance solutions for:

- Town and parish councils.
- Charities, not-for-profit and voluntary organisations.
- Community buildings and village halls.

We can provide cover for the council, its councillors, clerks and volunteers – building a policy that meets your needs. Gallagher is the most turned-to insurance broker across local government, and the only broker serving the town and parish council market that has the strength of a global broker behind them.

Would you like to talk?

T: **0800 0622 030**

E: **uk.community@ajg.com**

ajg.com/uk

Arthur J. Gallagher Insurance Brokers Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. Registered Office: Spectrum Building, 7th Floor, 55 Blythswood Street, Glasgow, G2 7AT. Registered in Scotland. Company Number: SC108909. FPI999-2021 Exp. 14.10.2022.
© 2021 Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. | ARTUK-2884

2021 | **WORLD'S MOST
ETHICAL
COMPANIES**TM
WWW.ETHISPHERE.COM



Gallagher

Insurance | Risk Management | Consulting