

VILLAGE green

Helping communities help themselves



Village Halls and Playing Fields Feature
The Women of Goodleigh and Burrington
Quality Status: the way forward for parishes
Defra Policy officer spends a week with CCD

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CCD SERVICES

CCD COMMUNITY SERVICES:

Community Buildings

Parish Plans

Parish Councils (in association with Devon Association of Parish Councils)

Playing Fields (in association with Devon Playing Fields Association)

Poverty and Disadvantage

Rural Housing (in association with the Devon Rural Housing Partnership)

Rural Services

Rural Training (Devon Rural Training Unit)

Community Enterprise

Rural Womens Support

CCD SUPPORT SERVICES:

CCD Consultancy

Grants Administration

CCD Publications

(including Village Green)

CCD Research

CCD Website

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A selection of Devon's village halls from the CCD photographic archive

VISION STATEMENT

CCD's vision is of active rural communities shaping their own futures with improved opportunity and quality of life for all.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

**This publication is available in larger print.
Contact us on 01392 383443.**

The **Community Council of Devon** (CCD) is an independent charitable company, offering advice and support to rural communities since 1961. CCD is supported by Defra, Devon's local authorities, trusts, foundations and other partners.

Membership: We welcome new members, whether you are an individual or organisation working within Devon or simply wish to support the work of the Community Council. For details of our membership scheme please contact the Office Manager on 01392 382533. Membership subscriptions run from April to March each year.

Village Green is available to all full and supporting members of the Community Council of Devon and to all members of Devon Association of Parish Councils. It is no longer available on a subscription only basis. If you would like additional copies mailed to the same address, these are available at a cost of £6 per annum (four quarterly editions). Where appropriate, please circulate this magazine to all your committee members or fellow parish/town Councillors.

Advertise to our readers: Village Green circulates 3,000 copies every quarter and has over 11,000 readers in organisations and communities throughout Devon. If you would like to advertise in Village Green please contact Grant Harrison at: Zara Media & Design, 14 Kingfisher Court, Venny Bridge, Pinhoe, Exeter EX4 8JN. Tel: 01392 201227. Email: info@zaramedia.co.uk.

Be a contributor: CCD welcomes all contributions, whether on our featured theme or for our regular sections. We cannot guarantee publication and reserve the right to edit for reasons of space and style.

Village Green 113 - Health and Social Care

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Village halls – at the heart of our communities

CCD has undertaken the first comprehensive research for 10 years into Devon's village halls. This issue of Village Green features community buildings and land and we enclose a summary of this important study.

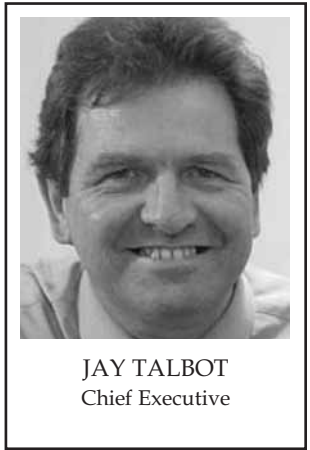
Key facts include the fact that a 6,000 strong army of unsung heroes is managing – on a volunteer basis – a community asset worth a £1/3 of a billion. We demonstrated that our halls are already saving 2,000 tonnes of CO2 every year by events and services being close to where people live.

Join the Devon Association of Community Buildings

It is therefore heartening that Devon's community buildings are taking out membership of the new Devon Association of Community Buildings. This body has been created by community halls themselves and will be more powerful in fighting the cause than CCD as a development agency could be. I would urge all village halls to support the new Association, and believe the higher fees will prove a good investment if halls take advantage of the new website described later.

In the meantime the concept of village halls as 'hubs' is really taking off. For those who wish to strengthen the role of the hall, it is heartening to know that Health, Sports and employer bodies are seeing new roles for halls. An influential group is to promote the role of halls as 'ICT hubs' with new technology and wireless access to the internet.

Such initiatives could enhance the role of the hall, meet unmet need locally, and help with the bottom line.



JAY TALBOT
Chief Executive

Defra policy officer spends a week at CCD

In December, Defra Minister Jonathan Shaw announced a new national contract for Rural Community Councils (RCCs) like CCD (Community Council of Devon). This is focused on the 'strategic influencing' role for rural communities, and bolsters the role of RCCs at a time when central government support for rural communities provided through the Rural Social and Community Programme has ended.

At the region's RCC conference in January, CCD's Jay Talbot suggested to Robin Mortimer (Defra's Director of Rural Policy) an exchange of staff between them. He agreed, and Tony Williamson spent a week at CCD at the beginning of April.

Tony has responsibility for communications at local regional and national level regarding rural community issues

CCD chose a week with a great deal of varied activity and good staff availability so that Tony could get an appreciation of the real working life of an RCC. However, aside from meetings with CCD staff, nothing was scheduled or re-scheduled for the secondment.

Principal activities

- RCC regional Chief Executives meeting
- Devon Rural Network seminar
- New Parish Councillors training event (Barnstaple)
- Parish Council meeting to

discuss possible Rural Housing Enabler involvement (Aylesbeare)

- CCD community buildings conference and AGM of new Devon Association of Community Buildings (Christow)

Office based sessions included: all staff meeting, bi-monthly 'external team' meeting, sessions with Trustees, senior managers, finance, and a range of community workers (community-led plans, inclusion, learning, women entrepreneurs, funding)

Conclusions

From a CCD perspective, the programme worked without a hitch, and anecdotal feedback was very positive about Tony's engagement with CCD staff and a range of people from rural communities typifying the range of people with which CCD works.

Tony's feedback to us was 'That was the best training course I've ever been on'.

A return visit to Smith Square is being penciled in for May. It is hoped to include the quarterly meeting of Regional Rural Affairs Forums, and a session with the Minister.

CCD's future looking brighter

Our March issue highlighted the funding challenges faced by CCD. Support for work with rural communities from central Government has been shrinking. But this has been partially offset by local funding from the County Council. Their support adds to that from East Devon, Mid Devon, West Devon and Torridge councils.

Now Devon County Councillors have agreed an emergency package to support our Rural Housing service. Everyone recognising the value of our Enablers. Although funding has dried up from central Government, all local partners, including District Councils, Dartmoor National Park and Housing Associations, have increased their contribution so that the programme is now entirely locally funded.

There has been a reduction in staffing numbers. But we now see a brighter future. Paul Edwards, our Community Projects Officer, is leaving in June and we are currently recruiting a replacement.



Defra's Tony Williamson meets CCD's Peter Dunning

Dartmoor to pilot community planning for climate change

CCD has just had a new project approved by Dartmoor National Park Authority for Sustainable Development Funding. The Park will be investing £13,075 on this cutting edge project which will support communities to respond to the challenges faced by climate change.

The grant is for a one year partnership project between CCD DCC, DARE, and the communities of South Brent and Moretonhampstead.

