

The Knowledge



Geoneedle at Orcombe Point, Exmouth
Photo: Tony Marfin

11 April 2008

The Sid Vale Association

The Sid Vale Association (SVA) is the oldest Civic Society in Britain!

The first meeting of the Sidmouth Improvement Committee took place in 1846. It was the earliest expression of concern to conserve the charm and attractiveness of Sidmouth and the Sid Valley. Later the SVA was registered as a charity "... for the Protection of the Beauties and Amenities of the Neighbourhood and to promote and aid its Cultural Development". Because of this foresight, (and the energies and activities of those who have followed), many who come and discover Sidmouth are able to value and appreciate what the SVA did; and are continuing to do.



To read more and find out how to join the SVA, visit their website: www.sidvaleassociation.org.uk



For one wealthy businessman, the time he spent in Sidmouth made such an impression that he has left his £1.5million fortune to the SVA.

John Keith Owen, who was born in Devon but later became a Canadian citizen, had hoped to retire to Sidmouth, which he felt was just how England used to be and exactly how it should be.

The capital bequeathed to the SVA can't be spent, but will provide an income of £60,000 a year for community projects. Mr Owen's hopes for the money included improving the local environment with the purchase of plants, trees and bulbs, encouraging local children to conserve the countryside and stimulating an interest in and awareness of the Sid Vale area with talks and events.

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Council Offices
Knowle
Sidmouth
Devon
EX10 8HL

www.eastdevon.gov.uk

Funding

Community Radio - Grants are available to cover core costs of running a community radio station within the UK. Priority is given to stations that have not received a grant



in the past. Applications are accepted from any community radio broadcaster already broadcasting under a community radio licence by the time the applications are considered. The minimum grant is £5,000 and there is no formal maximum level. However, the average grant is around £13,000. Deadline: 7 May. Application details are available on the website:

www.ofcom.org.uk

The Biffaward Flagship Scheme was re-launched on 1 March 2008 with a deadline for Expressions of Interest of 1 July 2008. The programme offers grants of between £150,000 and £500,000 to support unique and exciting projects which will make a significant impact at regional or national level. The following 2 priority themes are supported: Rebuilding biodiversity, Cultural facilities. Projects must be site-based, within 25 miles of a Biffa operation and within 10 miles of an active landfill, and the organisation making the application must be eligible to enrol with ENTRUST as an Environmental Body. Further details: <http://www.biffaward.org>

Local Food can fund a broad range of exciting projects and both capital and revenue costs can be applied for. Funding is available for not-for-profit groups and organisations in England delivering projects such as growing, processing, marketing and distributing local food; composting and raising awareness of the benefits of such activities. There are 3 levels of grants, Small - £2,000 to £10,000, Main - £10,001 to £300,000 and Beacon - £300,001 to £500,000. Here are a few ideas of what projects might be funded: Allotments, Box schemes, Catering (cafés or



subsidised meals), Celebrating food cultures, City farms, Community food growing projects, Community gardens, Community land management or Permaculture design, Community seed exchanges, Community supported agriculture,

Composting, Education & learning (food related), Farmers' markets, Food co-operatives, Redistribution of food, School grounds (educational & practical and related to food), Sharing best practice, information, Dissemination and networking. To determine eligibility visit the website and complete the eligibility questionnaire:

www.localfoodgrants.org

Potato Club news

For those of you that don't know ... the Potato Club members, by rota, undertake to provide and cook jacket potatoes, with a variety of fillings, every Thursday for approximately 25 members of the Planning Department staff. The preparation of the fillings are undertaken in the staff's own time, with final cooking and serving being completed in their lunchtime.

A donation of £200 has been made by the Potato Club to the 'Open Door Centre' in Exmouth. Their



mission statement is: "To make a positive difference in our community; to offer resources and support to individuals, promote hope for change, and help to improve life opportunities. Our services are free, independent and confidential."

For more information please see their web site: www.opendoorexmouth.org.uk

Dave Collings & Ollie Moore (Planning Department)

Green Page



Transition towns

For those who regularly tune into the Archers on the radio, you may already have heard of "Transition Town Totnes".

