

The Knowledge



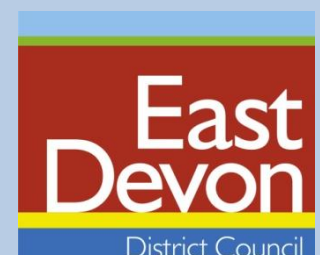
'Soaking' • Jacob's Ladder, Sidmouth, November 2009 • Photo by Paul Harvey

20 November 2009

This week in The Knowledge

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Meeting	DSO	Date	Time	Location
Licensing & Enforcement Committee	CL	Tuesday 24 November	9.30am	Council Chamber
Standards Assessment and Hearings Sub Committee	CEH	Tuesday 24 November	2.00pm	Room 74
Standards Review Sub Committee	CEH	Tuesday 24 November	3.00pm	Room 74
Recycling and Refuse Partnership Board	RP	Wednesday 25 November	2.00pm	Committee Room
Local Development Framework Panel	HJ	Thursday 26 November	10.00am	Council Chamber
Housing Review Board	CEH	Thursday 26 November	6.00pm	Council Chamber
Planning Inspections Committee	CEH	Friday 27 November	TBA	Council Chamber
Asset Management Forum	CL	Monday 30 November	9.30am	CANCELLED
Licensing & Enforcement Committee	CL	Tuesday 1 December	9.30am	Now 24 November
Licensing & Enforcement Sub Committee	CL	Tuesday 1 December	9.30am	CANCELLED
Executive Board	DV	Wednesday 2 December	5.30pm	Council Chamber
Audit and Governance Committee	CEH	Thursday 3 December	2.30pm	Committee Room



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Would Councillors please pass their apologies to Democratic Services if they are unable to attend a meeting so that post can be sent or withheld as appropriate. Please don't forget to check your pigeon holes whenever you are visiting Knowle. If you would like a copy of the papers relating to any of the above meetings, please contact the relevant Democratic Services Officer. (All the above meetings are at Knowle, unless otherwise specified).

Click [here](#) to view agendas and minutes on the Council's website. Click [here](#) to view planning applications online.

Chairman's engagements

Saturday 21 November

Chairman and Mrs Liverton to attend the opening of a new foyer and lift installation at the Blackmore Theatre, Exmouth. Hosted by the Exmouth Players.

Thursday 26 November

Vice Chairman to attend a Public Address and Reception, hosted by the Vice Chancellor of the University of Plymouth, at the Roland Levinsky Building.

New documents in the Members' Area

Feedback from outside bodies

- ❑ **The East and Mid Devon Community Safety Partnership** – Minutes of the Steering Group meeting held on Wednesday 28 October.
- ❑ **Community Council of Devon** – the latest quarterly Achievements sheet

The above documents are in the 'Feedback from Outside Bodies' file on the bookcase in the Members' Area

Portfolio Holder's decision

Decision by Portfolio Holder

 Members are notified of the following decision

Economy

Peter Halse

Authority to negotiate terms for the granting of an easement for a mains water pipe at Salterton Workshops, Budleigh Salterton

That agreement be given to the granting of an easement for a mains water supply pipe at Salterton Workshops to serve a new dwelling at the rear of Oak Lodge, Budleigh Salterton on terms & conditions to be agreed.

The above decision will become effective on 26 November 2009 at 9.00am unless "called in". The published procedure for a "call-in" is on pages 135-137 of the Council Constitution, or contact Democratic Services for assistance or explanation.

Drakefest Beer Festival



On Saturday **21 November** The Yarcombe Inn is holding a festival to celebrate local beers, ciders and foods. The 9th Century inn that Sir Francis Drake once drank in, has recently been saved from closure by a group of volunteers determined to save their pub. The day will be filmed for the television series 'Save Our Boozer'. You can find The Yarcombe on the A30, just after it has split from the A303 north of Honiton.

12 noon to 12 midnight • local foods from local producers • 20 different local real ales and ciders
live music from Sweet Black Angels (from 9pm) • families welcome

Designing services around our customers

Well done

The Planning and Benefits Teams continue to reap the rewards of designing their service around their customer demand using systems thinking principles ... less time taken to make decisions, less (and still reducing) preventable demand, extremely high customer satisfaction and good staff morale...all in these challenging financial times. Well done to all.

More good news

The Housing Team are reporting that anecdotally their customers are very happy with the newly designed allocation and sign up processes, and that many more of them are paying their rent up front and on time thanks to our new processes. We will be getting more hard data over the next few weeks so that we can evidence these improvements.

Message to all staff

Over the last month, we have spent a day with each Head and some members of their teams to do more education on what systems thinking is in practice for them, and to facilitate discussion around 'purpose' and how we might measure whether we are achieving our purpose across the board.

