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Bringing community news across southern Exmoor since 1985

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July/August 2020

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**Exmoor News
celebrates its
32nd anniversary**
See page 3



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Dulverton: Co-Op, R & N Fruit and Veg, Chemist, Butchers, The Tantivy, The Exclusive Cake Co and Post Office. **Exebridge:** the Anchor. **Bampton:** Fruit and Veg, Butchers, Chemist, Bampton Game. **Brompton Regis:** Brompton Regis Shop. **Exford:** Exford White Horse, Farmers Den. **Wheddon Cross:** Garage. **Anstey:** Village Hall. **Wiveliscombe:** Garage. Amanda for the **Dulverton Volunteers** and Ceri for the **Brushford** magazines outside The Old Stores.

We live in a beautiful part of the world where the community spirit is strong. So many people have gone the extra mile to help others in need, from Suzanne and her team in Anstey stitching bags for scrubs (see page 9) to Amanda and the team of volunteers organising help and food banks, fundraising walks and more (see page 53).

And there were so many more people ... we thank you.

Best wishes, Ceri Keene and Claire Savill

E: exmoornews@gmail.com T: 07497 914441 W: www.exmoornews.co.uk

Post: The Old Stores, Brushford, Dulverton, Somerset, TA22 9AH

We take our responsibility to maintain high editorial standards seriously.

Should an error occur please do not hesitate to contact us.



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The deadline for the September/October issue of the Exmoor News is

Thursday 6th August 2020

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Exmoor News celebrates its 32nd anniversary

- the roller coaster history of Exmoor News

For many years, up to 1988, the Benefices of the Southern Exmoor area all contributed to a shared Parish Magazine. This was a great way of sharing news and information about forthcoming events, such as fetes, jumble sales, whist drives, etc. However, in 1988, they decided to part company and go their separate ways. I believe the reason was because some of the vicars were failing to meet the deadline!

I worked as Community Education Manager at Dulverton Middle School, and had used the joint Parish Magazine to advertise all the community events we were organising, from numerous Adult Education classes, holiday playscheme activities, community use of the school and much more. So I decided to create the bi-monthly Exmoor News and the first issue was published for July/ August 1988.

In those days, we used our first computer and printer which did not provide us with much scope for great quality! We had no Clip Art but I used books of artwork to cut out and paste to make the articles more appealing! I then had to take the hard copies of all pages to the printer in Taunton, and then collect 2,500 copies from them a few days later, organise them into boxes for delivery across Exmoor. I vividly remember one trip to Exford in ever deepening snow and wondered if I would get home safely. The Parish Magazine volunteer delivery people all continued to help with the circulation of Exmoor News, whilst pupils at the school carried our door-to-door delivery in Dulverton.

The vicar in Winsford had a few reservations about placing Exmoor News inside their Parish Magazine and I had to have some of the issues published without the front cover and then join the group who collated their magazine to staple Exmoor News into the middle. At first, I thought it would be a challenge to give up a couple of hours every other month to join them but I soon looked forward to my visits – an escape from the busy office and the chance to catch

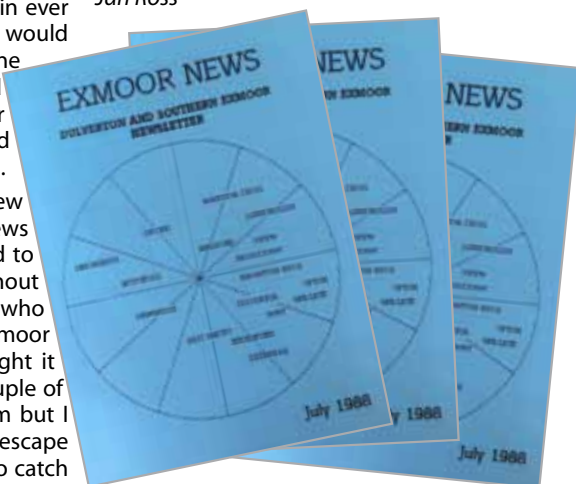
up on local news and a little gossip. We were also entertained by the parrot belonging to the late Mr Chrisford and his wife, with its occasional swearing!

Very quickly, local small businesses realised that Exmoor News was a good way to advertise their businesses and we were happy to help support them. This also helped ensure that the magazine could be more financially sustainable. Soon we had a waiting list as we did not want to swamp the magazine with adverts but kept at least half of it for community news.

When all Community Education Manager posts were made redundant by Somerset County Council in 2004 following major cuts in funding, I was determined that Exmoor News should continue and persuaded Exmoor Community Computer Centre in Winsford to take it on. When the centre closed, Tracey Staples kindly took over Exmoor News. And now Claire and Ceri are the owners of the magazine and I am sure you will agree that they have taken it to a new era with great colour and quality – it has come a long way from the first issue 32 years ago and long may it continue.

I have a copy of every issue of Exmoor News and it is a great way to research dates of past events, an opportunity to reminisce on some wonderful events that happened over the last 32 years and see our local communities at their best.

Jan Ross





Day Excursions 2020

Sadly, our Day Excursion programme is currently suspended to help prevent the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) and follow Government advice.

Thank you to all our customers for your understanding and messages of support!

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FLOWER AND PRODUCE SHOW

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NEXT YEARS SHOW WILL BE HELD ON

SATURDAY 21st AUGUST 2021

Brushford Parish Hall puts the safety of its users first.

We will remain closed until the government clears village halls to open and gives instructions on the safety requirements. This is unlikely to be before 4th July. The Flower and Produce Show in August has been cancelled.

You can still take part in our Brushford is Beautiful Photography and Art show – details at side. Keep in touch via our Facebook Group “Friends of Brushford Parish Hall”, where we are sharing information we hope is useful; our newsletters by email; and our blog on the website: www.brushfordparishhall.org.uk. Please share with your friends who don't use the internet.

