

The Knowledge



Axmouth around the start of the 20th century

13 June 2008

Beavers return to Devon

Beavers were once an indigenous species in the UK but were driven to extinction by hunting centuries ago. Now, as part of a carefully monitored UK-wide experiment, a pair of beavers has set up home in the ponds at Escot Park. Obviously delighted with their new West Country quarters they have set about making a house a home by adding the ultimate must-have feature in every beaver habitat – a dam! Such signs of domestic bliss might well be followed by what – the patter of tiny webbed feet?



Bringing back the European beaver to the UK, and to the South West in particular, is a conservation cause that Escot's John-Michael Kennaway has embraced with enthusiasm. The River Tale runs through the heart of the Escot Estate and its valley is already the site of some important and exciting conservation programmes. These include the restoration of the valley's water meadows and the re-

introduction to the area of the endangered water vole. A two acre enclosure has been created encircling ponds, woodland and a section of stream within Escot Park, to home a pair of unrelated wild caught Bavarian beavers, born in the Spring of 2006.

Beavers are nocturnal and therefore their activities are not open to public view during the day. However, individuals and small groups can beaver-watch in the evenings, but only by appointment. You can also sponsor the beavers and receive updates on their progress. If you would like to book a visit, or sponsor the beavers and follow their progress, please contact Escot on 01404 822188 or email info@escot-devon.co.uk

www.escot-devon.co.uk

This week in The Knowledge

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Green Page



Why buy local produce?



The food and drink we buy has a massive impact on the world around us. From the carbon created by transporting goods half way round the world, to the working conditions of farmers, what we consume has a huge affect on the state of the environment.

Supporting local food is good for us and the communities we live in, but doesn't mean giving up the morning cup of tea or coffee. Simply buying a few more items of local food is a great start.

There are a lot of good reasons to buy goods that have been produced locally including:

It supports your local economy

- ❑ Small scale producers are often struggling to compete with large supermarkets chains
- ❑ Local produce can directly support local businesses, local employment and keep money in the local economy
- ❑ Personal contact with a local producer – understanding of how something is grown or processed

Reducing food miles

- ❑ 'Food miles' – the distance food has travelled from where it is produced to where it is purchased and onto where it is consumed
- ❑ 13% of the UK's total fuel consumption goes on packaging and transporting food

Supporting traditional crafts

- ❑ Buying locally produced timber such as fence materials ensures you help maintain our landscape and don't destroy someone else's

www.ruralways.org.uk

Environmental Benefits



- ❑ Local food production ensures that local land is put to good use
- ❑ Local land is maintained to a high standard, which in turn increases environmental quality and attracts visitors to the countryside

Reducing Packaging

- ❑ Vast quantities of packaging are used to protect produce when it is being transported long distances
- ❑ Local produce generally has a minimal amount of packaging which cuts down on the use of valuable natural resources

Social Importance

- ❑ Buying locally encourages links between local land owners and the communities they are in
- ❑ It increases social connections between urban and rural communities

Useful websites

Soil Association – Information on why we should buy locally, news & events, library, networks in your area, where to buy local food, community supported agriculture (CSA), and also funding for local initiatives. www.soilassociation.org

Visit an organic farm and find out first hand about a farming system that works in harmony with nature. For details:

www.soilassociation.org/farmvisits

Big Barn – The Virtual Farmer's Market. Find your local food producers. <http://www.bigbarn.co.uk>



www.pickyourown.info – it doesn't get fresher than straight from the field! Find out what is currently in season and your nearest pick-your-own farm.

NFU Countryside has launched a campaign to support local food producers. www.countrysideonline.co.uk

Cash boost for biomass fuel for heat and electricity generation



Farmers, foresters and biomass producers can apply for up to £200,000 each under a new round of grants. The Bio-energy Infrastructure Scheme will support the biomass industry in England by helping those supplying biomass fuel for use in heat and electricity generation.

Environment Minister Phil Woolas said:

"We have to rethink our energy mix. We know biomass has the potential to considerably reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and cut our carbon emissions. UK producers are setting the standard and have shown production can be sustainable and our investment will support their commitment to this emerging industry. The fund will inject cash at the point of production. By investing in the biomass industry we are helping farmers, foresters and other producers to diversify and become part of the environmental industry sector which is currently worth more than £25bn and growing."

