

March
April
2023

EXMOOR NEWS



Bringing community news across southern Exmoor since 1985

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EXMOOR NEWS

COVERING SOUTHERN EXMOOR

Hello

Last year was notable for the summer heat, then snow before Christmas, This January, flooding was followed by more freezing cold. It has also been amazing to see how quickly Wimbleball Lake was refilled by pumping up from the river. See comparison photographs on page 32. What will this year will bring?

In the spirit of keeping going, we have a large feature on keeping fit - please read on, and share with us any activities not covered.

Our cover image for this issue – Stag in the Rain – was taken by Jochen Langbein; read more about his photography on page 22. We were also sent a wonderful starry night shot of Conygar Tower... see page 5.

Our mission statement is to inform, engage and connect our community, so if you have a group, event or activity, please let us know and we will put it in here and share on our social media platforms.

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.




The deadline for the May/June '23 issue of the Exmoor News is

Thursday 6th April 2023

Printed by Brightsea, Exeter



Exmoor News Rate Card 2023

<p>Size 1 60wide x 92high Mono £20 Colour £28</p>		<p>Size 3 60w mm X 188h Colour £55</p>	<p>Size 4 188w x 92h Colour £83</p>	<p>Size 5 124w x 188h mm Colour £122</p>	<p>Size 6 190mm x 190 mm (no bleed) 216 mm x 216 mm (includes bleed) Colour £165</p>
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**EXMOOR
u3a**

Meetings are now held in Dulverton Town Hall on the last Wednesday of every month, except in August and December. Non-members are welcome and have free entry as an introductory offer. Meetings are at 10.00 for a 10.30am start, and last about one hour. So come along early and enjoy a free cup of coffee.

Wednesday, 29th March, Dulverton Town Hall at 10.00 for 10.30
ANTHONY POULTON-SMITH

What's in a Name?

Anthony is a freelance journalist and author. In this talk he delves into the the origins of place names, to find the answer to questions such as: which river was named from the blackberries which grow there? Why would a rock be called the Pig's Nose? What links beer and cathedrals? Just who were Peter and Mary Tavy? Why is Mincing Lake not a lake but a river? Which public house name has links with the legend of Zorro?

Wednesday, 26th April, Dulverton Town Hall at 10.00 for 10.30
ROB WILSON-NORTH

Caring for Exmoor - Understanding the Past, Shaping the Future

Rob is Head of Conservation and Access at the Exmoor National Park Authority. He will give an overview of the Authority's work, along with the current challenges that Exmoor faces. He will focus particularly on current conservation projects and initiatives but we will also peer into the future to see what may lie ahead.

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Wed 8th March

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Wed 12th April

KRAMER vs KRAMER

starring Dustin Hoffman & Meryl Streep
(1979)

Film starts at 2.30 pm
at Fishers Mead Community Centre

£2 includes tea and biscuits

Dulverton Farmers Market



10.00 - 14.30
Last Saturday of
the month
April - September

Lion Car Park
Dulverton
TA92 9HB

www.dulvertonfarmersmarket.co.uk

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DULVERTON ACTION GROUP

Litter-picking (3rd Sunday)