Here in the UK, a growing number of communities are looking towards the energy descent planning work that began in Kinsale in Ireland. Totnes is the UK's first Transition Initiative, that is, a community in the process of imagining and creating a future that addresses the twin challenges of diminishing oil and gas supplies and climate change, and creates the kind of community that we would all want to be part of. Transition Town Totnes (TTT) believes that only by involving all of us - residents, businesses, public bodies, community organisations and schools - will we come up with the most innovative, effective and practical ideas, and have the energy and skills to carry them out. Their website, www.totnes.transitionnetwork.org, is full of inspiring and positive steps being taken by the town.

Over 40 towns have now officially joined the Transition Initiative, with Ottery St Mary and Seaton being official Transition Towns, here in East Devon. A full list can be found on the Transition Town website, www.transitiontowns.org

Also featured on the site are those towns currently "mulling over" the Initiative. Dunkeswell and

Sidmouth both mulling.

The website site provides a focal point for all interested towns, villages, cities and localities around the world as they implement their own Transition Initiative. Some groups are using this site as their main website for organising, recording progress and communicating with their own community, whilst others have their own site which is linked in.

For those who are interested in starting up their own Transition Initiative or would like to find out more information take a look at the [Transition Network](#) link on the website for help and advice. They aim to inspire, encourage, network, support and train communities as they consider, adopt and implement a Transition Initiative. Currently they are building a range of materials, training courses, events, tools & techniques, resources and a general support capability to help these communities.

It is believed that if we can collectively plan and act early enough there's every likelihood that we can create a way of living that is significantly more connected, more vibrant and more in touch with our environment than the oil addicted treadmill that we find ourselves on today.

Sustainable Ottery

Sustainable Ottery is a group of local people working to create a sustainable community, a greener, healthier, more connected place to live, much less dependent on resources and solutions from 'out there'. Since February 2008 they have grown from 3 people to a core group of 16 and a mailing list of over 150. The group has held film screenings, a Green Family Day and successfully lobbied the council to adopt the Feniton to Sidmouth cycle path in its local plan.

Steering Group Meetings – Third Thursday of every month. United Reform Church Hall, Yonder Street, 7.30 pm. Everyone welcome.

Green drinks – First Thursday of every month. An informal opportunity to exchange ideas and put the worlds to rights from 8pm at Ottery Indian Cuisine, 5 Cornhill.

For more information
email: info@sustainableottery.org.uk
or visit: www.sustainableottery.org.uk

Sustainable Seaton

Sustainable Seaton is a core group established to look at ways of building resilience into Seaton. Inspired by the Transition movement, they are working on a plan to lead Seaton towards a sustainable future for the town and its population.

Meetings held every third Wednesday of the month for informal discussions and plan making.
3 Meadow Road, Seaton, 7.00 pm – 9.00pm.
Everyone welcome.

For more information
email: administrator@sustainableseaton.com
or visit: www.sustainableseaton.com



3 cheers for the Planners!

The systems thinking review of the Planning Service is progressing well. The good news is, the planning check team has been doing a sterling job on the first 'check' phase of the review (where we gather the facts and get knowledge about what matters to customers). The team is now into redesigning the service based on the newly acquired knowledge about our current capability to meet demand and what matters to the customer. A big thanks to them for their dedication, enthusiasm and hard work, and also, of course, to the rest of the service who continue to keep the show on the road until we're clear about how the new service will operate.

Say yes to good development

The Planners have clearly identified that their purpose is to 'Say yes to good development' and the first application went much quicker through the new, experimental process. It's early yet to say we can repeat this streamlining for all applications, but Kate Little, the Head of Service, is confident that we will be delivering a radically better service to our customers in the future. Her view is that 'We have learned a great deal through this exercise and believe that we are much better placed now to design a system that meets the needs of our customer - the planning applicant - and deliver a quicker, more personal service.'

Benefits team go for it!

We've also got going on the Benefits review, and will have completed our fact finding bit of the review in just a few more weeks. Want to know more? A session on progress so far and how we are designing our services around what matters to our customers and next steps will be open to all members and staff. Details to be confirmed soon.