For all our teams, we want to get to the stage where:

1. every member of staff has agreed their service's purpose(s)
2. all teams have measures in place that help them improve the system and the service
3. managers at all levels are accountable to their staff for managing an Issues Log which captures issues causing preventable demand, issues affecting capability (both end to end times and one stop capability) and waste in the system.

Next stop StreetScene

We are meeting with the managers next week to finalise plans to do some in-depth work with the StreetScene teams to help them understand and put into practice systems thinking principles. I will be working with the service through December and January (better get the thermals and hobnail boots out then!) to help them develop what they've already started to learn in our systems thinking awareness sessions.



And finally ... we're famous

Check out this website <http://www.thesystemsthinkingreview.co.uk/> for some great examples of councils (and others) achieving great things. 'Computer says no' was very interesting and you might also spot a link to our Benefits Team's successes writ large for all the world to see. Congratulations to them on their great work.

Denise Lyon (Deputy Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer)

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Reminder to vote!



Don't forget to vote for Newton Poppleford's proposal to replace outdated and condemned play equipment (sited on the playing fields) with modern, fun and age-grouped equipment. You must vote by phone between 9am and midnight on **23 November**. The phone number will be advertised on the **website** and in the Daily Mirror on the day. A short video about this project and the competing project will also be shown on the ITV regional news between 6.00pm and 6.30pm.

News from the Rural Services Network (RSN)

▶ £400K village shortlist unveiled



Villages are a step closer to finding out if they have won up to £400,000 to revive their communities. Some 28

villages have been shortlisted as finalists by Village SOS - an initiative by Big Lottery Fund and the BBC to inspire rural revival. The project aims to fund 6 rural villages to develop new business ventures that will improve life for local people.

▶ MPs slam post office closures

MPs have accused ministers of lacking concern over the impact of rural post office closures. A House of Commons Public Accounts Committee report focused on the closure of 2,500 post office branches. The Government's assessment of the social and economic costs of the closure programme was inadequate, it said.

▶ Spotlight on public spending cuts

Rural stakeholders are examining ways of coping with reduced public spending amid fears of funding cuts. Dozens of delegates attended a rural summit held at Taunton, Somerset, on 9 October. Whitehall departments have been told to examine up to half of all their programmes to find savings.

▶ Fragile future for village halls



England's village halls face a fragile future - despite their use trebling over the past 20 years, warns a report. Village halls have a crucial role in supporting local action and

service delivery, says a study by Action with Communities in Rural England. But many halls receive little local authority funding, relying instead on an army of volunteers to remain open.

Note: Members of RSN (which includes Councillors and Council staff) can gain free and full access to RSN Online by registering.

Older people's needs



In recognising the age profile of our population, the East Devon Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) is launching a project to try to ensure better multi-agency work to tackle older people's needs. The LSP has been keen to get each of the agencies who home-visit older people to act as 'eyes and ears' for others. This will reduce the risk that a householder's needs will be overlooked and also start to create a better sense of co-ordination of services, from the customer perspective. Obviously there are also several Council services who visit older people in their homes, and relevant Councillors may also be interested in promoting the scheme if they visit local people.

Rather than start from scratch, or through a massive multi-agency training programme, we felt that using a pre-existing scheme would be preferable. Care Direct, an organisation created by Devon County Council, is in the excellent position of having good sign-posting facilities for the services that people need. They created an initiative to try to cover all the main areas of work that need to be tackled to ensure the wellbeing of older people. Everything from benefits to safety and security, and from health to having friends. This scheme is called 'Getting the most out of life' and is a simple self-assessment of basic needs.

The concept is that home-visiting agencies promote the leaflet and its content and either leave a copy or, if there is time and the householder is less able, to work through the main areas with them. The householder or home visitor should then be encouraged to contact Care Direct if there are evidently needs highlighted by the leaflet. Care Direct will then carry out the signposting to the relevant agencies.

Initially this will be a pilot exercise for those working in the Honiton area of East Devon. This is because we do not know how large the impact may be on Care Direct's work and we do not wish to create an unmeetable demand. We hope that this pilot will later be rolled out across East Devon if successful. We will commence in January, initially for 6 months, and will monitor the effect. We have a small stock of leaflets in the Members' area, or can be requested from Peter Jeffs:

Peter Jeffs (Corporate Director)

☎ 01395 517452 (or Ext 2652) pjeffs@eastdevon.gov.uk

News from the IDeA (Improvement and Development Agency)

▶ Arts to bridge the health gap



Discovering new ways to reach out to people is a challenge all health services face. Find out how Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council and the local NHS are achieving

success by engaging the public through an arts-focused Wellbeing Festival. Residents who attended were able to have their blood pressure checked and their body mass index measured.