Sunday 19th March

Sunday 16th April

10.30 meet by the Heritage Centre

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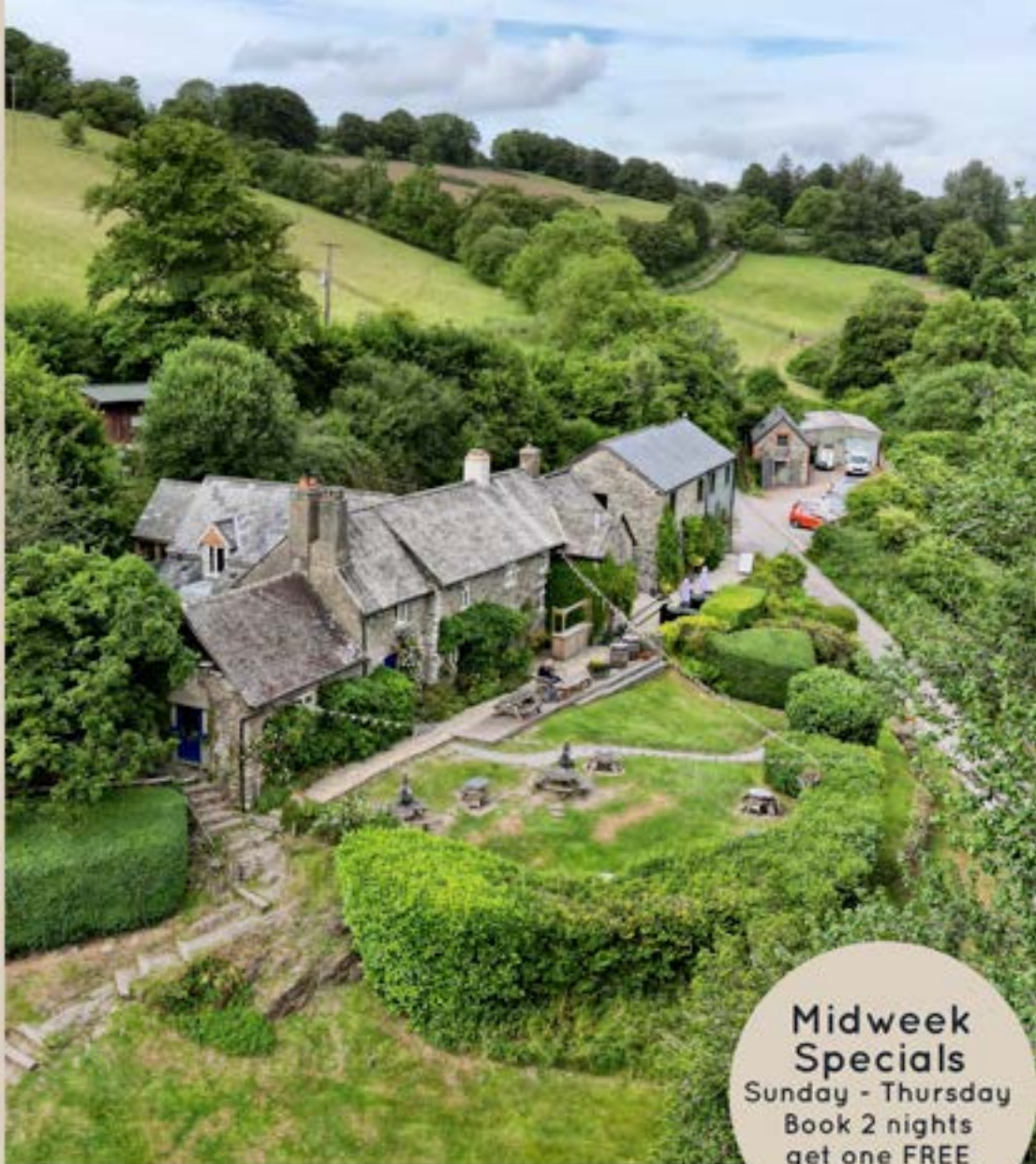


16th March -Talk, Mark Hinsley
"The Churchyard Yew"

20th April -Talk, Peter Beale
"Rose Growing Made Easy"

7.00pm for 7.30pm

At Dulverton Town Hall



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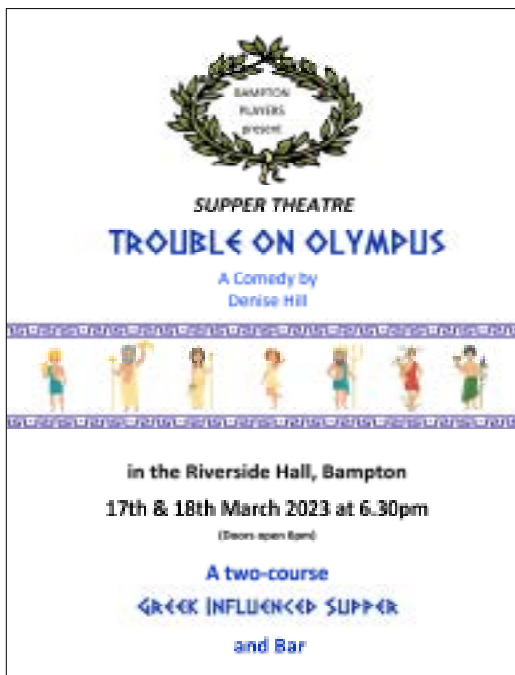
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Bampton Players Present: Trouble on Olympus

A supper theatre at Riverside Hall, Bampton, Friday 17 and Saturday 18 March 2023. Doors open at 6:00pm, with the meal starting at 6:30pm.

Bampton resident, Denise Hill, wrote this short play during the COVID lockdown of 2020, for the Bampton Players' playwriting competition. This is its world premiere.

The play, based on the antics of the Greek gods, is funny and, as you will know if you have watched any of Denise Hill's Mummers plays at Bampton Fair, at times both risqué and thought provoking.

The supper will be a delicious two-course, Greek-themed meal, prepared by former Bampton restaurateur, Julia Mayer.

Tickets are on sale at Bampton Fresh, 21 Brook Street, Bampton.



© Roger Shattock

Dunster's Conygar Tower

The Conygar Tower in Dunster, Somerset, was built in 1775 and has been designated as a Grade II listed building. It is a circular, three-storey folly tower, built of red sandstone, situated on a hill overlooking the village. It was commissioned by Henry Luttrell and designed by Richard Phelps, and stands about 18 metres (59 ft) high, so that it can be seen from Dunster Castle on the opposite hillside. There is no evidence that it ever had floors or a roof. The name *Conygar* comes from two medieval words *coney*, meaning rabbit and *garth*, meaning garden, indicating that it was once a warren where rabbits were bred for food.