We are looking forward to welcoming back our user groups and new activities – please contact us if you want a provisional booking enquiries@brushfordparishhall.org.uk

Keep safe!

BRUSHFORD PARISH HALL

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Visit <https://brushfordparishhall.org.uk/photography-competition/> for full details

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October 2020 - date to be confirmed

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What does lockdown mean to you?

Ceri - Zoom, Quiet, Animals taking back the towns and cities, Weird dreams, Missing my friends.

Claire - Netflix, Boning up on software, Pottering in the garden, CNN (can't believe what I am seeing!), Less pollution, Hearing birdsong.

Helen - Valuing our beautiful skies, birds and wildlife. Supporting local businesses. Taking time out for me. Missing seeing friends.



Terry Wilson raises funds

Peg Leg Wilson would like to thank everyone that donated to his fund raising

challenge for Dorset and Somerset air Ambulance. He walked 11 miles during May, 4,200 paces with his prosthetic leg. His total so far is £1,241. The fund raising page is open till the end of June.

Visit www.https://www.dsairambulance.org.uk/fundraisers/peg-leg-wilson

Just a few fun ideas:

Start a journal - notes and doodles, jot down ideas

Make to do lists.

Origami, Calligraphy

Online courses Drawing

Online yoga or keep fit

Birdwatching sheet visit rspb.org.uk



Exford - A Village in Lockdown

Photos by Peter Hendrie

*Article published with kind permission of
Carole Woods, Farmers Den, Exford.*

Exford is aptly named on its road signs into the village as the Heart of Exmoor. Its population of around 450 is made up of mostly sheep and cattle farming families, agricultural workers and farm hands.



Equestrianism is also a large part of the community and it's been disappointing that the Golden Horseshoe and Exford Show, the two biggest summer attractions for us, are now cancelled. Sometimes looking out of the window, it seems we haven't been affected by the lock down. Tractors and trailers are busy making the most of the spell of fine weather to get on with essential work following what many believe has been six months of continuous rain. Farmers will tell you that they are used to working all day in isolation; it's part of the job, animals need to be cared for.

Villagers were visibly shocked, fearful for their own safety, by the number of people that arrived into the village the weekend that schools nationally were closed down. Normally visitors are part of Exford village life, vital and essential to its economy, providing work for the community in the hospitality and sporting sectors. Now it is felt that Exford will be slow to recover, even after any partial lifting of the lock down, until a universal vaccine has been found. Many who live here remember the Foot and Mouth disease in 2001 that ruined so many livelihoods. Knowing that we were in for a long haul again, hoteliers Peter and Linda Hendrie, with their hotel and youth hostel closed for an indefinite period, stepped in to fill the lack of a grocers store in the village. They quickly created a shop in the pub! "We



*Photo by
© Peter
Hendrie*

have been able to continue using our suppliers in the hotel trade and offer most items the villagers need with a home delivery option. Our chef is making meals for the freezer and we are open between 5pm and 7 pm every evening for pre-ordered takeaway food such as fish and chips on a Friday. We have also become the community's pick up point for medical prescriptions."

Becky Champion who has lived in Exford for 18 years and founder of a community web site little more than a year ago says "It began as an idea as the Exford – Events and Notices but I changed the name as Coronavirus approached, to the Exford Community Group. Membership has risen in the past 28 days from 248 to 283 and viewing posts, comments and reactions have rocketed up by 715%." One of those who recently posted on the site looking for help is Moira Jones. "We were looking for unwanted pillowcases and sheets to turn them into laundry bags for the NHS staff at Barnstaple Hospital. We have had quite a few donations and Lucy Edwards has joined my daughter, Rowena, to make them up. Rachael Edwards, Lucy's sister-in-law, works as a nurse at Barnstaple Hospital and has taken more than 40 bags in already. She said they are really grateful as the wash bags they were using were normally given to patients to take soiled clothes home. The bags were meant to dissolve in the wash but the nurses found they clogged up their machines, so our cotton donations have been really useful."

Meanwhile everyone is taking advantage of the fine weather and can be seen out in full force tidying their gardens and making D.I.Y. repairs while helping their neighbours in any way they can. "We are catching up on all sorts of jobs in the hotel's water and terrace gardens" said Sara Whittaker owner of the Crown Hotel,. "We've been here for 15 years and haven't had the chance before. We've managed to furlough all the staff so when we re-open all the same faces will be here to greet everyone." The final word comes from Rev. David Weir at the Rectory. "It is very encouraging to see how so many people have rallied round, supporting one another in these extraordinary circumstances and finding ways to adapt so as to continue to share and express the strong bonds of community and goodwill we feel across Exmoor."



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Providing PPE to NHS

It all started when a couple of ladies in Yeo Mill wanted to help with providing PPE to NHS staff.

Jo Penny had started to crochet attachments to make masks more comfortable to wear and Gaby Tyson was sewing headbands for the same purpose. As my husband Peter Blythe works at NDDH and I have recently retired from South Molton Hospital they approached us for contacts and who and what was actually needed.

I contacted some ex colleagues at the South Molton Community Rehab Team who snapped up our offer to supply the mask attachments and they were also in need of scrubs laundry bags.

To make this happen we needed supplies of buttons, fabric and yarn so we raided our stashes and I recruited Karen Piercy to help with the crochet. An appeal was put on the Anstey Community Facebook Page for unwanted bedding to make scrubs laundry bags. The response was overwhelming! Thank you!

Gaby worked really hard cutting and pressing the donated fabric which she and Jo sewed to make the bags.

We are now on standby to help again if needed!

Suzanne Blythe



Jo Penny



Karen Piercy



**Colonel Tom Portrait helps
Marie Curie support NHS**



Rachel Crews raised funds for Marie Curie.