The project will pilot a support model for communities across Devon who wish to explore, plan for and develop actions to meet the challenges of climate change in their communities. The project will do this in two ways: Firstly, by working with community groups in Moretonhampstead & South Brent to develop whole community climate change action plans and implement actions coming out of them. Secondly, by developing a Climate Change Resource Pack for use by other communities across the Dartmoor area.

DEFRA has identified climate change as a key element of Rural Community Council activity for the next 3 years and CCD will be committing further resources to this agenda to ensure that community action for climate change maximises its potential.

If you would like to know more about this project, or would like to talk to us about Climate Change Issues generally, please contact Charlotte Hanson at the CCD offices, or on: charlotte@devonrcc.org.uk

EDU For All

For a number of years CCD has been working to help bring learning opportunities to Devon's rural communities. The Community Host model has been the basis for our successful CORA, RB2L, COBRA, ROLI, WAM and WUP projects, and we have learnt a lot along the way.

Now CCD has been invited to work with a consortium of European partners on a project about making Adult Education available to people living in rural areas of other countries across the EU (European Union).

Edu (Education for All) is creating a manual to help support Learning Providers and

Community Groups to work together to identify and meet local needs. As something that we have been passionate about for a long time we are very pleased to be able to share our experiences with organisations from other countries, hopefully bringing benefits to even more rural communities.



Greg Davies from CCD pictured at the 1st Partnership Meeting in Helsinki with partners from Germany, Finland, Latvia, Italy and Hungary

Housing Enablers win new support

Hopes of finding a solution to Devon's affordable housing crisis have been given a significant boost.

The Devon Rural Housing Enabler (RHE) programme was faced with closure when anticipated national Government funding failed to materialise. However, local partners have pulled together and pledged to meet the significant funding shortfall for the programme. The final piece to the jigsaw came with Devon County Council's decision to invest £46,000 in the programme this year. That follows pledges from other partners, including District Councils, registered social landlords, Dartmoor National Park and the Community Council of Devon, to contribute over £50,000.

The Devon RHE programme supports rural communities in undertaking local assessments of housing need, identifying suitable land for affordable housing

development, and acting as an honest broker between the community and other key agencies. Now the jobs of the RHE team have been guaranteed for a further year at least.

Since 2006, Devon's RHE's (excluding North Devon, which is part of a separate programme) have assessed the housing requirements of almost 17,000 households across 43 small rural parishes, identifying over 600 households in need. Over the last two years, the RHE's have facilitated work either starting or completing on site for 123 rural affordable homes, with a further 324 homes in the pipeline. Thanks to the support of local partners, this good work will now continue.

Problems of affordable housing are particularly acute in rural Devon. In 2006, typical house prices in the county were 14 times higher than average incomes, and there were over 21,000 people on local authority waiting

CCD targets for 2008/09

Our current CCD Business Plan covers the period 2005 – 2010. Our Board of Trustees have recently set new targets for 2008-09. These targets are set to measure progress –not to be the principal focus of our work.

New Plans and Targets

Our new Plans and Targets should be read in association with our CCD Business Plan 2005-10 or our CCD Business Plan Summary. Both are available from our website or in hard copy from the CCD office. The new Targets are listed under the CCD Publications section of our website, www.devonrcc.org.uk

CCD's annual conference and AGM

This year's Rural Communities Conference will be on the theme of Rural Health and Care and will take place on 22nd October. The venue is Bridestowe Village Hall in West Devon near Tavistock. As usual it will be combined with the CCD AGM and a presentation to the Devon Calor Village of the Year ©.

The conference theme is in the light of recent changes in health structures and provision, and reflects the strong interest in this issue from CCD Members Forum specifically and from our

wider membership. A growing and an aging population especially in the countryside, poses challenges to the NHS.

Bridestowe's new hall opened in March and is a modern timber building with high environmental standards and low running costs.

22nd October: a date for your Diary

Put 22nd October in your diary now and look out for the booking form in the September issue of Village Green, or on the news page of our website.



CCD's 2007 conference on the 21st Century Village

Look out for the survey

CCD will be working with other umbrella organisations this year to undertake the first comprehensive survey of voluntary and community organisations in Devon for a decade.

There is an increasing focus on partnership working for all bodies that serve the community. At the same time there are demands for facts and figures on both the needs and the ability of voluntary groups.

CCD has helped set up the Devon Consortium in order that our sector has a strong voice, gets investment and funding, and can fulfil its potential. The survey will help with this.

So please look out for this important survey later in the year – it will be available in print or 'on line'. We will make it as easy as possible to full in as it will be important to get a good return.

A ROLI wrap up

"This sort of thing changes peoples lives."

The Rural Outreach Learning Initiative (or ROLI for short) came to an end on 31st March 2008. The project reached out to all corners of the County from Hawkchurch to Welcombe and from Combe Martin to Stokenham.

"The learning process and community spirit was great."

Thirty two community 'Host' groups were successful in providing local people with the opportunity to learn something new. Over 650 people (50% more than the target) did courses in everything from Oriental Cookery to Dog Training and Digital Photography to Decorative Plasterwork.

"A very enjoyable course. I gained a great deal from it and learnt an entirely new technique."

Greg Davies
ROLI Project Manager

The final evaluation report say that individuals have seen benefits to health, welfare, skills, voluntary work and employment (97 said they had improved their skills as a result their ROLI learning).

"Learners are fired up and wanting more."

And more is what they will no doubt get as the diverse range of community Host groups now have the enthusiasm and ability to continue providing courses independent of ROLI support.

The success of the project is down to: Stuart Allardyce and Anthea Duquemin (the dynamic duo project workers); to the various learning providers who have been involved, but mostly to the Host groups and their dedicated volunteer force. Congratulations to all those involved.

Trustee Vacancies at CCD

CCD will be looking for at least two new trustees at our Annual General Meeting (see below). John Collings has retired away from Devon and Wilfred Emmanuel-Jones has been selected as a prospective MP and is over-committed.

CCD Trustees represent CCD's membership of voluntary groups and Devon organisations. We have an induction programme and, although unpaid, all out of pocket expenses are reimbursed. Training is offered as are opportunities to represent CCD and to

become more deeply involved in specific parts of CCD's work. The minimum commitment is to quarterly meetings of the Board of Trustees.

We look for a broad cross-section of the rural community to ensure the Board benefits from a full spectrum of views and experience. If you are interested or think a specific organisation should be approached for a representative please contact me. Jay Talbot, Chief Executive, 01392 383443, or jay@devonrcc.org.uk

New website to promote Devon's halls!

CCD's Access & Awareness Project's new website, designed by hall for halls, was launched at the DACB conference on the 3rd April. The aim of the website is to: 'Provide a marketing tool for village halls and community buildings to improve the use of facilities and advertise the activities, services and events that take place.' By achieving this aim we will be working towards ensuring financial sustainability and improving the social fabric of community life.