All projects must be based in England and must supply the biomass to end-users in Great Britain. Grants are available for up to a maximum of £200,000 per producer group or business. The deadline for applications is 5 August for applications from businesses and 5 September from producer groups.

www.defra.gov.uk

Rural Services Network (RSN)

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

£28m rural fund deluged with applications



Applicants have swamped a £28m community fund to improve rural life in south-west England. Some 19 partnerships seeking funds for their towns and villages have submitted bids to the South West Local Action fund

for rural communities. In total, almost £60million is being sought by the groups – more than twice the £28 million of available funding.

www.rsnonline.org.uk

Bus reforms 'will hit rural residents hardest'



Plans to reform fuel tax rules could lead to the withdrawal of rural bus routes, the Government has been told. Rural residents could lose vital bus services if the proposals to reform fuel duty

rules worth £400m a year to transport operators go ahead.

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>

Chairman's engagements

Thursday 19 June

Morning - Chairman being introduced to Brigadier Dunham of the Royal Marines here at Knowle

Noon - Mike Rotchell's retirement presentation

Saturday 21 June

Afternoon - Attending the High Sheriff of Devon's (Lord and Lady Clifford of Chudleigh) Garden Party at Ugbrooke House

Evening - Opening of Payhembury Parish Hall

Funding

Grants for the arts



Seminars are available in Taunton (12 September), Salisbury (13 November) and Truro (27 June) on applying to the Arts Council England, South West. If you are considering making an application to Grants for the arts, this seminar will help you decide whether you can make a strong enough case against the criteria of the fund, and if so, give you the confidence to ensure

that you are able to submit the strongest possible application. It is essential that you obtain a copy of the application pack and read the guidelines before the seminar. The seminars are free, but you will need to register in advance in order to secure a place. Call Clare Bromley on 01392 229271 or email clare.bromley@artscouncil.org.uk For more information: www.artscouncil.org.uk

Wildlife Funding

Natural England has grants of between £25,000 and £250,000 available to support wildlife recovery. The Countdown 2010 Biodiversity Action Fund (BAF) will support projects carried out by voluntary conservation organisations that directly contribute to the conservation of UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitats and species in England. Grants are available for a maximum of 3 years, and for up to a maximum of 50% of total project costs in each of the 3 years. The submission deadline is 18 July 2008. For more information: www.naturalengland.org.uk

Jamie Buckley (Engagement & Funding Officer), Tel: 01395 517569 (or Ext 2769) Email: jbuckley@eastdevon.gov.uk

Makes homes warmer



Warm Front have grants of up to £2,700 available to households to help make homes warmer, healthier and more energy efficient. Warm Front Grants are for people who receive certain benefits and own their home or rent it from a private landlord. The scheme has already helped over 1.7 million households. The package of energy efficiency measures will reduce fuel bills, and also check that households are receiving all the benefits they are entitled to. More details on: www.eaga.com or phone 0800 316 6011.

Community Churches



The Church and Community Fund (CCF) has grants of up to £15,000 available for projects that take churches out into the community and strengthen the relationship between the church and community. Projects supported by the CCF may include: employing a youth worker, renovating an old church hall for use as a community centre or providing hot meals for the homeless in a church room. The projects must be run by parish churches, deaneries, dioceses and other bodies connected to or working in partnership with the Church of England. Applications are considered at quarterly trustees' meetings - the next deadline is 13 August. For more information phone 02078981767: or visit the website: www.centralchurchfund.org.uk

Obituary

The Council learnt this week, of the sad news that Honorary Alderman Bill Thorne passed away on Monday 9 June 2008.

Honorary Alderman Thorne, born 15 May 1924, gave many years service to Local Government at all levels. He was a Member of Honiton Rural District Council from 1966 to 1974, a County Councillor from 1974 to 1993 and a Member of East Devon District Council from 1980 until 1999. At EDDC he held many Chairmanships and positions of responsibility including Deputy Leader. He was also Chairman of the District Council from 1990 to 1992.

A Funeral Service will be held on at Talaton Parish Church on Friday 20 June at 2.00 pm followed by burial in the church yard. Family flowers only. Donations will be taken in aid of Ottery St. Mary Hospital League of Friends.

For further information contact Christopher Holland 01395 517543.