The photo shows the Red Planet (Mars) above the top left of the tower and Pleiades (our local star cluster) directly above the middle of the tower. Photographer, Roger Shattock, and his partner, Kelly, love exploring the local outdoors and both enjoy being creative, so this shot was challenging and fun to create.

You can follow Roger and Kelly on Facebook at Roger Shattock Photography and ExmoorSaltyglass.

Winsford Moor Movies

7th March 2023 The Lost King (2022) (12A)

Stars Sally Hawkins and Steve Coogan

Having been lost for over 500 years, the remains of King Richard III were discovered in 2012, beneath a carpark in Leicester. The search had been orchestrated by an amateur historian, Philippa Langley (played by Sally Hawkins), whose unrelenting research had been met with incomprehension by her friends and family, and with scepticism by experts and academics. *The Lost King* is the life-affirming, true story of a woman who refused to be ignored, and who took on the country's most eminent historians, forcing them to think again about one of the most controversial kings in England's history.

4th April 2023 See How They Run (2022) (12A)

Stars Saoirse Ronan and Sam Rockwell

In the West End of 1950s London, plans for a movie version of a smash-hit play come to an abrupt halt after a pivotal member of the crew is murdered. When world-weary, Inspector Stoppard (Sam Rockwell), and eager rookie, Constable Stalker (Saoirse Ronan), take on the case, the two find themselves thrown into a puzzling whodunit, within the glamorously sordid theatre underground, investigating the mysterious homicide at their own peril.

Winsford Village Hall, Exford Road, TA24 7JE

All films start at 7.30pm. £3 members and £5 non-members.

No need to book, just turn up. Any enquiries to Orla Jones: 01643 851881.

HELP!
HELP!
HELP!

Dulverton Heritage Centre
needs volunteers for
3 to 4 hours a week.
At the moment we can only
open part time.

We need room stewards and
people to run the model railway.

To see how you can help,
meet us in the Heritage Centre
for coffee and homemade cake
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11.00 till 1.00.

Or email kathycurrie.dhc@gmail.com



BRUSHFORD PARISH HALL

Upcoming Events



Thursday 2nd March

14:30 to 16:30 - Book Mart, Drop in Café, Lets Get Connected IT Help Desk. Come along with your laptop/tablet for help/assistance

Saturday 11th March

16:15 to 18:45 - Six Nations Rugby v  
19:00 to 22:30 - PopUp Bar

Saturday 18th March

16:15 to 22:30 - Six Nations Rugby v  
& PopUp Bar

Thursday 6th April

14:30 to 16:30 - Book Mart, Drop in Café

Saturday 8th April

19:00 to 22:30 - PopUp Bar with JukeBox

Sunday 7th May

King Charles III Coronation Concert on the Big Screen
PopUp Bar & Brushford Parish Tea Party
Watch for times and further details as they are released

For further information on clubs and events visit
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Dulverton Films



Dulverton Town Hall

Friday 10 March

THE BANSHEES OF INISHEREN (Cert 15)

Director: Martin McDonagh

114 mins

On a remote island off the coast of Ireland, Pádraic is devastated when his buddy, Colm, suddenly puts an end to their lifelong friendship. With help from his sister and a troubled young islander, Pádraic sets out to repair the damaged relationship by any means necessary. However, as Colm's resolve only strengthens, he soon delivers a desperate ultimatum that leads to shocking consequences. With nine Oscar nominations, the film promises some outstanding performances.

Friday 24 March

EVERYTHING EVERYWHERE ALL AT ONCE (Cert 15)

Directors: Daniel Kwan, Daniel Scheinert

111 mins

A Chinese immigrant gets unwillingly embroiled in an epic adventure where she must connect different versions of herself in the parallel universe to stop someone who intends to harm the multiverse. A hilarious and big-hearted sci-fi action adventure about an exhausted Chinese American woman (Michelle Yeoh) who can't seem to finish her taxes. The film gained 11 Oscar nominations.

Friday 7 April

THE OUTFIT (Cert 15)

Director: Graham Moore

105 mins

Leonard (Mark Rylance), a master Savile Row tailor, has ended up in Chicago, operating a corner tailor shop with his assistant (Zoey Deutch), where he makes beautiful clothes for the only people around who can afford them—a family of vicious gangsters. One night, two killers (Dylan O'Brien, Johnny Flynn) knock on his door in need of a favour and Leonard is thrust onto the board, in a deadly game of deception and murder.

Friday 21 April

SEE HOW THEY RUN (Cert 12A)

Director: Anthony Fabian

98 mins

In 1950s London, plans for a movie version of a smash-hit play come to an abrupt halt after a pivotal member of the crew is murdered. When world-weary Inspector Stoppard (Sam Rockwell) and eager rookie, Constable Stalker (Saoirse Ronan), take on the case, they find themselves thrown into a puzzling whodunit within the glamorously sordid world of underground theatre, investigating the mysterious homicide at their own peril.