It will be particularly useful to those from outside the community – looking for a space to rent or an activity to attend. CCD Access Officer, Penny Thame said 'If we want to ensure that village and community halls remain viable and financially sound, we must address their improved use now. We would hate to see halls under threat – like post offices, shops, and pubs. Halls provide a unique opportunity to support social and physical activities for the community as well as being

ideal for delivering services to people living in rural communities.'

Each hall has a unique selling point. For example, due to their location, some are ideal for business meetings and conferences. Some are outstandingly beautiful – thus perfect for a special event, like christenings or weddings. Nearly all the parishes in Devon have a hall and many are already used for adult education



Kentisbury donations

classes, as a polling station at election time and for one off events like concerts, cinema, festivals, art exhibitions, parties and public meetings.

When a hall has paid their DACB membership, and provided us with an email address, they will be emailed with their 'log in' details and information about how to input their information (and photos) on the site. The hall is responsible for maintaining their information and ensuring it is up to date and complete. As halls go through this process we are seeing more and more halls on the site – check out the map page : <http://www.devonvillagehalls.co.uk/ViewCountyMap.aspx>

It is anticipated that the site will be working towards capacity during the spring and early summer months.

Our next task is to promote the site to tourist information offices, local authority staff, venue selectors and other interested parties – i.e. those

looking for venues to book! We are hoping to persuade publicly funded organisations to support halls by using their venue hire budgets to re-invest in charitable organisations and in rural communities –summed up by the Western Morning News as the 'Unsung Heroes of Village Life'.

Further information: Penny Thame (01392 38 3443) or penny@devonrcc.org.uk



Dalwood water fountain

A passion for playing fields

Are you concerned about the future of sport and play in rural areas? Are you keen to play a role in protecting our playing fields, ensuring they are accessible and well enjoyed by all the community? If so we would like you to consider a role with the Devon Playing Fields Association.

The current chair of the DPFA Ken Lewis, recently announced he would be standing down at the DPFA AGM on the 10th July. Dennis Smith, the current vice chair has expressed his interest in standing as chair.

DPFA are therefore accepting nominations for officer posts; non members are encouraged to participate, but of course, they will need to become members before standing for office.

Nominations should be received, in writing, at least two weeks before the meeting and by no later than 25th June 2008. For further information (including nominations) please contact Charlotte Weedon - DPFA Secretary, 01392 383345 or email charlotte2@devonrcc.org.uk

Lamerton's fundraising idea



When the long-awaited new hall for Lamerton opened last summer, the many visitors noticed the brick edgings to the path. Each inscription represented a valuable contribution to the fundraising target for the new hall.

Devon Association of Community Buildings Annual Conference

On the 3rd of April seventy five delegates from community buildings and halls across the County gathered to celebrate and explore the vital role played by community buildings and village halls in rural life. The key elements of the day included:

● The first AGM of the Devon Association of Community Buildings where the existing shadow committee members came together with new nominees from across the County to be formally elected as representatives on the Executive Committee.

● Presentation of the findings from the recent research on village halls

and community buildings in relation to their impact on the local economy and environment (see separate article)

● Stephen Wright Director of SWAN – the South West ACRE Network of Rural Community Councils, held a lively discussion regarding the future potential and roles of our rural communities. Stephen asked what steps can rural communities, and especially those involved in running village and community halls, take to ameliorate the impact of rising costs, particularly fuel?

● Malcolm Moseley Professor of Rural Community Development at



The whole lot of us

the University of Gloucestershire reflected on the initial findings of the evaluation of the Access & Awareness Project.

Changing membership arrangements:

With the launch of the new Devon Association of Community Buildings, we are now offering a new membership service to community buildings and village halls. This new membership with DACB will include use of the new halls' website and CCD affiliation (i.e. you will still get your Village Green!).

After an excellent lunch provided by the community (WI) we had three poignant and amusing presentations looking at the PAST (Margaret, Yarnscombe), PRESENT (Anne & Co, Washfield) and FUTURE (Kate, Branscombe) role of the village hall in community life.

If you have any questions about your membership or membership services, please contact David Kinross (Secretary DACB on) 01392 383 345 or via email on davidk@devonrcc.org.uk

The day was rounded off with an overview and launch of the new halls' website and the presentation of Hallmark certificates to thirteen successful halls (see article page 6).



Very young and not so very young!

Poughill hall is feeling flushed after achieving their first indoor toilet

Poughill community celebrated their grand opening of the new toilets on the 15th March. The official ribbon cutting was done by Councillor Michael Lee who enlisted the help of Poughill residents - Vicky Lancelles (age 11) and Andrew Lancelles (age 8).

This is a real milestone for the village hall as previously there had been one toilet for everyone to use; it was inconveniently located outside and reached by going through the kitchen on wet and windy days or by dashing around the outside of the building. It now boasts wonderful facilities for women, gents and for people with disabilities – all indoors!

The village hall is the centre of

our community; it is regularly used and we hope with the new facilities it will be used even more - thus making it more sustainable. The Toddler Group and the Youth Club (membership of over a hundred children) meet in the hall and it is also used for social events, held monthly and organised by committee; these events are supported by most of the community. Other regular users include the parish council and church groups – it is also very popular for children's parties.

The project was funded by the Community Council of Devon County Grant Scheme, with match funding coming from Mid Devon District Council with contributions from the Village Hall, Parish Council and Cllr Lee's Community Fund.

The village hall committee would like to thank CCD/DACB Community Buildings team and Paul Tucker from Mid Devon District

Council for their continuing support.

For bookings etc: contact Carole Crossman 01363 866666 or fourleapingfrogs@aol.com



Rural Community Buildings research results announced

CCD has undertaken the first comprehensive research for 10 years into Devon's village halls. This research set out to investigate and report on the use, impact, and potential of multi-use community buildings across rural Devon. It assesses the financial, environmental, and social issues that they face.

It updates information on the condition of community buildings available to rural communities, and learns more about their current and potential uses.

It was found that the rebuild value of Devon's rural community buildings is £160 million. When the true market value and land value are taken into account the figure would be a phenomenal £1/3 of a billion.

This substantial asset is managed entirely by volunteers. It is sustained by a 6,000 strong army of unsung heroes. Their combined voluntary time of 335,000 hours can be valued at over £5 million.

The research also discovered that by people taking part in local activities rather than attending the nearest alternative venue an average hall saves over 13,000 miles travelled in a year. Across the county this would equate to over 2,000 tonnes of CO2 saved every year.

"This comprehensive survey has given a clear picture of the activities and impact of community buildings in Devon. It has demonstrated some of the economic, social and environmental outcomes of their work and highlighted key recommendations to sustain and build on these

achievements." Says Queenie Broom, the Chair of the Devon Association of Community Buildings (DACB).

This research was launched at the DACB AGM and Conference in Christow on Thursday 3rd April 2008 with a range of speakers including Professor Malcolm Moseley from the University of Gloucestershire.