Local artist Rachel Crews drew Captain Tom then donated the picture to raise funds for Marie Curie and people have given £700.

The picture will hang in Oakford Village Hall and everyone who donated gets a copy of the original.



What does the property market look like in a post Lockdown world?

As we entered the lockdown there were lots of predictions on how the market would crash, stay the same, rise (OK so not so many predicted that apart from one very well known behavioural economist and so far he has got quite a lot right) and of course whilst we knew the lockdown was coming, it was still a huge shock to the system for all of us.

The first few weeks of lockdown for us as a firm was as much as anything making sure that we had relocated all of our offices and departments to be able to work remotely from home. A huge logistical feat with 164 staff and multiple residential, Fine & Country, commercial, property management, professional and New Home Departments. However, after the dust of the first few days settled, it was then spending the first two weeks talking/communicating to our existing customers where appropriate to let them know what we were doing, calming nerves on what had just happened. The first two weeks didn't see much in the way of new property enquiries from buyers, most were still in shock or making the most of being at home with family.

However, after week two had passed the numbers of enquiries from buyers (local, regional, national and international) started to grow week on week, to the extent that by the end of the 7/8 week lockdown period we had over 850 buyers/tenants specifically requesting properties to view as soon as lockdown for the property market was lifted.

Having said that, on our part, there was still perhaps a slight degree of nervousness during this period. Would sales fall through?

Would many of the buyer enquiries turn out to be just lots of people at home, some of whom were bored and "property dreaming"? During the lockdown period though we only lost 2 sales locally. Buyers and sellers preferring to wait calmly until they could come out of lockdown and then get on with buying/selling their home.

On 13th May the Property Industry was allowed to get back to work fully, albeit in the "new world" (though to be fair it was a surprise announcement on the evening of 12th May, as all day on 11th and 12th the Government had continued to state that we would not be reopening until 1st June at the very earliest, obviously a sudden change of heart at high office but giving us only 11/12 hours to get all of our offices and departments up and running by 9am the next morning).

Since then, the past three weeks has in truth been a complete and utter blur. I'm not sure I have known a busier three week period for appointments in the past 10/12 years and indeed it must rank as one of the busiest three week periods that I can personally remember since I first started working locally in July 1984.

The first couple of days back for us was partly making sure we knew who to contact, what they wanted to view, which properties could now be valued, not an easy feat in itself as almost everyone wanted to be at the front of the queue. It was also a time of making sure that we had in place enough of our own PPE to make sure that, when we did carry out viewings or valuations, we had enough protective equipment to keep ourselves safe, our clients, buyers and tenants safe.

Three weeks later, the number of enquiries coming into our busy Exmoor office in Dulverton (and indeed across the company) is incredible, with our customer care team having to assist with overflow calls to help those of us at the front line keep on top of all of the enquiries and to ensure that everyone is dealt with in as professional and efficient way possible.

Buyers are looking for homes from £180,000 to £1.65 Million and almost everything in between and almost everything is getting viewings. Particular hot spots for the market are properties priced between £200,000 and £350,000 with lots of interest being shown by First Time Buyers (almost unheard of locally but so wonderful to see so many actively out viewing homes with us at the minute and to see the excitement between them when viewing each home) and a big increase again for rural country properties (with or without land or cottages) priced between £550,000 and £1.2 Million.

At the present moment we see no sign of the present activity slowing. Of course it may be tempered if there is a further lockdown (regional or otherwise) so we are not unrealistic in our view. However, for now, the market is busy, prices are strong, viewing levels are excellent and at this rate I may end up with sun burn on the top of my face and a pale PPE Mask to the lower part of my face. Some days it literally is

carrying out viewings from almost crack of dawn to dusk, wearing a PPE mask 80% of the day is not going to do anything for an even tan (it does make you realise how special all of our NHS teams are).

There is no doubt that it's a crazy world out there right now. But there is something magical about the area that we live in and it is hardly surprising therefore that right now we have many people who have lived in the area in the past (but perhaps moved away for family, partners, work etc) rushing back to the area to live. Right now we have former locals trying to move back from Australia, USA, London, Home Counties and even the Welsh Borders (and more besides).

Finally, stay well and stay safe.

With my very best wishes to one and all.



Napoleon Wilcox

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 When I'd rather be running or trampolining;
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 Hands in water and soap suds on -
 Carpets and paintwork and windows and floors;
 Mopping up stains and scrubbing down doors;
 The washing machine is sharing my plight,
 Washing by day and tumbling by night;
 The brass bowl is polished, the silver pot too;
 Everything smelling like lavender dew;
 I'd rather be sharing my lovely clean house
 With more than the cats and their little dead mouse;
 I'm longing to invite some friends home for tea -
 Or lunch, or dinner, or a simple coffee;
 I want to stop cleaning! I want to shout 'Done!'
 I want to start living, and having some FUN.

Fran Bridger

**Fran will be creating
 a poetry book fundraising
 for Marie Curie**



This is what I did during Lockdown.

A much loved family member died just as Covid 19 was starting. He had been allowed out of hospital and cared for by family and a great group of Marie Curie nurses for three weeks prior to his death. By the time his funeral was due to go ahead the lockdown restrictions were in place and no funeral was held. Because of this all the church collections, which were to have been donated to Marie Curie, did not take place. Instead I decided to start A Poem A Day challenge in order to raise the funds which Marie Curie missed out on. My aim was to raise £300. Every day I wrote a poem and planned the next day's poem.