Denise Lyon - Corporate Director (and Deputy Chief Executive)
Tel: 01395 517480 (or Ext 2680) Email: dlyon@eastdevon.gov.uk

Forthcoming meetings

Meeting	Officer Contact	Date	Time	Location
Licensing & Enforcement Sub Committee	Christopher Holland	Monday 14 April	9.30am	Council Chamber
Planning Review Task and Finish Forum	Christopher Holland	Wednesday 16 April	4.00pm	Room 1
COUNCIL	Diana Vernon	Wednesday 16 April	6.30pm	Council Chamber
Planning Inspections Committee	Christopher Holland	Friday 18 April	4.15pm	Council Chamber
Licensing & Enforcement Sub Committee	Chris Lane	Monday 21 April	9.30am	Council Chamber
Corporate Overview Committee	Chris Lane	Thursday 24 April	6.30pm	Council Chamber

Would Councillors please pass their apologies to Democratic Services whenever they are unable to attend a meeting so that post can be sent or withheld as appropriate. **Please check your pigeon holes for any post whenever you visit the offices.**

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).

To view agendas and minutes on the Council's website, click [here](#).

Click [here](#) to view planning applications online.

Click [here](#) to view new applications received relating to the Licensing Act 2003.

Diana Vernon 01395 517541	Christopher Holland 01395 517543	Hannah Jarvis 01395 517542	Chris Lane 01395 517544	Debbie Meakin 01395 517540	Rachel Perram 01395 517542
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Newly elected Councillor

Due to the recent resignation of Mrs Boote, a By Election was held on 3 April for the District Ward of Dunkeswell (Parishes of Combe Raleigh, Dunkeswell and Sheldon). The details of the newly elected Councillor are:

Councillor Bob J Buxton (Conservative)
Courtmoor Farm, Upottery, Honiton EX14 9QA. Tel: 01404 861481

http://www.eastdevon.gov.uk/councillor_profile



Chairman's engagements

Wednesday 16 April

Chairman hosting a reception and then presenting Long Service Awards to staff at Full Council

Thursday 17 April

Chairman attending a tour of the Norman Lockyer Observatory

New documents in the Members' Area

- **Looking ahead 2008 – 2012** – This booklet contains Devon & Cornwall Housing Trust's plans for the next 5 years. This is the first time they have brought together the plans of the new Devon & Cornwall Housing group, including Tor Homes, Penwith Housing Association, Devon & Cornwall Housing Association and their subsidiaries.
- **Invitation to Chairman's Evening** – Exmouth Musical Theatre Company invite members of the Council to the Chairman's Evening of their production of South Pacific at 6.45pm for 7.30pm on Friday 6 June at Exmouth Pavilion. Ticket prices and further details are available in the Members' Area.
- **Countryside Alliance** - A letter has been received from the Countryside Alliance regarding the number of houses planned on flood plains and areas of high flood risk. Having collated the responses from local authorities, they highlight the following:



In the areas covered by the 209 local authorities who responded, 135,688 of the 2,106,449 houses planned for construction are due to be built in areas of high flood risk. This represents 6% of new houses planned or 4 towns the size of Tewkesbury. 56 of the 209 local authorities who responded stated that they were unable to ascertain whether new houses were planned for development on flood plains or land at high risk of flooding.

If you would like to read further information, including the Countryside Alliance's response to this information, their letter can be found in the Members' Area. If you would like further details directly from the Alliance, contact Sarah Lee, who collated the data: sarah-lee@countryside-alliance.org

- **Sid Vale Association** – The Annual Report for 2007 is now available in the Members' Area.

Feedback from outside bodies

- **Health and Adults' Services Overview/Scrutiny Committee** – We now have the minutes of this committee meeting held at County Hall on 13 March.

The above document is in the 'Feedback from Outside Bodies' file on the bookcase in the Members' Area for your information.

Local Action for Rural Communities (LARC) Meetings



East Devon Business Centre Honiton
18 April 10am – 12.30pm or

Buckland St Mary Village Hall
21 April – 6.30pm – 9pm

LARC aims to "help rural communities to diversify and strengthen their local economy, and improve the quality of life for people living in those communities". LARC follows on from the LEADER+ funding that has been running in the Blackdown Hills area, which helped fund things related to Local Products.

Two meetings are being held this month (dates above) that will explain more about the new LARC programme and help gather local project ideas and support for development of a funding bid for LARC in Blackdown Hills and East Devon. This is being prepared by the Blackdown Hills and East Devon AONB areas to run from 2008-2013. Good local support is needed to make the bid successful.