CCD acknowledges the financial assistance of Devon Renaissance (SWRDA) Devon Rural Network (Defra Rural Social and Community Programme) and Government Office for the South West in conducting this research.

For more information see the Exec summary enclosed with this issue or contact David Kinross on 01392 383345 or davidk@devonrcc.org.uk

Key facts

- **An initial mapping exercise to identify all Devon's rural community buildings**
- **A survey questionnaire sent to 530 rural community buildings, 300 (56%) of which were returned**
- **Case study interviews conducted with 30 community buildings focusing on Economic and Environmental issues**

Key findings

- **Total asset (insurance rebuild) value is £160 million**
- **Total income raised last year was £7.3 million**
- **335,000 volunteer hours valued at over £5 million**
- **2,000 tonnes of CO2 saved last year**
- **17% have already conducted an energy audit and 34% are interested**

Recommendations

For policy makers, agencies and funders

- **Community buildings potential to act as local 'Hubs' needs to be developed and supported**
- **Promote financial sustainability through community enterprise, financial planning, and new income generating opportunities**
- **Information, support and funding for environmental issues and renewable energy initiatives**
- **Need to support the development and expansion of quality assurance schemes**

Thirteen Halls Receive Hallmark Awards

This years Devon Association of Community Buildings' Conference saw the first round of Hallmark presentations. Hallmark is a quality assurance award for village halls and community buildings. The aim of the award is to encourage good practice and recognise the work undertaken by hall management committees.

A special mention for South Brent Village Hall who achieved all three levels within the first year; this is a remarkable achievement as it is the first hall in Devon to get all three levels, and over such a short period of time - demonstrating the dedication of the management committee.

Further congratulations go to the following halls who also received certificates this year:

Branscombe	Level 1
Buckland Monachorum	Level 1
Croyde	Level 1
East Budleigh	Level 1 & 2
Exminster	Level 1
Filleigh	Level 1 & 2
Kelly	Level 1
Newton St Cyres	Level 1
Rattery	Level 1 & 2
Stokeinteignhead	Level 1 & 2
West Hill	Level 1
Yarnscombe	Level 1 & 2

There are currently sixty seven halls signed up to the Hallmark scheme. If you are interested in finding out about the scheme please contact:

Cara Stobart (Trainee Rural Officer)
T: 01392 382534 or cara@devonrcc.org.uk

HALLMARK 

Women's' Rugby Champion asks what's the future of sport and play in Devon rural communities?

Three times women's rugby champion Danielle Waterman? shared with delegates her views on the importance of local community sport and play facilities and associations, in nurturing future UK sporting champions. Danielle recently met with members of local playing fields associations and sports Clubs, Local Authority officers and other key organisations representing sport and play issues, for the launch of Devon Playing Field

Association's (DPFA) 5 year development plan – The Way Forward.

The importance of sport and play to health and general well being is well documented. However, whilst images of the rural idyll present seemingly unlimited opportunities for people to roam free throughout the countryside, the reality is that many people in rural communities have no access to sport and play facilities. In

research undertaken by DPFA and Devon Play in 2005, it was highlighted that: "29% of Parishes within Devon have neither playing fields nor play areas with open community access" and "91% have no areas set aside for teenagers".

The findings from this survey of community sport and play provision, has set the context for the 'Way Forward' development plan and the actions within it. The plan outlines key areas for

action by which DPFA can support Devon's rural communities and local playing fields associations to overcome some of the unique challenges they face in the protection and improvement of community sport and play facilities. Some of the keys issues raised to date include: a general lack of quality provision; maximising the potential of opportunities from development whilst minimising the threat; and the need to support the community-run facilities through advice and training as well as focus on publicly owned facilities.

The launch seminar marks the beginning of a more detailed consultation period on the development plan and DPFA would be pleased to receive any comments on this document. (please see insert leaflet for summary of the way Forward).

If you would like to get a copy of the full development plan – 'The Way Forward' you can find it on: www.devoncc.org.uk, alternatively please contact the DPFA secretary, Charlotte Weedon on 01392 383 345 charlotte2@devoncc.org.uk for a hard copy.



Crediton rugby

New Playing Fields could be an Olympic Legacy

In 2005, research was undertaken by Devon Playing Fields Association (DPFA) into outdoor sport and play provision. It identified substantial gaps in each of the seven rural districts, where several adjoining parishes had no playing fields or children's play areas.

Team Devon is a partnership of bodies from across the county, including Plymouth and Torbay, who are responding to the opportunities presented by the 2012 Olympics. Representatives come from business, tourism, sport, culture, universities, armed forces and the community. There is

a strong desire to 'leave a legacy' from the 2012 Olympics in all parts of the country.

An excellent legacy would be the provision of new playing fields in some of the large gaps identified by the DPFA research. This has found favour with Team Devon. Although there is no funding provided, Team Devon is private sector led, and there is strong interest from Devon businesses. The linkage to the 2012 Olympics might make access to funding or sponsorship a bit easier.

DPFA and CCD will be working together to identify suitable villages – i.e. those with no facilities but

who have affordable fields, and those who have the enthusiasm to work with us through the funding process. If you would like to find our more, please contact Charlotte Weedon (01392 38 3443).

N.B. We are hoping to promote community based events associated with the 2012 Olympics (for all ages and abilities) and we are looking at ways of using the 2012 Olympics to increase interest in sport, healthy activity, and volunteering. We would love to



The opening of new play area at Exbourne Playing Field in 2007

Boundary Committee enquiry into unitary local government

As I write we have entered Stage 2 of this process, with 22 possible concepts being submitted for consideration by the local authorities in Devon. These can be viewed on the Boundary Committee's website. <http://www.boundarycommittee.org.uk/our-work/devonstrev.cfm>

The next stage is for them to ask questions of the authorities who have submitted concepts to clarify the basis for the submissions. One the additional information has been received they will be in a position to publish possible unitary solutions for Devon and invite comments on them. This will take place between early July and mid September (see timetable in Noticeboard section)

Whilst this process is happening, there are a few things which town and parish councils could be doing. No doubt members will be attending information meetings to find out what is being proposed, and to make their views known on how various unitary situations would affect their communities. Local councils might also want to look at the services being provided in their parish, and the assets which are held by other authorities.

It is possible that there would be a window of opportunity where town and parish councils could bid for services or assets to be transferred to them. To judge whether this would be

advantageous the council will want to assess the additional costs involved in running the service or asset and balance that against the benefits to be gained. Additional costs might be increased staff time, office space, insurance etc. Increased benefits could be greater local control, higher quality service or use and development of an asset.

Town and Parish councils will continue no matter what system of unitary government is recommended for Devon. Their importance to local people will be even greater, and it is important they feel able to take informed decisions about quality of life issues for their communities.