It proved a challenging task. However, for 32 days I sent the poems up to my Facebook page, set up a Justgiving page, and I also posted the poems on the Bridport Writing Community Facebook page. I am nearly at my target, and have raised

When lockdown eases

SOUL WORKS
 Magdalena Harding

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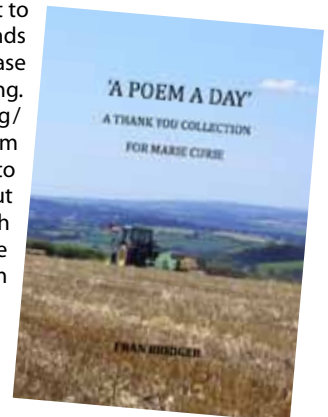
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As we all gently ease out of lockdown at a pace according to our own feelings of safety, I am very happy to offer my Free Taster Sessions at home rather than at Fishers Mead. Please do phone me to book one if you're interested.

£280. My poems covered an eclectic mix from humour to covid, from faith to springtime, and I am showing here my poem based around what to do when in lockdown. 'It's Cleaning Time.' My justgiving page is still open, and if anyone would like to use it to donate some funds to Marie Curie please go to [justgiving.com/fundraising/fran-bridger](https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/fran-bridger). I am currently hoping to make a booklet out of the poems, with the help of the Exmoor News team - watch this space!

Fran



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12pm Body Conditioning

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7pm Men's Fitness Pilates

Friday - 6am Bootcamp

9.30am Boxercise, 10.30am Fitness Pilates

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Donate an old bike

Somerset charity CCS (The Community Council for Somerset) is calling on the generosity of people in the West Somerset area to donate their second-hand bikes, that they no longer need and would rather see being kept in use, to help get West Somerset moving again – safely.

Social distancing and scaled-back public transport is making it difficult for people, especially those on low incomes, to travel to work or take up a new job when they have no affordable way of getting there. After being lovingly refurbished by an expert mechanic, the bikes will be supplied to local residents who would struggle financially to purchase a new bike.

Izzy Silvester, CCS Village Agent for West Somerset, says:

"Please support us to help our community by donating your good but unneeded adult bikes. With your generosity and our tech, we're going to provide a transport option for lower-waged people to get to work safely.

First, we will 'up-cycle' the bikes to ensure they're safe and sound. Then we will supply them to people who are waiting to make



good use of them and are keen to travel at a safe distance. But on top of that, we will be providing all new owners with socially-distanced training on how to maintain their bikes into the future."

CCS is requesting donations of bikes that are in good

condition – meaning nearly ready to ride, with two wheels, pedals and handlebars. Bikes which would only be suitable for recycling by scrapping the metal cannot be accepted. Minor rusting, decorative issues and minor mechanical problems are not a barrier, as our qualified mechanic will be refurbishing the donated bikes.

Raj Singh, CCS Deputy Chief Executive, says:

"Please donate an old bike to help someone get back into work or education. Let's get West Somerset moving again!"

If you have a bike to donate please get in touch with CCS Village Agent Izzy via email izzy@Somersetccc.org.uk with your name and phone number and a brief description of the bike or call 07931 018 045 to arrange for a free collection. For anyone in a transport crisis, Izzy also works as the CCS West Somerset Transport Agent ready to help people who are struggling due to a lack of transport in the area.



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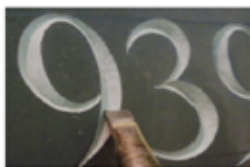
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EASING OF LOCKDOWN SEES RISE IN NATIONAL PARK FIRST TIMERS

As we head into summer and Covid-19 restrictions continue to ease, Exmoor Rangers have seen a notable increase in people visiting the national park for the first time. With retail and hospitality outlets shut and after weeks of being cooped up indoors, it seems many are taking up the Government's advice to find enjoyment in the outdoors through picnics, sunbathing and walks in the countryside.

It's a phenomenon affecting beauty spots around the country, with one survey by the Lake District National Park Authority finding that 68 per cent of last weekend's visitors would not normally have come to the Lakes and many had never visited before.

Local services are also feeling the pressure from all the extra visitors, with Devon and Somerset Fire & Rescue Service reporting a sharp spike in call outs to fires in the open compared to this time last year*. Moorland fires in the summer breeding season spread quickly and can be devastating to ground nesting birds and other wildlife. When conditions are dry, they can start from something as simple as a disposable BBQ, cigarette stub or glass bottle.

Dan Barnett, Exmoor National Park Access & Recreation Manager, said: "Over the years national parks have worked tirelessly in all sorts of ways to reach out to new audiences, but it's taken a global pandemic to really shift the demographic. Whether a newcomer or seasoned to the outdoors, we welcome you and urge everyone to follow the Countryside Code and public health advice to help you enjoy the national park safely. And it's not just coronavirus that poses a risk – from avoiding tick bites to walking the dog, follow us on social media or head to our website to find out all you need to know.

"It's clear that most people are being respectful, with almost no littering at places like Tarr Steps despite the high footfall. But elsewhere our rangers are taking away whole trailer loads of litter, spent BBQs, cigarettes and other flammable waste, discarded with little thought

for local communities or the environmental damage that could result from a summer wildfire. A small minority also seem to be flouting the rules around social distancing and overnight stays, which risks spreading the virus. We're working hard with police, landowners and other partners to address these issues and encourage care for the countryside."

Sarah Bryan, Chief Executive of Exmoor National Park Authority, said: "Being away from the people and places we love has taken a terrible toll on this country. For many it has meant months of social isolation and worry, with a shocking 1 in 8 households having spent this time with no access to a garden according to ONS figures**. In the aftermath we're all learning to find our way in this 'new normal'. It's throwing up some challenges but also the opportunity to engage groups who, until now, may have felt completely alienated by the countryside. In doing so we are building a stronger more sustainable future for these special places for the benefit of everyone."

For more information about visiting Exmoor National Park safely see: www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/about-us/covid-19-exmoor or follow @ExmoorNP on Twitter and Facebook and @exmoor_national_park on Instagram.

*Think twice to stay safe and reduce pressure on emergency services as lockdown eases, Devon & Somerset Fire and Rescue Service, 15th May 2020.