Tickets-Dulverton Films members £3, non-members £4.50, students, accompanied by an adult, £2.50. Book in advance at Dulverton Post Office (Tel: 01398 323474) or email janaross2003@yahoo.co.uk. Bar open from 7pm.



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Bampton LARC in Station Road, Bampton, welcomes drop-in visitors at our normal opening times: Mon 10.00-15.00, Tue 12.30-15.00, Wed 12.30-15.00, Fri 12.30-15.00.

Pop in to relax, have a cuppa, warm up, have some company, browse the magazines and books, use the Wi-Fi or PCs, take a look at Bampton Visitor and Heritage Centre displays and, of course, use Bampton Library, which is open as follows: Mon 15:00-17:00, Thu 09:30-12:30, Sat 10:00-12:00.

Bampton LARC exists to keep Bampton Library; every penny of income and donations goes towards that aim.

We need to generate more interest, more support and more funds for LARC to maintain and enhance the wonderful, warm and welcoming space that was created six years ago by the local community.

Bampton LARC is available for hire for groups, clubs, presentations, rehearsals, music practice etc. We have lots of free evenings and welcome suggestions for new uses, up to 20 people at a time.

Why not volunteer to keep the LARC open? If you can spare a couple of hours a week, or indeed every other week, we welcome you with open arms!

Please get in touch, call Oliver on 01398 331267 or email: hello@bamptonlarc.org.uk www.bamptonlarc.org.uk

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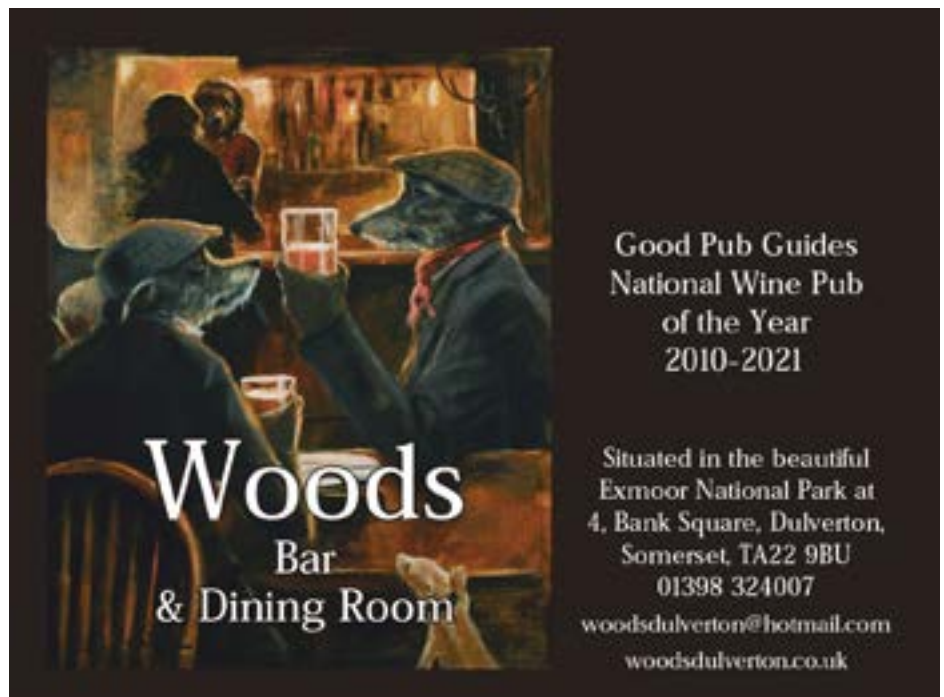
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4 March 2023
09:00-11:00

Dulverton Town Hall

Somerset Council has partnered with About Community Engagement (ACE) to engage with rural communities about the Council's Local Transport Plan update. Stop by Dulverton Town Hall on 4 March between 09:00-11:00 to grab a coffee and chat about transport!



About Community Engagement (ACE) is funded through the Future Visions Transport Group by the Rees Jeffreys Road Fund. For more information, please visit msha.ke/aceinfo



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Getting fit, keeping fit

With spring on the horizon, many of us are looking forward to leaving winter behind and getting out and about more. For some, this might include taking up a new sport or fitness activity and, when it comes to getting fit, southern Exmoor has plenty to offer—both indoors and outdoors.

If sport or martial arts are your thing, you really are spoiled for choice: from cricket to netball, short mat bowls to snooker, and croquet to karate, there are local clubs happy to welcome new members. There is a comprehensive list of sports club contacts in our local directory at the back of the magazine and details in several *Exmoor News* adverts. If you are interested in a particular sport but unsure if it is right for you, it's worth getting in touch with the club to see if it's possible to attend a session and have a go—or simply watch! We've been taking a look at some of the sport and fitness activities on offer locally and, at the end of this article, you'll find contact details for all the clubs and classes mentioned.