LESLEY SMITH, MBE
Senior Manager
(Communities) and
County Secretary, DAPC

Quality Status – the way forward

The Quality status scheme has proved a valuable way of giving credit to councils which have proved they are able to work within the criteria.

In Devon we have 27 councils who have a qualified clerk, use a variety of ways of communicating with their parishioners including using a regular newsletter and annual report, have a high electoral mandate, have adopted the Code of Conduct and have achieved a clear audit.

The scheme has been under review and some updating recommended. These new criteria were due to be launched mid April to coincide with the new Cilca portfolio criteria. However, government are still considering whether the electoral mandate should be 80% of councillors to have stood for election or whether they should adopt the proposed change to lower this

to 67%. Locally councils in Devon felt that it would not be right to lower this threshold, so perhaps this feeling has been made known nationally.

We will now know the final new criteria on or soon after 1st July – the date when the criteria for use of the Power of Well being is to be launched. This power was introduced for town and parish councils in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, which is being activated section by section.

One criteria we do know is that the communication criteria are being updated to require local councils to have a web site and be able to communicate via email.

This may be a good moment to remind councils of the one date specific requirement – that is to have an Annual Report published by 30th June. Annual reports do not

have to be lengthy documents, but should aim to give an overview of the financial position of the council, the report of the chairman/major with regard to the past year and hopes for the coming year along with contact details for the council and councillors. Councils could also include committee reports or reports on special achievements or projects if that seemed relevant.

Local councils do so much in their communities – from the largest councils which manage property and facilities to the smallest which supports their local parish through grants to the village hall or as a voice of the community. It is great that there is a scheme which can acknowledge this work, and which has now become an established part of local government.

Lesley Smith

Digital UK to launch Parish Council campaign

Later this summer Digital UK will be launching a special campaign to link up with parish councils in the South West. Information packs will be given to the hundreds of parishes in the region to help with the digital switchover.

“Working with communities at a really local level will be vital to ensure everybody knows what’s happening” said campaign organiser, David Farwig.

The campaign aims to create “digital neighbours” right across the south west to ensure there’s a local source of help for anyone needing assistance. Digital UK believes involvement at a parish level will ensure nobody is left out when the West Country region switches to digital in 2009.

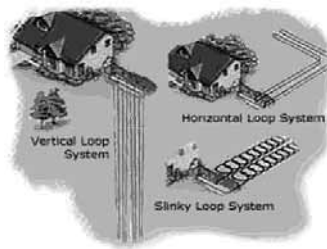
Green Energy: Ground-Source Heat-Pumps

A Ground-Source Heat-Pump (GSHP) is a means of making useful a renewable energy source, and is, potentially, fully renewable itself. Used to provide space heating, GSHPs can offer a reduction in energy bills and carbon footprint.

Rather than converting some form of energy into heat, GSHPs use electrical energy to move existing heat from the ground to the space to be heated. The ground's heat comes from a combination of geothermal energy and solar gain. GSHPs pump water through tubing in the ground to pick up this heat and return it to the heat-pump. The tubing can be laid in horizontal trenches, or placed in a vertical borehole. Once the ground's low grade heat reaches the heat pump, it is concentrated into high grade heat (concentrating the heat by transferring low grade heat in a large amount of water into a small amount of water), and this high grade heat can heat homes.

Every kWh of electricity put into a GSHP can return 3 – 4 kWh of useful heat. However, electricity is both more expensive and more carbon intensive than, for example, oil or gas. This means that unless a GSHP is working very efficiently, its monetary and carbon savings versus a fossil fuel system can be slight. To ensure efficient work from a GSHP, GSHPs should be used with underfloor heating systems, which do not require water to be as hot as radiators.

Using grid electricity limits the "renewability" of GSHPs, but it is possible to power them with renewable electricity, in which case, they would be fully renewable systems.



Totnes Food Guide

The new 'Totnes Guide to Local Food, Shopping and Eating Out' will be launched this June. The 44 page Guide, which follows a successful pilot edition published last year, includes information on the wealth of local food producers and suppliers in the Totnes area.

Over 80 traders are listed according to the produce they sell. A system of symbols identifies foods sourced from within 5 miles of Totnes, South Devon or from the South West. Organic produce and shops accepting Totnes pounds are also indicated.

The Guide includes articles from traders and information on the many food related projects in the area. In response to feedback on the pilot issue there is now more detail on local producers and, because the guide is so popular with visitors, there is a new section

on places to stay.

Dave Lacey at Sacks Wholefood said, "What a lot of accessible information in one place. If you want local food from a local supplier the Guide is the place to look."

Mandy Burton, a local resident and shopper commented, "What an informative Guide. I was new to Totnes last year, and the Guide gave me the encouragement I needed to use local shops and markets and help in finding the local produce I wanted to buy."

Further details from Noni Mackenzie: noni-m@supanet.com or call 01803 867358




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Bridestowe's new green hall

Robin Young, the Chairman of the hall reflects on the process of constructing their new Austrian hall

We started with the 'sod' turning in June 2007. The ground works were then delayed due to the awful wet autumn. These were completed by the end of September 2007. The building arrived on my

birthday 26 October, by several large lorries, which were unloaded and the shell erected within 10 days with two Austrians working every day from 7am - 7pm with a crane driver.

The Hall is on one acre of land purchased from a local farmer. The cost of the land was £12,000 and the cost of the building was £275,000 with the

balance being the ground works. Total cost £537,000. The Building was completed at Easter 2008, 2 months late, again due to the appalling weather and the problem with suppliers in the South West!! Also serious problems with the services, but that is another story.

We wanted a building as green as we could, so all the timber is

from sustainable forests, the lighting is all low energy fittings and we have just signed the order for Solar Hot Water. We are attempting to obtain grants to cover Solar Electricity, but these are not so readily available. We are implementing a recycling scheme for all the waste together with the Pre-School, and will ensure that we end up as green as possible.

Loving food can help you tighten your belt!

Around a third of all the food we buy in the UK ends up being thrown away and most of this is perfectly good food that could have been eaten – not just peelings and bones, so Don't let Devon go to waste in supporting the Love Food Hate Waste campaign, which encourages us all to get the most from the food we buy.

In the UK we throw away 6.7 million tonnes of food each year. Most of this ends up in landfill sites, which contributes to climate change because it emits methane, a very powerful greenhouse gas. Not only are the environmental implications huge but the financial ones are too – it is costing us around £8 billion each year, as much as £400 per year for some households!

Ainsley Harriott says "You don't have to be a chef to know how to cut down on food waste, you just need to care about your pocket and the rest will follow."

We can all be savvy chefs and start saving money now by using our fridges and freezers to make our food last longer, and go further. Here are some tips from www.lovefoodhatewaste.com to get you started:

- Most ripe fruit can be kept in the fridge to make it last longer. Your freezer really is your kitchen hero – many fresh foods can be frozen: check the label.