LARC could help local economy and community by funding things like:

- ❑ feasibility studies, start-up and revenue costs
- ❑ marketing support
- ❑ training
- ❑ small-scale capital investments
- ❑ costs of working with other organisations
- ❑ technical support to help new businesses*
- ❑ technical support to help existing businesses* to improve the quality of their services, consolidate and expand.

*Note: "businesses" in LARC context includes farmers, artists and crafts people, food producers, social enterprises and voluntary/community groups.

At the meetings you will be able to exchange ideas about the exciting opportunities which a successful bid could bring to local communities. Refreshments will be provided. Please indicate whether you will attend: Telephone 01392 421869 or email hannah@hannahreynoldsassociates.com

If you are unable to attend, but would like more information, or to complete a project ideas form, please contact Jenny Archard tel 01823 680626, or to complete a quick survey about an idea you may have for a project that could fit into the LARC bid, go to: <http://tinyurl.com/638guy>

www.blackdown-hills.net www.eastdevonaonb.org.uk

Napoli update



The Maritime and Coastguard Agency has released the following information:

This week the operation will start on the removal of the final stern section of the MSC Napoli. Contractors will use cutting charges to remove the propeller, rudder and to cut the main drive shaft. The explosives in these cutting charges will be a fraction of what was previously used to separate the stern from the rest of the ship. Once this preparatory work has been completed, at-sea equipment including accommodation, working and scrap barges, a crane and cutting machine will be mobilized to the site at Branscombe at the end of April.

Contingency plans are in place to minimise any environmental impact that the operation may have. There will be an at-sea exclusion zone of 1,500 metres which will extend as far as the high water mark on shore. Clean-up contractors will be in place throughout the 5 month removal operation.

Once the stern section is removed, full underwater surveys of the site will take place under the direction of the salvors to check that the seabed is clear of any debris.

Hugh Shaw, Secretary of State's Representative for Maritime Salvage and Intervention said: "This is the final phase of the salvage operation of the stern of the MSC Napoli. The owners have contractors in place to deal quickly with any debris that may come ashore. The contractors are working closely with East Devon District Council to keep beaches and coastal areas open."

Rural Services Network (RSN)

Here are the latest news items from the [Rural Services Network](#):

Warning over state of the countryside

Vast tracts of countryside are unable to cope with environmental pressures, the government's landscape agency has warned. Much of the countryside is deteriorating, according to early indications from a State of the Natural Environment report due to be published by Natural England. www.rsnonline.org.uk



Councils need more support for housing

Local authorities have called for more resources to deliver rural affordable housing that meets local needs.

www.rsnonline.org.uk

Note: Members of the Rural Services Network (which includes Councillors and Council staff) can gain free and full access to RSN Online by registering at <http://tinyurl.com/2y7ssp>

News from the IDeA (Improvement and Development Agency)

Implementing NICE guidance

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) is planning 2 workshops to discuss the challenges of implementing its guidance in local authorities. Workshop events are being held in Manchester and London during May. www.idea.gov.uk

Food Futures

For many people, securing access to fresh, reasonably priced food is not an easy task. Manchester City Council has developed an innovative scheme to enable the local population to choose a healthy diet. www.idea.gov.uk



Local Area Agreements (LAAs): 'Partnerships and Places Library'

For evidence of best practice, including case studies, overviews – giving context and background to the issues – and different approaches for dealing with the emerging priorities, visit the new 'Partnerships and Places Library'. This resource is searchable by national indicator or theme. www.idea.gov.uk



Knowledge management: new resource

The IDeA believes that local government has within it the knowledge and experience it needs to improve. Knowledge management can help to reveal and share this knowledge among those who need it most. Discover 10 techniques to help your authority find, use, create, manage and share knowledge. www.idea.gov.uk



In the press

Youngsters asked to rate play areas



Young people are going to be asked to rate their local play facilities, with the results recorded in a national league table. The project could see councils being set improvement targets on satisfaction ratings. [Telegraph](#)

Blairs warns of 'social apartheid'

Communities Secretary Hazel Blairs has warned against the development of "social apartheid" in the UK, with rich and poor and members of different ethnic groups living in separate areas. *Independent* – 4 April 2008