▶ Domestic violence: bespoke support

Find out how Bolsover District Council established a robust evidence base on domestic abuse, and developed bespoke provision for women suffering from violence. The authority delivers a multi-agency response through the Domestic Violence Support Service, a unit providing specialist support to women suffering violence.

▶ Recession: councils' positive response

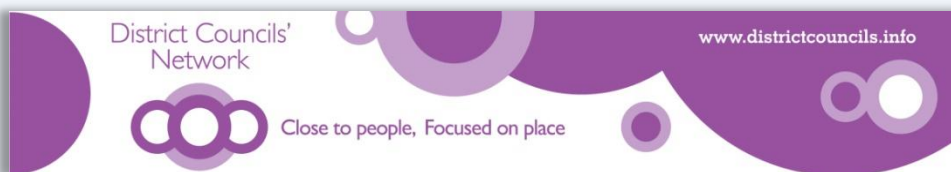
From helping rural businesses survive and thrive to providing unemployed professionals with support – find out how councils are dealing positively with the challenges posed by the recession. Read this latest batch of case studies compiled by the IDeA and the Local Government Association (LGA) which demonstrate how councils are responding innovatively to the downturn.

▶ Flood risk management – how to survive the storms



Heavy rain led to flooding in coastal areas last weekend, as seasonal storms battered southern England. Find out how to prepare for flooding in your area with an in-depth guidance on managing flood risk.

District Councils' Network



On 13 November, the District Councils' Network was formally launched at its first Assembly meeting in London. Councillor Gary Porter, Chairman of the District Councils' Network and Leader of South Holland District Council, announced that the Network is in negotiation to gain access to £2.8 million of the former Association of District Councils' funds.

Cllr Porter explained: "This will mean that the District Councils' Network will have real resources to push forward its programme ... We now have a new opportunity to speak with one powerful voice and significantly influence the next Government. This means we can also reduce our level of subscription from the proposed £950 to a modest £150, which will help to get us underway as the new Network while we complete the negotiations."

The new programme for the Network sets out how the District Councils' Network will campaign on the key issues of importance to Districts. Cllr Porter said "From influencing national decision-makers and dealing with the unprecedented financial climate, to tackling difficult issues including concessionary fares and pensions, through to speaking out on the pivotal role we play at the heart of our local communities, the Network's role is far reaching."

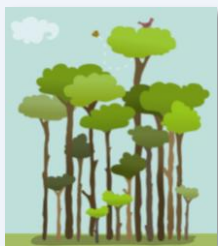
The new Assembly heard how the District Councils' Network offers Leaders across the country an unequalled opportunity to share, tackle and address common issues. The new programme will also help to generate much deserved recognition for the important work district councils undertake. The website, which already hosts over 200 case studies outlining good practice and shared initiatives, will be used to better share best practice and information: www.districtcouncils.info

Find out more about funding

Third sector funding

The Hardship Fund offers grants of between £50,000 and £250,000 to third sector organisations that are suffering financial hardship, impacting on their ability to deliver front-line services in health and social care, housing support, education or training and information and advice. Organisations must have a turnover of £200,000 a year or more. For more information ☎ 0113 2461561.

Woodlands



The Woodland Improvement Grant funds capital investment in woodlands to create, enhance and sustain an increase in the quantity and quality of public benefits delivered. For more details

about the funding in East Devon contact Richard Preston, richard.preston@forestry.gsi.gov.uk or ☎ 01626 890666.

Climate change



The Low Carbon Communities Challenge has funding available of up to £500,000 for local authorities, charities and social enterprises to help their communities fight climate change. Projects could range from a biomass plant to electric car charge points.

Biodiversity

SITAs Enriching Nature Programme has grants of up to £120,000 available to not-for-profit organisations. Projects must focus on a species or habitat that has been identified as a priority by the UK Biodiversity Action Planning Process. The funding will run until 2012 with 3 funding rounds each year. Projects must be within 10 miles of a landfill site.

Jamie Buckley (Engagement & Funding Officer)
☎ 01395 517569 (or Ext 2769)
jbuckley@eastdevon.gov.uk

In the press

The closed, costly world of the quango

Quangos give people little say in what they do and fail to provide value for money, according to research by the LGA. LGA chairman Margaret Eaton is quoted: "We need to make sure there is no unnecessary bureaucracy and that the vast array of different bodies providing public services do not waste money by duplicating the work others already carry out."

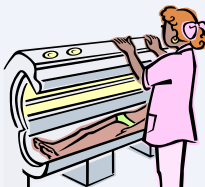
How boxing has fought its way back into our schools



There has been a sharp increase in the number of schools

which offer boxing as a sport, either directly or through links with local clubs. The number of schools with boxing on the curriculum has gone up in the last four years from 20 to 1,931 according to the latest national school sports survey. Boxing is credited with having improved both behaviour and academic achievement.