- If things are approaching their "Use By" date and you won't get round to eating them - pop them in the freezer for another day.

- Sliced bread can be frozen and then used for breakfast toast.

- Grate cheese in small portions and freeze - take it out in the morning to make lunchtime sandwiches, no need to defrost.

- To freeze tomatoes, remove their stalks and freeze whole in freezer bags. They can then be used in place of canned tomatoes. No need to defrost them separately as they fall apart.

Have you got ideas or recipes on making the most of food? Log on to www.lovefoodhatewaste.com and share them with us.

Look on our Noticeboard pages in this Village Green for venues this summer of the "Love Food Hate Waste" roadshow around the county.



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Devon Business Women Don Their Posh Frocks!

A hundred Devon business women donned their gladrags recently and joined together at Roadford Lake to celebrate their successes as part of the WAM Project. A fleet of coaches brought the women from the four corners of the county for the Gala Dinner.

The highlight of the evening was the announcement of the winners of the **WAM Business Awards**. These recognised the achievements of individuals, businesses and the networking groups involved in the WAM project over the past two years. Awards were presented during the evening by a range of special guests. These included Sally Hurst, who founded the award winning Old Bag Company, based here in Devon.

The WAM project itself was congratulated for its success in having just achieved the prestigious Prowess Flagship Award. They are the first in Devon, and one of only a handful in the South West to achieve this mark of excellence in providing a range of woman-friendly

business support services to project members.

Over the last two years the WAM project has been funded by Devon Renaissance and Devon County Council and supported by the European Regional Development Fund. With project support, groups of women within their own communities, have been working hard to turn a hobby, skill or interest into an income or to turn a small business into a bigger one.

The evening also proved a great opportunity for women to network with each other and for groups to plan joint meetings and business support activities in the coming months. When asked how they would sum up the evening, Deborah from the Blackdown Hills said: 'Inspiration....inspiration...inspiration!' Jo, a member of the prize-winning artist's network 14 The Gallery summed up the event by saying: "a fantastic evening on so many levels – recognition of our hard work has made us all very happy!"



Women from the 'Inspiring Women' networking group enjoying the WAM Gala evening at Roadford Lake

Many new women-owned businesses have now been successfully launched with help from the WAM project. Existing business owners have been developing exciting plans for the future. Many have seen a boost in sales whilst others have taken on new staff – all good news for the economy of Devon!

WAM Business Award Winning Kate Seekings collects her prize as Most Successful Start-up Business



Rural Devon Promised More Dentists



Dennis Bater, the Mayor of West Devon in the hot seat. Photo courtesy of James Bird, Tavistock Times

The opening of a new NHS dental practice in Tavistock has resulted in a significant rise in the number of West Devon residents who have access to a dentist.

The new practice, which opened in December 2007, has been set up through a partnership between Devon Primary Care Trust (PCT) and West Devon Borough Council.

With around 37,000 patients already found NHS dentists in the past 18 months, the new Tavistock practice is a continuation of Devon PCT's commitment to making constant

improvements to the county's dental care.

Devon PCT's Andrew Harris, who is responsible for dentistry in the county, welcomed the move.

"It is very good news for people in Tavistock and the surrounding area," he said.

"I've had positive feedback from patients who are happy with the improved access to dental care within their local area.

"This has had a major impact for the people of Tavistock and the surrounding rural area where

dental access has been difficult for a number of years.

"Our dental plans certainly do not stop here and we are currently working on improving services in Totnes, Dawlish, Teignmouth and Ilfracombe by the end of the year."

Devon PCT has set up a central dental telephone line to assist patients looking for an NHS dentist. Anyone who wants to add their name to the list should call 0845 002 0034 and leave a message, including their name, address, contact details and date of birth.

The goodly Women

Goodleigh Women on the Up was formed when a survey by the Village Hall identified a wish for educational and social gatherings within the village. A coffee morning in October resulted in a decision to host seven taster sessions on Tuesday mornings from November. Under the guidance of Olivia from CCD, we arranged workshops on genealogy, courtesy of DACL, and an introduction to computing (Pathfinders). A number of skilled ladies from within the village hosted inspiring sessions on flower arranging, silk painting, card making and locker hooking. We were also exhilarated (and exhausted) by a keep fit and line dancing morning.

The group was well supported and plans were made for the New Year. The Women Returners project enabled us to host an Image Consultancy day and we are looking forward to our Personal Development day in May. We are also enjoying computing sessions encompassing Word and Excel. These have contributed greatly to the confidence of our members, some of whom had not used a computer before.

A six week watercolour painting course enthralled and amazed us all, not least because it was new to almost all the participants and yet, under expert guidance, some rather nice seascapes were produced. We have a digital photography day in May and the Women on the Up funding has enabled us to purchase a laptop,

A Warm Welcome to Migrant Workers

A Devon wide consortium called the Devon Multi Agency Migrant Worker Task Group was formed last year and has been developing an Action Plan in support of Devon's Migrant Workers.

One of the early activities has been the creation of a Welcome Pack. This is a wallet containing a number of information leaflets giving advice and guidance for Migrants on subjects such as

Education, Services, Employment and many more topics.

As an initial pilot exercise and to enable some feedback on the Pack a limited edition in Polish / English is now being produced. Further editions in other languages are then expected to follow. The first edition is currently with the printers and should be

available by the time you read this article.

David Rolls, CCD Social Inclusion Manager, is the facilitator for the Task Group, whilst Greg Davies at CCD chairs the Welcome Pack Sub Group.

For further information contact: David Rolls 01392 382832, david@devonrcc.org.uk or Greg Davies 01392 383292, greg@devonrcc.org.uk.

Awards for Communities involved in Housing

Individuals and Community Groups who have been working to achieve affordable housing in rural communities are invited to apply for the Devon Rural Housing Partnership's 'Housing Awards'

There are two prizes of £125

each to be awarded to benefit the community involved. The categories are: the Most Effective Housing Group and also the Most Inspirational Individual.

For more information and details on how to nominate either yourself or a group or individual you are aware of,

please see the insert in this Village Green or phone one of the Housing Enablers on (01392) 383419

The closing date for receipt of nominations for the DRHP Housing Awards is noon on Friday 25th July.

digital camera and printer which will allow us to develop (!) our new found skills.

We have also enjoyed crafts and games, origami and napkin folding, beading and acrylic painting, but it is not just the range of activities on offer that makes the group successful. The mix of people from villages as far afield as Rose Ash and Braunton, the willingness to share skills with others and the shared experiences of trying something new have all contributed to make Tuesday mornings a time to relish.



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WAM Project Rolls out for a third year across Devon

Following the successes of the WAM project in the European Objective 2 funded areas of Devon, additional funding has enabled the project to be extended for a further year into the other rural areas of the county.

A number of community groups in Teignbridge, Mid Devon and East Devon have already expressed an interest in receiving support and funding to enable their members to start up or develop their own small business. Amongst these are a group of disabled women, who will join forces with the women who have already helped to set up the Disabled Business Women's Network as part of the previous WAM project.