** One in Eight British Households has no garden, Office of National Statistics, 14th May 2020.

Photo: Tarr Steps - Claire Savill





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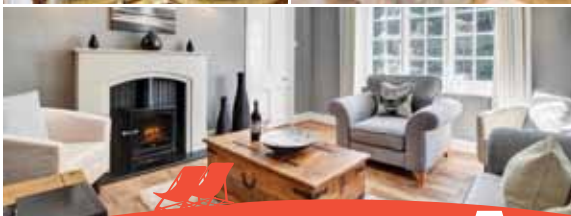
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SURVEY – Your Church, Your Say

We invite you to take a few minutes to tell us what you think is important about your church and what you would like to see happening over the next 5 years or so. This is a particularly important time as we work to select our new Rector. It is important that we hear from everyone, **not just regular church-goers**. The surveys are anonymous but results will be made public. Please consider the following questions and give us your views, which will help to inform your vision for the future of your church. Thank you.

**Required*

1. How often do you attend your church? *

- ☐ Daily ☐ For special services only e.g. Remembrance; Easter, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day
- ☐ Weekly ☐ For personal services e.g. Baptisms, Weddings, Funerals
- ☐ Monthly ☐ Never

2. How relevant do you feel your church is to you? (please circle)*

Not at all relevant 1 2 3 4 5 Very relevant

3. What do you think could be done to make your church more appealing to you?

4. Please tick up to 5 things that you value most about your church: *

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A focus for community events | <input type="checkbox"/> A peaceful, spiritual place for quiet contemplation and meditation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A beautiful historic building | <input type="checkbox"/> Promotes Christian values |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A place to worship God | <input type="checkbox"/> Friends, family and fellowship |
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- ☐ A warm welcome
- ☐ Other:

5. What concerns you most about your church?

6. What do you believe are the community's most pressing needs?

7. Name up to three changes you would like to see happen at your church in the next 5 years?

1.

2

3.

8. About you

It would help our understanding of your responses, if you could please tell us:

8a. Where you live * (village/town or area)

8b. Your gender and age

	Under 16	16-25	26-45	46-65	66 +
Male					
Female					
Prefer not to say					

Thank you for responding to this survey

If you would like to discuss this survey and how the responses will be used, please call **01398 323028**

Please use extra paper if you wish to add anything else. Please return to the: Parish Office, 1 Church Walk, Dulverton.

All are invited to a Vision meeting so please when this crisis is over Date will be published in Parish Magazine, Brendon Beacon, Church doors, lychgate and various other places around our benefice.

Brompton Regis Show & Gymkhana - Cancelled

It is with much regret and a fair degree of inevitability, that the Show Committee has decided to cancel this year's show, planned for 15th August, due to the Coronavirus pandemic.



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Exestream Radio

Exmoor Studios CIC are pleased to announce that their planned Community Radio station, Exestream Radio will be starting a service to the Southern Exmoor Area on 15th June. Aimed at the communities within the valleys of the River Exe and its tributaries, the Barle, Danes Brook, Haddeo and Bathern they aim to provide a service from Simonsbath to Morebath and Wheddon Cross to Cove.

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A Dog's Day Out – Stayin' at Home

You've noticed Honey she's been stayin' at home lately. She says she's on vacation because she likes the way that sounds. The number of bees she's rescued out of the windows on her mop head have been staggering and surpasses all her other previous attempts. I thought that was my job but she says it's a perfect occupation for her at the moment. She doesn't mind being by herself if there's no one else around, except us of course, she says. She's making tea in a teapot too. Have you noticed that? And she uses a tray...And drinks a beer from a glass! What's going on? "I have no idea Buddy." Perhaps when it starts raining she'll go back to see you later, be good stuff.

She's been out in our garden too just staring at the ground muttering something about mister frost and mister snail. Do you know who they are? "Nope, but she's pleased with your digging under the tree Buddy. You've created a dust bath for the sparrows, she said". Yep, I showed her how to dig instead of poking around with that little bent fork she uses. Do you think we'll be meeting up with Poppy this week for a cross country run again? I hope she didn't get into too much trouble for rolling in the sheep poo last time. She'd just had a shampoo and trim from the mobile dog groomer.

What day is it today? "Wednesday". Can't be. We were sitting outside having a picnic yesterday afternoon – that means it was Sunday – so today is Monday, and the bin men are coming, hurray. "No, Miercoles! We had roast beef and her leftover vegetables for dinner two days ago. Then plain biscuit the next day she said to recover our tummies. And rice

yesterday. So it's Wednesday." What do you think will be in our dishes today? "Eggs probably. We walked up the road to fetch them last night, remember?" Hmmm, we'll probably have them with the left over rice then. Maybe she's still got some gravy. I kinda like to do it in style.

Buddy Brown (pure Jack Russell) a roving reporter

Reference: Last Good Time in Town – The Eagles.



We welcome your community information. You can be added to our contributors email list asking for copy (we send a reminder email prior to deadlines). Just email us to be added.

If you see something which needs changing in the directory at the back of our magazine please do let us know. Email exmoornews@gmail.com.



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As many of you are aware, we are no longer able to provide routine dental treatment due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Here at The Dulverton Dental Practice, we would like to provide you with some general oral health advice to help keep your teeth, gums and oral health in top condition until we can see each other again:

- Brush your teeth twice a day with Fluoride toothpaste for at least 2 minutes at a time, to keep your teeth and mouth healthy.
- Floss or use interdental brushes every day

to remove food, debris and plaque that may have become lodged between your teeth.

- Try to avoid sugary foods and drinks as much as possible.
- Drink more water. This can help wash out some of the negative effects of sticky and acidic foods and beverages in between brushes.

For dental emergencies please contact the Practice, where we can advise you on the best course of action.

We aim to reach and update all of our patients but are limited due to emails given to us by our patients, therefore it is essential that all contact details are in place.