Forthcoming meetings

Meeting	Officer Contact	Date	Time	Location
Licensing & Enforcement Sub Committee	Chris Lane	Monday 16 June	9.30am	CANCELLED
New Growth Point Sub Committee	Christopher Holland	Wednesday 18 June	2.00pm	CANCELLED
Licensing & Enforcement Sub Committee	Chris Lane	Monday 23 June	9.30am	Council Chamber
Recycling and Refuse Partnership Board	Rachel Perram	Monday 23 June	10.00am	Committee Room
Referrals and Hearings Sub Committee	Christopher Holland	Tuesday 24 June	10.00am	CANCELLED
Beach Concessions TaFF	Chris Lane	Tuesday 24 June	2.15 pm	Committee Room
Local Development Framework Sub Committee	Christopher Holland	Wednesday 25 June	2.00pm	CANCELLED
Executive Board	Diana Vernon	Wednesday 25 June	5.30pm	Council Chamber
Audit & Corporate Governance Committee	Christopher Holland	Thursday 26 June	4.30pm	Committee Room
Corporate Overview Committee	Chris Lane	Thursday 26 June	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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New documents in the Members' Area

- ❑ **Honiton Town Council** – Agenda for the meeting of the Town Management Advisory Committee on Monday 16 June at 2.15pm.
- ❑ **South West of England Regional Development Agency** – Letter indicating the anticipated changes to the Agency. The Corporate Plan sets out the Agency's ambitions and plans for 2008-2011 and this can be downloaded [here](#).

Feedback from outside bodies

- ❑ **Blackdown Hills** Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Annual Review 2007/08

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

East Devon beach wins Quality Coast Award

Exmouth seafront has won a prestigious Quality Coast Award at its first attempt. The Awards are given in recognition of coastal areas that achieve the very highest standards. For a beach to gain the Quality Coast Award, it must meet a strict criteria of recommendations and the beach manager must look to continually develop the beach over a 3 year period. An independent panel of judges look at beach cleaning, litter bins, beach furniture, lifeguards, first aid, public toilets and fresh water as well as bathing water quality, signage and car parks amongst other things.



EDDC's Beach Safety Officer Andy Phillips prepared this first submission for Exmouth, highlighting not only the good work that the beach cleansing staff do but giving details of management structures in place for the day to day running of the seafront. The Council's aim, at all times, is to provide a safe, clean and fun environment for all visitors and locals.

Councillor Graham Liverton, Portfolio Holder responsible for Environment said: "A lot of time and effort has been spent in gaining this Award and I am very proud of what everyone has achieved, particularly the way in which the beach cleaning staff have taken up the challenge. Exmouth is a beautiful seafront family resort and has prided itself on its clean beach, but staff have had to go that little bit further to ensure we had a good chance of winning this Award. Now residents and visitors can enjoy Exmouth's many facilities, safe in the knowledge that the beach has been recognised as one of the best coastal resorts in the country."

Photo: Sarah Staddon

Springwatch comes to the Blackdowns with special wildlife event



Local people can find out about the fascinating wildlife on their doorstep with a special free Springwatch event. As the whole country gets hooked on wildlife during the BBC's Springwatch, this is a chance to take a closer look at what is going on in the Blackdown Hills. Children and adults will be able to spend an afternoon at Blackdown and Sampford Commons near Hemyock, exploring nature and finding out what happens at this time of year.

As the weather warms up, the natural world bursts with life. Simon Goodson from Devon Wildlife Trust will be on hand to help spot birds, insects, animals and plants at this Site of Special Scientific Interest. There will be fun wildlife activities for kids as well as a longer walk for those who want to explore further.

The Blackdown Hills AONB and Devon Wildlife Trust are teaming up to organise the event, which takes place on **Saturday 21 June** from **12.30pm**.

Katherine Findlay from the Blackdown Hills AONB said: "This is a lovely site with spectacular views, and it's a great place for wildlife. We want people to really enjoy the afternoon outdoors and get everyone in the family excited about nature."

Booking is essential for Springwatch in the Blackdown Hills. To book your place, call the AONB office on 01823 680682.