Enterprise South Devon have drawn on their own expertise in working extensively with disabled business women (via the Disabled Entrepreneurs' Project) to host this new network in partnership with CCD. WAM support has already enabled

them to set up the network's web site (www.dizbizwomen.org.uk) and to begin piloting a range of exciting new on-line business support services for network members.

Through the website women will be able to access a range of business support tools and services, provided by ESD and Business Link. They can share business concerns and ideas through a discussion board and tap into news of events and a range of free training. There are also lots of useful links and more services and information will be added soon. Webcams will be available to enable women to enjoy face-to-face to contact where they would not otherwise be able to meet a business advisor or mentor in person.

More information about WAM, The Disabled Business Women's Network and the DizBizWomen website is available from the WAM team at CCD by telephone on 01392 383345 or by email at charlotte2@devonrcc.org.uk

Additional funding for WAM in 2008/9 has come from Devon Renaissance, NLDC, Devon County Council and Leader+.



Gillie Jackson, a founder members of the Disabled Women's Network, receives an award for her business success

Look out for Grassroots Grants

This new programme will provide £850k in small grants for Devon. It should go live in July and run for the next three years. Devon Community Foundation has applied to be the Devon grant manager. CCD is a partner in this bid and will be able to help applicants from the rural parts of Devon apply.

Is your groups income below £20,000 per year?

Grants between £250 and £5000 will be available from the Grassroots Grants programme, and can be for capital or revenue costs. It is for voluntary organisations and community groups only, but you will not have to be a registered charity. It will be available for most purposes that benefit communities. We will publish the details on our website once announced and in the September Village Green.

Burrington Women's Link

Previously a W.I, who objected to a lack of democracy, we created our own independent organisation in March 2007. Not only did our membership increase, but our subs reduced to just £12.00 a year! We meet in Burrington Parish Hall, which is extremely well appointed.



Our first year saw us discover hidden Bideford and Barnstaple. "one-pot" family meals and jewellery making. We learned about the magical finds of metal detecting, and walked our parish boundary.

Enhanced by the Women on the Up project, we held taster sessions in Pilates and salsa, and ran a beginners computer course, followed by digital camera training (and we are now contemplating producing our own calendar...no, not nude!!!!!!) For a complete IT ignoramus like me, this has all been quite incredible. I am now proud to call myself a silver

surfer, and can now discuss cyber space with my grandchildren.

Weekly "stretchersize" classes keep us more flexible, and Image Consultancy and First Aid classes are coming up. We recently produced an Olde Time Music Hall, which included many villagers and raised £650 for Devon Air Ambulance. Our Parish Hall provided stage, lights, sound, bar and kitchen and it was a great success. We've been asked to tour Ashreigney in the autumn and open Chulmleigh Fayre this summer..... next year who knows?

One of the aims of the link group was to include the wider community, which we have successfully achieved. We have purchased a printer, music system and radio mike that we can use in our church, chapel, school hall and outside events.

It has been a great year and we have evolved into a more dynamic group. With the support of Community Council of Devon, we have developed new skills and interests and have realised that whatever our age or ability, there is always a satisfying new challenge around the corner.

Dates for your diary From June 2008			Devon Rural Training Unit	
Course	Date & Time	Location	Venue	Who should attend
Chairmanship	Tues 3rd June	Exeter	Cardinal Newman	Councillors
Planning for Small Parish Councils	Thurs 19th June	Exeter	Cardinal Newman	Clerks and Councillors
New Councillors Short Course	Thurs 26th June	South Hams	South Brent Old School Centre	Councillors
Chairmanship Master Class	Tues 1st July	Exeter	Cardinal Newman	Councillors
Involving All: Increasing Users & Widening Participation	Thurs 3rd July 10am - 1pm	South Hams	South Brent Village Hall	Hall management committees
Planning Master Class	Tues 8th July	Exeter	Cardinal Newman	Clerks and Councillors
Hallmark and Red Tape Road Show: Good practice and legislation	Wed 16th July	Nr Exeter	TBA	Community Buildings and village hall committees

Our training programme is developing all the time. If you can't find the training you need, let us know and we aim to help you fulfil your learning needs. Often the specific types of training we offer is only otherwise available out of county or at a prohibitive cost, so give us a try; we'd be delighted to welcome you to our training. For any enquires relating to CCD training events, please contact: Gail Hickson Tel: 01392 383443 or E-mail: gail@devonrcc.org.uk. For any enquires relating to DAPC training events, please contact: Cara Stobart Tel: 01392 382534 or E-mail cara@devonrcc.org.uk.

County Grant Scheme: Round 2 Grants Awarded!

Congratulations to the following successful applicants of the CGS round 2

Harbertonford Village Hall: extension and DDA work, £15,000; **Belstone Village Hall:** new room, DDA work, £15,000; **St Giles on the Heath Coronation Hall:** village hall car park, £1,980; **Croyde Village hall:** extension and DDA work, £15,000; **Colyford Memorial**

Hall: DDA work, £3,000; **The Manor Room Upottery:** DDA work, £3,000; **Stockland Victory Hall:** improving and refitting kitchen, £2,258

The next closing date for applications for the County Grant Scheme is the 30th of June. If you require any further information please contact Charlotte Weedon or David Kinross 01392 383345.

Sport and Play Grants: Round 2 Results

Congratulations to the following organisations on their grants success:

Stoke Gabriel cricket club (build a cricket net facility) £500; **Chumleigh and Mid Devon Cricket club** (renovate a thatched pavilion) £500; **Hatherleigh Sport field committee** (replace fencing and marking around multi use court) £916; **Halwill Parish**

Council (Create a multi use play area) £1,000; **Bigbury Parish Council** (install toddler swings) £500; **Moretonhampstead Tennis club** (install linear drains) £223

The next closing date for the Sport and Play grant is July 31st. For further information please contact Charlotte Weedon 01392 383345 or email charlotte2@devonrcc.org.uk

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New capital investment in Devon

Following the sale of Exeter Airport by Devon County Council (DCC), new capital funds are being established to invest the proceeds.

A local projects fund is being distributed via elected Members of DCC, so smaller scale projects with a purely local focus should contact their local Councillor.

Other funds are being established for larger scale projects. There is a green fund to promote carbon reduction, an economic development fund, a schools estate fund, and a major projects fund.

This is a 'one off' opportunity and we understand that the approach is one of investment rather than open bidding. It is expected that projects supported will need to line up with DCC's own strategic priorities. Again for these more substantial funds your local Councillor is probably the best starting point.

Our Post Office network

By the time this Village Green reaches you the Post Office will have announced about 50 post office closures across Devon (including Plymouth and Torbay).