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[Ed: Information correct at the time we went to press](#)

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Otter seen at Dulverton Weir

DWLCT supporters will recall that in March we were able to report that an otter had been seen in Dulverton Leat by John Dunscombe. During the VE Bank Holiday weekend an otter was seen and filmed just above Dulverton Weir. Visit this website to watch the film: www.dulvertonweir.org.uk/press-coverage



DWLCT Academic Associates Somerset Otter Group are the obvious people to ask about what was seen and they comment: "We can't be certain but it looks large and is probably male. Using the house brick for scale, which is also visible in the film shot, we estimate the otter to be 110cm long including 44cm of tail. It is looking for fish, eels, invertebrates or anything hiding in the shady spots under the rocks. It is less usual to see an otter out so openly in daylight, it does appear to have white on the nose in some of the shots which might be a moustache, or a trick of the light in filming, but it might be useful in identification if it is seen again".

Somerset Otter Group has much more information about otters which can be accessed via their website at www.somersetottergroup.org.uk.



The Somerset Otter Group is a loose association of active enthusiasts, they express their appreciation of these wonderful animals by undertaking practical work which will assist in their wellbeing and in promoting awareness of their needs. The group has recorded and studied otters for over twenty years, charting their remarkable come-back since the 1980s.

The group's survey work is vital for monitoring the population in Somerset, records are shared with the Somerset Environmental Records Centre, (SERC)

The group regularly engages with outside researchers and works with other organisations.

Emergency remedial work carried out on Dulverton Weir.

On the evening of 25th May Dulverton Leat ran dry. This is especially disappointing given the work put in by the Dulverton Weir & Leat Conservation Trust and Somerset West & Taunton Council and, of course, recent excitement on sightings of otters in the leat. The problem was, quite simply, that given the holes in the weir, the level of water in the river was too low to flow through the leat.

Somerset West & Taunton Officers met on site on 2nd June and within 24 hours had a team carrying out remedial repairs to restart a flow of water in the leat pending more significant repairs. Our pictures shows the remedial repair team working to staunch the leaks in the weir.

Philip Hull Trustee of Dulverton Weir & Leat Conservation Trust said:

"This prompt action demonstrates the council's commitment to sustaining the

Dulverton Weir & Leat system and bodes well for future cooperation in saving this important medieval heritage asset".

Councillor Marcus Kravis, Somerset West & Taunton Council's Executive Member for Assets said:

"The Council has a statutory obligation to keep water moving through the medieval weir and leat system and I am glad that we were able to move swiftly to restore water flow on this occasion. We value this historic waterway and are proud to be working together with the trust on longer-term plans to restore this ancient waterway to its rightful place as part of Dulverton's heritage".



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Dulverton's amazing volunteers during the pandemic



Dulverton's Good Neighbours Scheme was set up late last year and their volunteers were quickly able to help many of the town's vulnerable people when the Covid 19 lock down started. Working with the local Village Agent, Jane Lillis, and other agencies, they quickly set up a Food Bank run by Jenny Barker and her team of volunteers and now regularly deliver at least 20 to 25 food parcels across the southern Exmoor area, as well as supporting the schools with the delivery of food parcels to families across the area. Sandy Takel, a member of staff at Hanover Court, quickly set up a brand new Meals on Wheels service.

Many of the Good Neighbours Scheme volunteers were themselves deemed vulnerable because of their age, so Amanda Rae, a local resident for the past 10 years, realised that they needed to recruit some younger volunteers to help with food deliveries, prescription orders, shopping and lots more. With the help of the Dulverton Coronavirus Support Group's facebook, communication between local people and volunteers has also been enhanced by sharing information and helping to connect people with support and advice.

Sandra Collett set up Dulverton's Good Neighbours Scheme paid tribute to Amanda. 'She is a first class enabler and ideas person. If she sees a need, she makes something happen to fulfill it, from organizing drivers to deliver meals on wheels, arranging for every volunteer to have an identity badge and car sticker (kindly supplied by Stickerzilla of Dulverton and helped by Printing At The Vicarage). Amanda's amazing energy drives us all on.'

Hanover Court and the Copper Kettle asked Good Neighbours to help organise a cream tea delivery to ensure as many vulnerable and isolated people could join in the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of VE Day. People were asked to nominate a person to receive a free cream tea. A massive 310 people were nominated so the logistics of making these and delivering them was taken on board by Amanda and her team. Thanks to the support of Hanover Court, the Copper Kettle, the Exclusive Cake Company, Tarr Farm Inn and Somerset Community Foundation, the cream teas were made and then delivered across a wide area. The volunteers have had a huge number of messages of thanks for those who received the teas.

Meanwhile some of the residents in Dulverton also organised their own street self distancing celebrations. In Valentines, Angela Balsom pushed invitations through all the residents' letter boxes to join her in the cul de sac, where Richard Archer had made cream teas for all, Stuart Patterson provided music, Angela made a rainbow flag for their flagpole and red, white and blue bunting was stretched to the wheelie bins.

Mick Orton who runs the Copper Kettle with his wife Kate set himself some amazing physical challenges each week based on virtual exercises using the café's renowned beautiful garden. For the first week, he climbed the height from Dulverton to Dunkery Beacon using the steps up to the garden, week 2 saw him running round Wimblesball. He then lifted one of Tarr Steps slabs by lifting a 5 kilo weight over his head 407 times! Mike exceeded all his challenges by walking and running a full marathon of more than 26 miles over 12 hours. He had a short break during this when he helped deliver the cream teas. Another challenge was an 80 minute test themed on rugby which is a one of Mick's lifelong passions. Mick has not sought sponsorship for his challenges but asked people to donate items for the Dulverton Food Bank. Mike said 'People have been so kind leaving donations of food on the table outside the Copper Kettle - it's been a fantastic response, plus over £120 has also been donated.'