However, if your main aim is to become fitter, with a focus on muscle toning, improving balance, core strength, or flexibility, for example, but without the competitive element of sport, then an exercise class, could be right for you. Linda London (see page 27) runs fitness classes in Brushford and Dulverton and some are specifically designed for people over 50. Jackie Kelly (see page 14) offers a range of classes at her health studio in Dulverton and online; these include kettlebells, tone and sculpt, and full body dumbbell sessions.

Table tennis is a great way of keeping fit and improving brain function too, so it's an ideal activity for older people, as well as young; there are sessions for all ages at Brushford Parish Hall on Friday afternoons. Dancing is another excellent way to keep fit and improve your co-ordination; Wivey Folk Dancing meets twice a month at Wiveliscombe Community Centre and the emphasis is on enjoyment rather than perfection!

Yoga and Pilates are also suitable for all ages; classes are more popular than ever, and many leading sportspeople and dancers now include either or both in their fitness routines. It's never too late to start and you'll find classes at village and community halls across or close to southern Exmoor. Pat Bell (Yogability) offers hatha yoga sessions in Bampton, Yeo Mill, and at Anstey Community Hall. Nancy Tapia of Edgemoor Pilates runs classes at different levels at various locations, including Oakford Village Hall and Anstey Community Hall. Nancy and Pat deliberately keep an upper limit on class numbers, to ensure that they can offer individual advice and guidance and suggest adaptations. In yoga, for example, this might include seated postures.

We are, of course, blessed with plenty of water (not just rain) here on Exmoor and Wimbleball Lake Activity Centre offers a variety of water sports and land-based activities, from family canoeing and paddleboarding to high ropes. And Exmoor's rivers offer some great wild swimming spots, including Tarr Steps and Landacre Bridge.

The one exercise most of us can do is walking, which brings a wealth of health benefits, mental as well as physical, as dedicated dog owners will attest. A daily walk, ideally at a brisk pace, is one of the best things we can do for ourselves as we get older. If you don't like the idea of walking alone, why not join one of the local walking groups? Get your week off to a good start on Monday mornings with Bampton Wellbeing Walks or Dulverton Health Walks (see page 32) on Tuesday mornings. The Exmoor Society runs guided walks across some of the most picturesque and spectacular parts of the area (see page 24).

If you are a Somerset resident, you can find out more about sport and fitness activities near you on the Somerset Activity & Sports Partnership (SASP) website. Active Devon has similar information for those of you who live across the border!

As with all sporting and fitness activities, do check with your GP or health professional before you start, particularly if you have recently had any injuries or surgery, or have any longstanding conditions, such as arthritis or osteoporosis, or if it is some years since you have taken regular exercise. If you do have any long-term conditions or mobility issues, look for a teacher or trainer who has experience of working with people with different conditions, as they can help you adjust or adapt accordingly and exercise safely.

The key to getting fit and staying fit is to find something that you really enjoy, because once you start, you won't want to stop. You could be making new friends too.

Linda London Fitness Classes: linda@lindalondon.plus.com

Jackie Kelly (What's On in Dulverton): www.facebook.com/groups/274032223331511

Table tennis, Brushford: Richard Archer on archer@hotmail.co.uk or tel 07773 160222

Wivey Folk Dancing: Colin Savage on 07536 175509 or colin.savage2016@outlook.com

Pat Bell, Yogability: www.yogability.co.uk / pat_bell@hotmail.co.uk

Nancy Tapia, Edgemoor Pilates: www.facebook.com/edgemoorpilates / nancy@edgemoorpilates.co.uk

Wimbleball Lake Activity Centre: www.swlakestrust.org.uk/pages/site/activities/category/wimbleball-lake

Bampton Wellbeing Walks: www.facebook.com/BamptonWellbeingWalks

Dulverton Health Walks: Richard Clarke 01398 341141 / richardclarke567@btinternet.com or Richard Archer 07773 160222 / archerr@hotmail.co.uk

The Exmoor Society: www.exmoorsociety.com/events

Somerset Activity & Sports Partnership (SASP): www.sasp.co.uk

Active Devon: www.activedevon.org

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Remember to 'get your ducks in a row' and don't forget to 'join the dots'

says Carolyn Matravers of Bluebell Financial Management

Finances and health often remain a very private matter, but it is good practice to put a plan in place for both.

'Get your ducks in a row' by gathering all your paperwork together and ensure your support network knows who they need to speak to if your health declines.

Over time we all become a little slower, increasingly aware of our limitations. Many of us will experience mobility or memory challenges which are a consequence of the passing years – they certainly do not signify the loss of mental capacity or the ability to live independently. It is common to have a support network in place often without realising it. Friends, family and neighbours might be on hand if needed, masking the actual impact of these challenges on your day-to-day life.