Rural communities in particular have been very concerned about the loss of these services and the knock on affects it could have. There can be a 'domino' affect on communities, especially if the post office is within a village shop. Many such shops are close to the margins of viability already. There is also concern about the additional 'carbon footprint' created by customers travelling much further for post office services.

Devon's county, district and parish councils have all been active in highlighting the importance of these closures,

New Unitary Councils – what happens when?

The Government's Boundary Committee is reviewing the County and District Council structure of Devon with the intention of creating a new set of unitary councils. This could include new boundaries for the existing unitaries of Plymouth and Torbay.

So far all the existing principal councils have submitted their suggestions for how this might look. There is little consensus among them, and each council has explained its own position on its website. The proposals tend to involve either a large unitary Devon or dividing it into 2 or 3 smaller unitaries, sometimes north/south and sometimes east/west.

Many councils are continuing to hold public events on their thinking and to understand local views. The Boundary Committee have also held a number of meetings, for example with Devon Association of Parish Councils, and will publicise their initial proposals by 4th July.

There is then a three month period of public consultation which is to close on 26th September. By 19th December they need to provide advice to the Secretary of State. The new council arrangements are to become operational from April 2010.

and in thinking of ways of reducing their impact. Unfortunately if a closure is successfully challenged in one place, an alternative post office is added to the list for closure.

There will be some new resources for outreach and mobile services, and these will help compensate for about a quarter of the closures. CCD will be actively working with both public bodies and communities when the changes are announced on 20 May. There will be a 6 week period for public consultation.

Love food hate waste

Visit the "Love Food Hate Waste" roadshow at one of the events below where you will find free recipe cards and giveaways to help you cut down on food waste:

Wood Fair	Roadford Lake	Sat 12 & Sun 13 July
Mid Devon Show	Hartnoll Farm, Post Hill, Tiverton	Sat 26 July
Yealampton Show	Kitley	Wed 30 July
North Devon Show	Torrington	Wed 6 August
Honiton Show	Nr Weston Village	Thur 7 August
Okehampton Show	Stoney Park Showground	Thur 14 August
Holsworthy Show	Rydon area A3072	Thur 28 August
Kingsbridge Show	Borough Farm, Kingsbridge	Sat 6 September
Widcombe Fair	Fairfield, Widcombe in the Moor	Tue 9 September

See also the article on our Going Green page titled 'Loving food can help you tighten your belt!' To find out more about recycling and composting in Devon visit www.recycledevon.org or call 0845 4502477



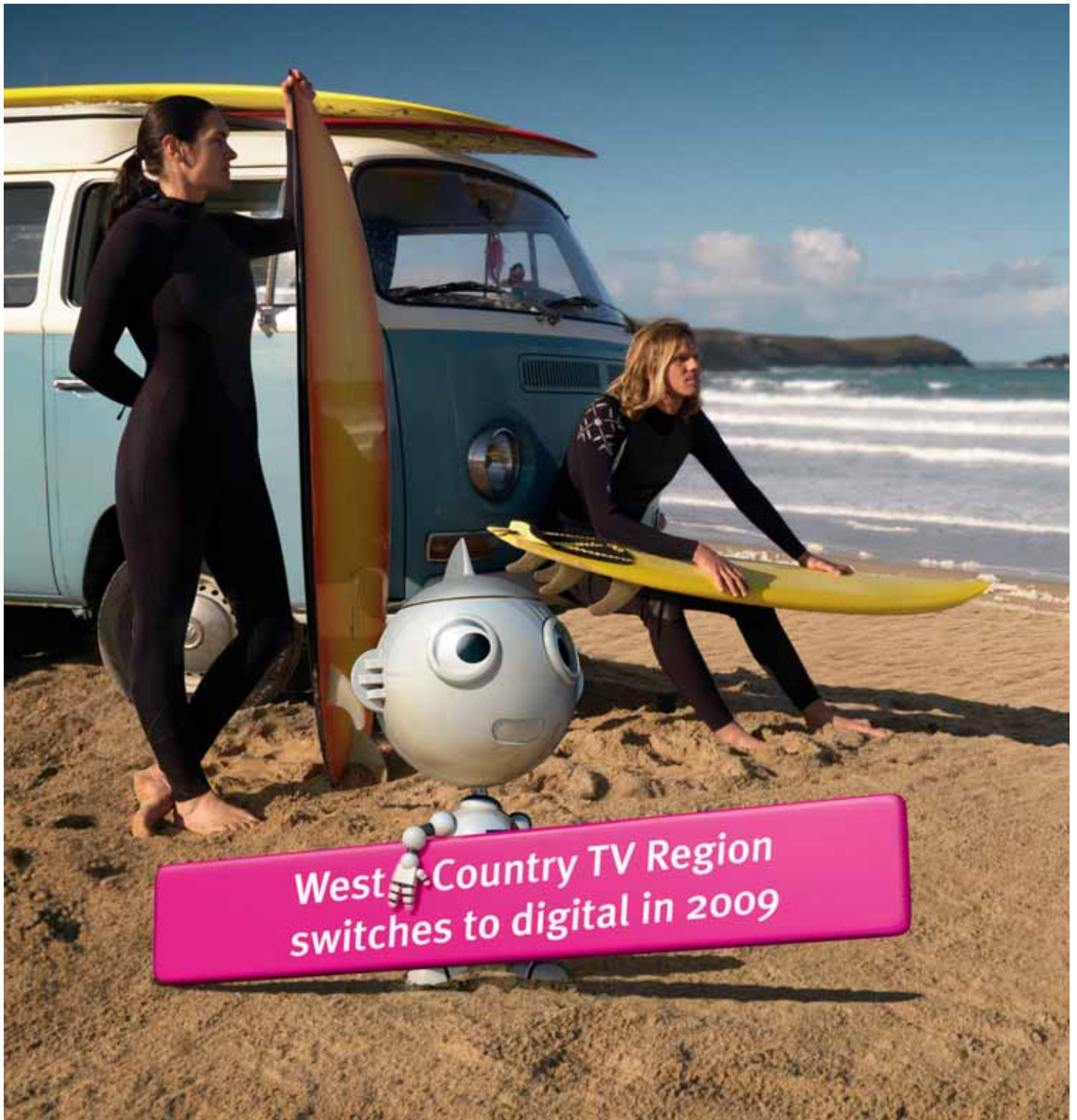
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But if you receive your signal from the Stockland Hill transmitter group, which serves South West Somerset, West Dorset, and South East Devon including Exeter, you'll be switching on **6th May 2009**.

If you live elsewhere in Devon or Cornwall, your switchover will be **later in 2009**.

To find out when, enter your postcode at digitaluk.co.uk or call 08456 50 50 50.

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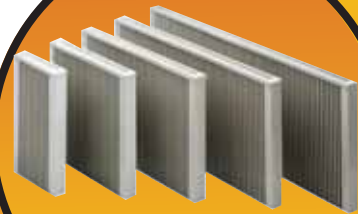
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