Food Bags

Joan Bidie, a member of Dulverton Gardening Club, organized a Plant Sale twice a week using her garden, enabling social distancing to take place. Jenny Boyce, a volunteer at the school, gave many of the plants grown from the seeds which pupils at the school had planted before lock down but sadly were not able to see the results of their work. She also supplied water lilies from the school pond. Joan thanked Roger Hammond for his help in promoting the sales on social media and to all the members of the club for donating plants. £686 has been donated to Dulverton's Food Bank.



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Minehead Literary Festival announces winners of adults' short story competition

Inevitably this year's Festival, like so many other events, was overtaken by the coronavirus endemic. Nevertheless, Tessa Hadley, one of our country's leading writers and patron of Minehead Literary Festival, judged this year's entries, the title for 2020 being *The Secret*.

Tessa said: *"What a rich crop of stories this year! It was a delight to read them all: what variety of styles and themes and subject matter the writers came up with - and wonderfully varied ways of interpreting the title. And it really was - I know everybody says this, but it really was - very difficult to choose a shortlist - sometimes comparing one story with another was like comparing chalk with cheese; how to weigh what's funny and sour, for instance, against what's mournful and sweet?"*

Chosen from over 50 entries, Tessa named John Barnes as the winner for his original interpretation of 'The Secret', writing about a man accidentally privileged to witness a secret ceremony among the stags on Exmoor, where they gather to rub off their antlers at the end of the season. Tessa said: *"... the whole was carried off with a sure touch, such vivid and moving description; I couldn't shake its images from my mind"*

Coming second was *The Woman and the Sea* by Susan Mitchinson, about a woman who turns into a mermaid which *"... balanced comedy with something wistful and poignant; and again, so elegantly put together, with great economy."*

Set in the future, the 3rd prize for *Under The Greenwood Tree* went to Malcolm Welshman whose story *"... felt like an exciting use of the genre; an elegant and striking idea of a couple excavating an ancient library from the twenty-first century, their eyes opened to a vanished world of feeling."*

"The four other shortlisted winners were Nikki Copleston, Dot Lupo, Christine Human and Janet Howard.

The winning entries will be posted on the MLF website -
www.mineheadliteraryfestival.org



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News from the Exmoor Pony Centre, Ashwick, Dulverton TA22 9QE

These are strange times we are living through and, like everywhere else, the Pony Centre is in lockdown. Most of our ponies have been put out to grass at the Centre or taken to other grazing sites in order to cut down on work, but all are still being checked daily in accordance with animal welfare requirements. A few ponies still need to be exercised however, either to control their weight or for other health reasons, and they are being ridden daily. Late foals, Andy and Banksy (in photo) are still having extra rations to bring them up to weight.

We are entering what would normally be our busiest time of year for visitors and events, and this is when we make around 80% of our trading income. Somehow we have to make up this deficit if we are going to survive so, like every other charity, we are appealing for help. We are making savings where we can. Our staff are furloughed and Linzi is caring for the ponies on her own, but we still have to pay the rent and, of course, there are feed bills and essential veterinary costs for the ponies.

We are immensely grateful to those of our supporters who are undertaking fundraising challenges for us through Just Giving and other methods, and to everyone who has sent us a donation in response to our appeal. Artist Jane Wills is raising money for us by raffling a limited edition print of her beautiful painting of Exmoor Ponies, and four year old Jackson is doing a 2.6km trot on his hobby horse! All these and more are on our facebook page.

We are keen to stay in touch with supporters and followers through this difficult time and we have launched a kids club on our website with downloadable games and puzzles which can be accessed from the home page by following the link to Kids Club.

Finally, we send all of you our good wishes and hope you are staying well.