Attendance Allowance is a non-means tested, tax-free State benefit that is very often overlooked. It is available to anyone over State pension age who fulfils a set criteria, requiring some form of assistance undertaking various

activities of daily living. It is worth investigating as the prospect of additional tax-free income could be very welcome.

You may be waiting for the right time to broach the difficult and often awkward 'what if' conversations with your loved ones. There are dynamics in every family but don't let this deter you. Families can be complicated, extended, blended, busy and often scattered across the world, but our means of communication are more advanced than ever. Where there's a will, there's a way so let's facilitate these conversations. Your family will appreciate you taking the time to 'join the dots' so they can best support you if life takes an unexpected turn in the future.

To 'get your ducks in a row' contact Carolyn Matravers at Bluebell Financial Management on 07944 992682 or carolyn@bluebellfinancialmanagement.co.uk



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WHAT TO DO...
 RECREATE YOUR FAVOURITE TREE AS A DRAWING, PAINTING, MIX MEDIA OR ANY MEDIUM 90 CM OR 20" YOU ALSO NEED TO ADD 3 DESCRIPTIVE OR EMOTIONAL WORDS ABOUT YOUR TREE.
 DON'T FORGET TO ADD YOUR DETAILS. SEE ALL T'S & C'S ON COMPETITION FORM WHERE IT COMES OUT.
 YOU MUST ATTACH A COMPETITION FORM AS PART OF YOUR ENTRY.

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OPENING & CLOSING DATES
 2ND JANUARY - 31ST MARCH 2023

GET IN TOUCH TO OBTAIN YOURSELF A COMPETITION FORM FROM YOUR SCHOOL, WILDWELLIES@GMAIL.COM OR 02082417383@THREATOP.CO.UK



My Favourite Tree Competition is back!

Three Atop Woodland Services & Ema Rowe from Wild Wellies have joined forces once again to deliver another exciting competition for the children of Exmoor and Greater Exmoor.

OUR AIM

This competition is part of our bid to ensure we create opportunities for young people across Exmoor and Greater Exmoor. We hope to further their understanding on how they can work and live in harmony with this beautiful place we call home. There are so many unique opportunities for the next generation of Exmoor's economy. Let's start to expand their knowledge whilst their minds are young and full of vibrancy and imagination.

We are welcoming children to recreate and celebrate their favourite tree in any artistic medium they would like. The aim is to connect their lives to a tree, encourage observation of that tree throughout the seasons and the wildlife it supports. Thus encouraging appreciation and pride in the landscape from an early age.

EDUCATION

We have reached out to the local schools and home school networks to promote and encourage the competition. Many have signed up and are working alongside us. Please do get in touch!

Entry forms available from info@threeatop.co.uk wildwellies@gmail.com or download threeatop.co.uk/latest-news/my-favourite-tree-competition-2023

OUR JUDGES

Kerrie and Ema are very excited once again to see all the entries from you all and will be joined by:

Graeme McVittie, Senior Conservation Officer of Woodlands for Exmoor National Park will be proudly sitting on the judging panel alongside Leo Davey, a very talented local artist based in Minehead.

CLOSING DATE

The My Favourite Tree competition is now live with a closing date of 31 March 2023.

Winners will be announced with some exciting prizes on Saturday 22 April to tie in with Earth Day.



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The Therapist Collection

Spring cleaning our bodies and our homes

Spring is here and with it comes new growth and change. It is hard not to feel more joyful with blossom blooming and daffodils brightening up the verges. For many of us, spring also brings with it the desire to spring clean. It is thought the tradition goes back to the Persian new year, Nowruz. This coincides with the first day of spring and translates to "cleaning" or "shaking the house." More recently, houses were kept warm by fires and, with windows shut, this would cause an accumulation of soot and grime. Cleaning and decluttering is also great for our mental health and detoxing our bodies.

Kate Pegram—Homeopath

After winter, when most of us have been less active and eating less fresh and more rich, heavy food, we can feel a bit stodgy and sluggish! Well known homeopathic "organ support" remedies can stimulate and detox our key organs to bring increased vitality and energy. A good start is to work on the liver and the kidneys, the two most important filters for cleaning our blood. Signs and symptoms of a struggling liver include constipation, bad breath, poor digestion of fats, irritability and feeling constantly fatigued.

Remedies such as Chelidonium, Nux Vomica and Carduus Marianus given in low potencies (eg 6c) and when symptoms agree, may bring relief. Some signs of stressed kidneys are dark circles under the eyes, painful, frequent urination and cystitis. Remedies such as Berberis, Apis and Solidago taken in low potency (eg 6c) can be a wonderful cleansing tonic. If you are dealing with complex health issues relating to a particular organ, individualised treatment with a homeopath is recommended.
www.evolutionhomeopathy.com

Julia Walder—Aromatherapy & Massage Therapist

Essential oils have many benefits for the body and the home. As many shop bought cleaning products are full of chemicals, you can use essential oils instead, offering a natural safer alternative, with the added benefit that they can lift your mood at the same time.