Councils cut free vermin control



Britain could be overrun with rats because councils are now charging people for their pest control services. A Local

Government Association (LGA) spokesman told the *Daily Mail* that council vermin control services were still cheaper than the private sector. [Mail](#)

A million more names added to electoral register

Following the introduction of the Electoral Administration Act around one million names have been added to the electoral register in just two years. A record 46 million people will be able to vote in local elections on May 1. [Telegraph](#)



Booze seized from teenagers

Around 45,000 pints of alcohol were seized from young people following the first national crackdown on teenage street drinking. Police from over 30 forces and council trading standards officers were involved in joint operations over the February half-term holiday. [Telegraph](#)

First free Lands End to John O'Groats bus journey completed

Richard Elloway, 61, has become the first person to travel from Lands End to John O'Groats for free on local buses - a record that became possible with the introduction of the national bus pass scheme on 1 April. [Times](#)

Noise is biggest nuisance

One million Britons find the biggest nuisance in their lives to be noisy neighbours. [Express](#)

Litterbugs cost councils dear



Britain is losing the battle against litter despite councils spending £600million a year to clean up the country. Paul Bettison, LGA Environment Chairman, said that this money could be better spent on

other services if people stopped dropping litter. [Telegraph](#)

Some Post Offices to be replaced by 'Outreach' counters

Hundreds more postal 'outreach' outlets will be opened in libraries, churches and pubs to quell the fury over Post Office closures. Critics condemned the so-called 'Post Office Lite' counters, saying that nothing can replace a proper local post office. Sir Simon Milton, chairman of the LGA, is quoted: "It is a huge step in the right direction as for some time councils have been putting forward proposals to save some of their local branches. Many councils who have been trying to find innovative options have often been met with unhelpful stonewalling."

[Daily Mail](#)

Stray dogs warning



Councils in England and Wales have sole responsibility for dealing with stray dogs. Charities have warned that this could mean some dogs will be left to roam free as councils will be closed at the weekend. [Times](#)

Couple seek damages over smoking ban

A couple are suing their village pub for £50,000 because they claim the smoking ban has made their home unsaleable. An unused yard on the couple's doorstep was converted into a smoking area when the ban came into force last July. The only access to their flat is through the yard. [Mail](#)



In the press (continued)

Flood victims ask for help



The Environment Agency has faced increased calls from victims to help prevent a repeat of last summer's catastrophic flooding. The Agency has been criticised by the Commons Public Accounts Committee for not dramatically increasing local flood prevention projects despite a 40% increase in investment. [Express](#)

£130 million of council tax is written off

More than £130m of unpaid council tax was written off by English councils last year, it has been confirmed. Authorities gave up chasing a total of £133,755,000 in 2007. Haringey Council wrote off £6.4m, the largest amount by a single council, as part of £49.2m which went uncollected across London. The LGA said that the 97 per cent collection rate of council tax is the highest of any in the UK. [BBC News](#)

Chairman's Civic Day on 8 April

Midweek Herald on Chairman's Civic Day:

Civic Leaders from Devon and Somerset attended a Civic Day in Honiton hosted by East Devon District Council's Chairman, Councillor Paul Diviani.

Civic Days are held annually by each of the local authorities in Devon, giving the Chairmen an opportunity to demonstrate the positive economic and community aspects of their district, to share examples of best practice and promote improved partnership working.

Guests attended a church service at St Paul's Church in Honiton, before moving on to visit Honiton Museum, the Street Market and the EDDC's Thelma Hulbert Gallery. Following lunch at the Deer Park Hotel in Weston, guests were taken by coach to Dunkeswell Eco Business Park, which provides low-cost and eco-friendly business units for new and growing businesses in the Blackdown Hills.



You can access press items by going onto the secure Members' web page of EDDC's website and clicking on the 'In the Press' link. This is updated every Saturday.

Please note that the Express & Echo web site for press coverage is: www.thisisexeter.co.uk

For Western Morning News stories the web site is: www.thisisdevon.co.uk

For Archant news stories the web site is www.devon24.co.uk

Production Information

The Democratic Services team 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.**

Telephone: (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, please contact Democratic Services.

Telephone: (01395) 517542 or Extension 2746. Email: knowledge@eastdevon.gov.uk