Website: www.exmoorponycentre.org.uk

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01643 702201

01398 323943

01769 581042

01643 851396

01884 250417

07419 212354

01884 860495

Dulverton Camera Club: Sec: Peter Main, 4 Valley View, Morebath, Tiverton, EX16	01398 331556
Dulverton Players: Chair: Les Silverlock	01398 341850
Oakford Players, Chair: Mr A Holmes tholmes556@btinternet.com	01398 351665
SPORTS CLUBS	
Anstey Short Mat Bowls: Chris Dale	01398 341615
Bridgetown Cricket: Sec: Mr. D. Sherring, Mid-Wicket, Bridgetown, Dulverton TA22 9JN administrator@bridgetowncc.co.uk	01398 324147
Brushford Short Mat Bowling: Sec: Sam Takle	01643 841036
Cutcombe Cricket: Sec: Mrs Maria Adams, 1 The Beeches, Wheddon Cross	01398 323409
Dulverton Angling Assn: c/o Pat Veale, 9 High St., Dulverton, TA22 9HB	01398 324353
Dulverton Badminton Club: Sec Judy Smith	01398 323474
Dulverton Cricket Club: Robert Dubery	01398 323474
Dulverton Cricket Club, Colts: Mrs Christine Dubery	07783 930700
Dulverton & District Tennis Club: Orla Jones	07710 046107
Dulverton & Exmoor Squash Club: Membership Sec: Chris Winter. chriswin@aol.com	01398 323474
Dulverton Jnr. F.C: Sec: Mrs Christine Dubery	01398 323834
Dulverton Netball Club: Sec Lindsay Smith, 25, Nicholas Close, Brushford	01398 323899
Dulverton Snooker: Sec: Mr. D. Bodger, 39 Fishers Mead, Dulverton, TA22 9EN	01398 324494
Dulverton Sports and Social: Chair: Carl Hooper	01398 323834
Dulverton Sportsfield Management: Adrian Smith	01398 324160
Dulverton Senior Table Tennis: Richard Archer	01398 323787
Dulverton Town F.C: Sec: Mr. J. Atkins, 1 Exebridge, Dulverton. TA22 9AY	01398 341556
Exmoor Croquet Club: Chair: Connie Heywood	
Moorland Hall Sports: info@wheddoncross.org.uk	
Wimbledon Fly Fishers: enquiries@fishingthewest.co.uk	
PRE-SCHOOL GROUPS	
All Saints School & Nursery:	01398 323231 & 01398 323223
Anstey Parent and Toddlers Group: E A School	01398 341369
Little Owls Nursery at All Saints C of E School, Dulverton	01398 324360
Rhythm n' Brews Toddler Group: Sabine Cooper	07419 212354
SCHOOLS	
All Saints C of E School: Fishers Mead TA22 9EN	01398 323231
Brompton Regis Toddlers: Mrs.S. Julian, Court Place Farm, Skilgate	01398 331031
Cutcombe C of E First School: Wheddon Cross, TA24 7DZ	01643 841462
Dulverton Junior School: Barns Close West, TA22 9EE	01398 323223
Dulverton Children's Centre: All Saints School, Fishers Mead TA22 9EN	01398 324360
Dulverton Family and Toddlers Group:	01398 324329
Dunkery PreSchool: Supervisor: Mrs. S. Matravers, Shute Close, Cutcombe, Minehead	01643 841008
East Anstey Primary School: East Anstey, Tiverton, Devon, EX16 9JP	01398 341369
Little Owls Nursery: All Saints School, Fishers Mead TA22 9EN	01398 324360
WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS	
Anstey W.I.: President: Mrs. C Wood	01398 341472
Brompton Regis W.I.: Sec: Mrs. P. Beecham, Rose Cottage, Brompton Regis	01398 371407
Cutcombe & District M.U.: President, Pam Anson	01643 851616
Cutcombe & District W.I.: Mrs. Pam Anson	01643 851616
Dulverton & Brushford M. U.: Mrs A. Gregory, 22 Jury Road, Dulverton, TA22 9DU	01398 323587
Exford Moorhens: Chairman: Mrs. I. Collett	01643 831016
Oakford Moorland Ladies Club: Chair: Patsy Phillips Patsyphili@aol.com	01398 351648
YOUTH ORGANISATIONS AND ACTIVITIES	
Bampton Scouts/Cubs/Beaver748s: Tony Weiss	01398 331901
Dulverton & District Young People's Project: Chair: John Preston	01398 323862
Dulverton Ballet: Mrs Wightmore, Flat 3, Easter House, St. Andrews St. Tiverton	01884 253999
Exmoor Community Youth Club: Organiser Laura Tasker, Fridays 6 – 8 pm	01643 831125
OTHERS	
Abbeyfield House	01398 324136
Bampton Library and Resource Centre, Station Road	01398 332466
Brushford Parish Hall: Bookings enquiries@brushfordparishhall.org.uk	07941 139846

Brushford Luncheon Club: Treasurer: Margaret Albery	01398 324587
Care Direct for help and advice: www.somerset.gov.uk	0300 1232224
Cutcombe Flower & Produce Show: Sue White	01643 841142
Dulverton Action Group: Magdalena Harding	01398 323 785
Dulverton & District Civic Soc: Kathy Currie	07493 518350
Dulverton & Southern Exmoor Twinning: Chair: Steve Ford, Dulverton	01398 323016
Dulverton Bridge Club: Sec. Brian Hughes, www.Bridgewebs.com/dulverton	01398 331219
Dulverton Dance:	01398 341850
Dulverton Ballroom Dance: Sec: Mrs Christine Dubery	01398 323474
Dulverton Development Forum: Sec: Mrs J. Ross	01398 323818
Dulverton Films: Jan Ross	01398 323818
Dulverton Fellowship for Mental Health: Marion Silverlock	01398 341850
Dulverton Gardening Club: Roger Hammmond	01398 323954
Dulverton Group Exmoor Society: Sec: Dr Ken Mills	01398 331482
Dulverton Vets	01398 323285
Dulverton Vintage Films: Magdalena Harding	01398 323785
Dulverton Voluntary Drivers: Mike Beale	07743 885115
Exe Valley Market Bus: Chairman: Colin Radford, cjrbutterdale@gmail.com	
Bookings (To include private use) Jennie Chappell smilerjenniec@hotmail.com	01398 351666
Exmoor Patient Group: Chair: Sandra Wilson, W Nightcott, Dulverton TA22 9RT	01398 324687
Exmoor BeeKeepers Association: Sec: Caroline Ralph exmoorhoneyshow@gmail.com	01984 656240
Exmoor Community Bus Assn: Sec: Mr. G Knock, 6 Pounds Close, Brushford TA22 9AL	01398 324555
Exmoor Pony Centre: Ashwick, Dulverton, Somerset, TA22 9QE	01398 323093
Exmoor Pony Society: Sec: Sue McGeever, Woodmans, Brithem Bottom Cullompton, Devon EX15 1NB	01884 839930
Exmoor Rotary Club: Humphrey Berridge (PRO), Station Hse, Luke St, Bampton	01398 332324
Good Neighbours: Sandra Collett	01398 324211
Oakford Village Hall: Chair: Mr D Bannister davidbannister10@hotmail.com	01398 351135
Bookings: Mrs Dawn Williams dawnwilliams1@gmail.com	01398 324035
Royal British Legion Dulverton: Peter Donnelly	01398 323030
TA22 Voluntary Lift Scheme (formerly Brushford Voluntary Lifts): Chair: T. Wilson	07528 326880
Tiverton Model Aero Club: Sec: Mr. P Veale, 9 High St., Dulverton TA22 9HB	01398 323409
U3A Exmoor: Yvonne Moorfoot, 3 Lamb Back, Dulverton	01398 323529
Village Agent Jane Lillis janel@somersetcc.org.uk	07958 415270
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