Making your own cleaning products is simple with a few essential oils and basic household ingredients like water, baking soda and white vinegar. For example, an antiseptic spray can be made using:

100ml of cool boiled water

10 drops of tea tree

5 drops of lemon essential oil

5 drops of peppermint

5 drops of eucalyptus blue gum.

Mix them together in a spray bottle and enjoy the dual benefits as you clean.

To be safe, mix a new blend every couple of weeks. Avoid contact with neat oils on your skin, spot test and don't use on varnished/polished surfaces.

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Gerald Cadogan



SIMONSBATH FESTIVAL 2023

This year is the twelfth anniversary of the Simonsbath Festival, where audiences will be treated to world class music and speakers in May and June.

The festival website is now live, with booking information and details of performers: Pianist Rupert Egerton-Smith; Gilbert & Sullivan touring company, Express G&S; author, Helen Wilson; geologist, Gerald Cadogan; medieval music group, Amarylii; Flanders and Swann specialists, Towns & Chatters...and many more. Printed programmes will be available across Exmoor in the usual locations during April.

All events are held in the intimate St Luke's Church in Simonsbath, with its excellent acoustics. The festival's collaborative activities, including Exmoor Society walks and the Exmoor Running and Walking Festival, will be taking place as usual.

We are particularly proud of our Affordable Tickets Policy with £10 tickets, or £15 to reserve a seat at musical events and £5 tickets, or £10 to reserve a seat at speaker events. We give free entry to all our events to those aged 16 or under.

More details and ticket booking can be found on the festival website at www.simonsbathfestival.org.uk or email tickets@simonsbathfestival.org.uk



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Guided Walks

Early Spring 2023



For information and booking visit exmoorsociety.com



March Walks

22nd	Pinkery to Wood Barrow to Long Stone
29th	History walk on 'other' side of the East Lyn River

April Walks

12th	Dulverton - Barle River and the Leat
17th	Farm walk inc lambing at Westermill
22nd	Lost Village of Clictet
24th	Cutcombe and the Saxon Herepath
29th	Lichens and mosses at Heddon Valley

  @exmoorsociety



Cover story...

Our cover image for this issue—Stag in the Rain—was taken by Jochen Langbein.

Dr Langbein is a mammal ecologist who came to Exmoor in the early 1990s to lead a Southampton University project, funded by the National Park, National Trust and several other organisations, into the ranging behaviour and impacts of deer grazing. At the end of the project, having fallen in love with the area, he and his family settled on the edge of Exmoor and set up Langbein Wildlife, ecological consultants, specialising, over the past 35 years, in deer research and management advisory work across the UK. Jochen's main passion, though, has always been photography and, in particular, filming wildlife behaviour;

Bird Box Monitoring Event

May 2023



Wednesday 10th May. Due to the nature of the task it is very weather dependent so if it's raining we will be postponing to a different day.

Join us for a 2 hour walk with a member of the British Trust for Ornithology as we monitor the bird boxes in Burrige woods. Expect to see Piedflycatcher, Blue Tits, Great Tits, Marsh Tits and Nuthatches from nest building to fledglings.



For information and booking visit exmoorsociety.com

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he combined this initially by using CCTV and, latterly, remote wildlife cameras for his work whenever possible. The cover picture was taken on a very wet day during the 2019 red deer rut, but the deer were very inactive, sheltering under trees, with rain pelting down all day. By contrast, Jochen took a picture of an Exmoor stag and calf was taken in mid-September the same year, during the early part of the red deer rut, when the stag was already busy roaring and gathering his harem. You can view a video of that September scene on Jochen's YouTube channel, youtube.com/LangbeinWildlife, in a playlist bit.ly/ExmoorDeer, with sample clips from each month through the year.



THE EXMOOR SOCIETY

PINNACLE AWARD 2023

An award of up to £5,000 is available for business development costs for people aged between 18 and 35 who live, work or study in Greater Exmoor

The Pinnacle Award was set up in 2011 by The Exmoor Society to support young entrepreneurs with businesses on Exmoor. As a conservation charity we want to show how beautiful landscapes and successful businesses can work together and help young people make successful lives on the moor.

Previous winners include:



Nick Hosegood
Three Atop Woodland Services



Oliver Hill
Hillbilly Haircuts



Tom Lile
Artisan Blacksmith

Apply now!

info@exmoorsociety.com 01398 323335 www.exmoorsociety.com

Closing date 1st June 2023

Jim Laker Fund—Update

The Jim Laker Fund (JLF), which raises funds across the 10 Parishes area in West Somerset, recently held its AGM. Looking back over the past year, fundraising gathered pace during 2022, with local communities' generosity continuing, despite a worsening economic climate. This has enabled JLF to give grants to a range of small organisations including Wivey Food Project, St Luke's Church in Langley Marsh, Wivey Link, Huish Champflower Village Hall, and Wiveliscombe Scouts Group. Our fundraising activities in 2023 include stalls selling our annual draw tickets and distinctive JLF 'Where in the World' merchandise, at venues such as Milverton Street Fair, Wivey Flower Show, and the 10 Parishes Street Fair. And, of course, the weekly Bonus Ball fundraiser in the Bear Inn.