Lessons from outsourcing

Over the last decade in England, local government has outsourced major parts of adult social care. This new report offers a set of 'messages' for other parts of local government on how they might manage workforce issues positively if and when they consider outsourcing. www.idea.gov.uk

'Progress and next steps' to tackle health inequalities



Health Secretary Alan Johnson has announced that £34 million will be spent to fund programmes relating to health inequalities in England. In a speech this week he launched a document entitled 'Progress and Next Steps' which addresses the effect of the NHS on health inequalities in the last 60 years. www.idea.gov.uk

Making homes affordable



If the current gloomy predictions for the housing market become a reality, local authorities may have to explore different housing options. This case study looks at what Kent County Council is doing to bring empty properties back into use as affordable homes. www.idea.gov.uk

Local government analysis and research - the latest

The May edition of the Local Government Association (LGA) Analysis and Research Bulletin is now available. This month's bulletin features reports on youth homelessness in the UK, food waste, the role of authorities in reducing re-offending, and public attitudes to congestion and road pricing. www.lgar.local.gov.uk

In the press

Free swimming for all by 2012



Free swimming for all by 2012 has been promised by the Culture Secretary Andy Burnham, aimed at making Britain healthier and more successful in sport. Charges at council-run swimming pools are to be scrapped, initially for over 60s and under 16s. [Times](http://www.times.co.uk)

Drivers demanding a referendum on Manchester congestion charge

A scheme to introduce a congestion charge in Greater Manchester which was announced in the Commons by Ruth Kelly has hit opposition after it was revealed that this will be the largest congestion charge zone in the world. Businesses in the area are demanding a local referendum on the scheme, which has the support of seven of Greater Manchester's ten councils. It is expected to be launched in 5 years' time. [Guardian](http://www.guardian.co.uk)

Only 5 eco towns could get green light



Only 5 eco-towns may be built as opposition grows against the settlements, a Government minister admitted. [Telegraph](http://www.telegraph.co.uk)

UK bleak place for children

The UK has been condemned as a bleak country for the young to grow up in. The 4 Children's Commissioners from England, Scotland, Wales & Northern Ireland have issued a report to the UN condemning the demonisation of young people and the punitive youth justice system. [Times](http://www.times.co.uk)

Call to simplify social care



The Local Government Association (LGA) has urged the Government to simplify the social care system in the upcoming Green Paper to ensure that elderly and disabled people are not denied care. The call comes as a survey of eligibility criteria shows that around three out of four councils are no longer able to provide lower level care. David Rogers, Chairman of the LGA's Community Wellbeing board, is quoted: "The complex system for getting care and support is in desperate need of simplification to make sure that people don't miss out simply because they end up confused and bewildered by the process." [Telegraph](http://www.telegraph.co.uk)

Blue badge fraud is rife MPs are told



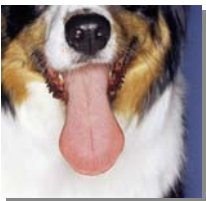
Blue badges issued to disabled drivers are selling for up to £5,000 a time on the black market, according to the disabled transport advisory committee.

[Telegraph](#)

Up to 1 in 3 shops still selling knives to children

Test purchases carried out by council trading standards officers near Manchester found that 1 in 3 shops were flouting the ban. Six out of the 18 shops visited sold blades to 15-year-old children, who were assisting trading standard officers in the crackdown. Hazel Harding, chairman of the Safer Communities Board of the Local Government Association, said: "Councils across the country are uncovering some frightening abuses of the law. It's vital that retailers do all they can to prevent underage sales." [Telegraph](#)

Dogs banned from B&B kitchens



Bed and Breakfast establishments will have to ban the family dog from kitchen areas under new health and safety guidance from the EU. An environmental health officer

from West Dorset District Council said that a farmhouse kitchen is classed as 'high risk' and that it was right that dogs should be banned from them. [Telegraph](#)

Increase in child poverty

The number children living in poverty is growing despite government pledges to cut figures. An extra 100,000 children and 200,000 pensioners are now classified as 'poor'. [Guardian](#)

Children still being failed by councils says Ofsted

Children are being failed by councils which are struggling to tackle levels of teenage pregnancy, substance abuse and obesity, according to the Government's watchdog. An Ofsted report found that fewer local authorities are offering a good service in terms of health, education and social care than a year ago. More than one in five town halls only provides an "adequate" level of care for children in key areas set out by the Government. [Telegraph](#)



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

Please note that links to some websites will only work correctly if you have Adobe PDF Reader Version 7 or 8 on your computer. You can download this free from the Adobe website:

<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readmain.html>

If you require further assistance please contact Democratic Services on 01395 517546.

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.**

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Submissions: If you have items that you wish to be included in the next issue, please contact Democratic Services.

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