Sunbed risk to children



More than 250,000 children are risking skin cancer without a ban on under-18s using them. In Liverpool and Sunderland, more than 2 in 5 girls aged between 15 to 17 said they used a sunbed at least one a week.

New signs for 300 Cornish speakers

Street signs in Cornwall will be translated into the region's traditional language even though only 300 people speak it. Cornwall Council is quoted as saying the signs would only be replaced when they needed repairing.

Free-for-all warning on wind turbines



Wind turbines up to 50ft high could appear across the country without planning permission under controversial plans unveiled by ministers. The Government says it wants to cut the red tape and expense involved in generating energy from wind, and insists the new rules will come with strict conditions about noise, size and appearance.

▶ **Caring for elderly 'should be promoted as a career'**



Caring for the elderly should become a recognised profession

and be recommended to school leavers as a rewarding career, Dame Joan Bakewell will tell ministers. She is delivering her first annual report as the official Voice of Older People.

▶ **Free care so elderly can stay in own home**

Elderly people will receive free care to help them to stay in their own homes under plans that will form the heart of the Government's legislative agenda in the months ahead.

▶ **Funding fears over free care for the elderly**

Councils and charities have raised concerns over the effectiveness and cost of new plans to offer free care to the most needy. LGA social care spokesperson, Cllr David Rogers, is quoted: "There are many people currently self-funding their care who will inevitably wish to benefit from the proposal of free care. The LGA is concerned that the Government's estimates do not appear to have taken these people or those who have never applied before, into consideration".

▶ **Children get legal right to a good education**



Children will be guaranteed the legal right to a good education under new legislation that teachers fear will lead to a "whingers' charter". A new education bill, announced in the Queen's

Speech, will give parents the right to complain directly to the Local Government Ombudsman if schools and councils fail to meet these guarantees.

▶ **Green belt to be 'cut to ribbons'**

The Sunday Telegraph has identified 27 towns across the UK that have been chosen by the Department for Communities as areas where they want to build on green belt land.

▶ **Free wi-fi for town**



A town has unveiled plans to become the first in Britain to provide free wi-fi for all its residents. Swindon Council leader Rod Bluh is quoted: "Both residents and businesses can benefit."

▶ **Partnership working at local level key to protecting services**

Peter Hetherington interviews Chris Bull, Chief Executive of Herefordshire Council and Primary Care Trust, who explains that partnership working at a local level can help protect vital services during spending cuts.

▶ **Spaniel with nose for recycling wins award**



A dog that scours the streets for litter has been given an environmental award by North Lincolnshire Council for its services to the community.

▶ **Register for wife beaters**

The Association of Chief Police Officers has announced plans to help tackle the problem of domestic violence.

▶ **Newcastle named Britain's greenest city**



The country's most comprehensive sustainability audit has named Newcastle upon Tyne as the greenest city, above Bristol and Brighton and Hove. The Council's Liberal Democrat leader, John Shipley, picked out transport as one of the city's strengths: "The city has become the electric car capital in a Government-backed experiment, which will see 1,000 charging points installed in Newcastle and Gateshead over the next two years."

Attitudes to age in Britain

By Dominic Abrams, Tiina Eilola and Hannah Swift

The surveys carried out by the University of Kent on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions reveal a consensus that many people experience ageism and that ageism is a serious problem. Younger people experience ageism just as acutely as older people.

The widely held perception that people over 50 are likely to be 'written off' as old, highlights the need to ensure that the voices of older people are heard clearly at national, regional and local levels. It is necessary to create a dialogue about age related issues that involves and recognises the perspectives of people of all ages.

People categorise ages in different ways. By their mid-30s most respondents stopped describing themselves as young. By their mid-70s most started describing themselves as old. On average, respondents judged that 'youth' generally ends at 45 years of age, but 18 per cent said youth ends by the age of 30 and 11 per cent said it continues beyond the age of 50. On average, respondents judged that 'old age' starts at 63 years of age.

Attitudes to age can affect people of all ages, and involve people's views both of themselves and of others. These attitudes have important implications for individual well-being, for age equality and for social cohesion. Understanding attitudes to age is essential if we are to develop appropriate strategies for an ageing population.

The report can be downloaded from [the Department for Work and Pensions](#).



Production information

Democratic Services produces this weekly information sheet every Friday for Members of East Devon District Council. Please contact Diana Vernon if you have any comments about the newsletter. **If you wish to reproduce any of the images used in The Knowledge, please contact the editor who will seek permission from the contributor:** ☎ (01395) 517541 or Extension 2741. Email: dvernon@eastdevon.gov.uk

Submissions: If you have items that you wish to be included in the next issue, contact Democratic Services: ☎ (01395) 517542 or Extension 2742. Email: knowledge@eastdevon.gov.uk