Towards the end of 2022, much of JLF's activity was focused upon the Wiveliscombe Christmas Lights display, with another successful collaboration with Wivey Community Centre. Large crowds gathered to watch the magical switch-on by Santa and local children, with music from High Park wind band, and Santa then reappearing in his grotto. As in previous years, the amazing tree (donated by Langford Lakes Farm) and surrounding lights display were breathtaking and truly a community effort, with input (physical and financial) from individuals, businesses and groups across Wivey. We are still able to offer small grants to groups across the 10 Parishes - if your organisation would like to apply, application forms are available from Wivey House or can be downloaded from our website www.jimlakerfund.co.uk

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Croquet Anyone?

The Exmoor Croquet Club meets at 2pm every Tuesday from April to October in the QE II Pavilion behind Exford Church. Croquet is a gentle but competitive game of strategy and skill, suitable for players of all ages and levels of fitness. New members are always welcome, to spend an afternoon in beautiful surroundings, make new friends and chat over tea and cake. It's a great way to keep physically and mentally fit, but most of all it's fun!

We are a friendly, informal club who play for pleasure and companionship. No experience necessary - we will teach you how to play the game. Come along any Tuesday and try a "taster" session free of charge. Thereafter playing fee of £3 per day including tea.

We'll look forward to seeing you!

For more information call Diana 07966 903052; Ines 01643 831016

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Minehead's Regal Theatre Celebrates Local Talent

As a wonderful community resource, the Regal Theatre has an important role to play. Sharing a wide and varied programme of events, shows, and films for our residents and visitors is the beating heart of everything we do. We are working hard to ensure that we have plenty of great events that celebrate the wonderful diverse talent we have within our rural community, and we're kicking this year off with the Regal Variety Show coming this April! This talent-packed extravaganza will perform over two

nights on Friday 21 and Saturday 22 April.

Our volunteers are working together to produce a varied programme of music, drama, dance and spectacular entertainment with performers from across our community. This celebratory event will showcase our abundance of local talent and the dedicated teams of backstage crews, all of whom make live performance flourish right here at the Regal Theatre; the heart of our artistic community. Those taking part include the cast and members of the Minehead Amateur Theatrical Association (MATA) founding companies, namely Barnstormers, Minehead Dramatic Society, Minehead Panto People, and the Waterfront Theatre Company,

and sharing the stage will be a host of local talented performers and some special guests. We invite you to join us; book your tickets today via our website or directly through the box office.

Recently there have been some concerns in the wider community about the current stability of the Regal Theatre and we're upset to hear some rumours circulating that we may be closing. There is an army of volunteers tirelessly working to ensure that Minehead and surrounding villages do not lose their theatre. We cannot escape the truth that Covid and the increase in energy costs have had an impact, although the challenges we face as an organisation are shared with many others across the county. And while we have enjoyed more affluent times, we are striving to ensure that your theatre is preserved for future generations to enjoy.

We're exceptionally proud of our run by and for our community, and many hands do make light work. We are actively inviting new volunteers with a broad set of skills, such as marketing (including social media), public relations, IT, finance, business management, and building and maintenance, to support us through these demanding times, as we rely entirely on volunteer contributions. Those who are interested to know more can come along to one of our coffee morning drop-ins, which are



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held every Saturday between 10am and 12pm or you can email us at volunteer@regaltheatre.co.uk—we'd love to hear from you!

There are many other ways that you can support us, from making direct donations either in person or via our website regaltheatre.co.uk, buying a ticket, becoming a Friend of the Theatre, or even just liking, sharing, and tagging someone in our social media posts.

We know that this is a very challenging time for all in our local community and we sincerely appreciate your continued support and passion for performance.

The Board of Directors

The M.A.T.A. Regal Theatre Co. Ltd.

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Sunday 19th March 11am coffee
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Sunday 26th March, 3:30 pm for
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Dulverton Events 2023

Don't miss these events in the pretty market town of Dulverton, Exmoor in 2023

Dulverton Antiques Valuation Event - What's It Worth? – Saturday 25 March

Secret Gardens of Dulverton – Sunday 2 July

Dulverton Artisan Food, Drink & Crafts Festival – Saturday 8 July

Dulverton Fun Run & Canicross – Sunday 17 September

Dulverton Exmoor Literary Festival – Saturday 18 & Sunday 19 November

Dulverton by Starlight – Sunday 3 December

AND

DULVERTON MONTHLY FARMERS MARKET – on the last Saturday of the month April to September inclusive

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Dulverton Netball Club

We always welcome new members (ladies 16+) and offer something for all abilities, whether you haven't played for a while, since school, or never before! We have a team entered in SASP Social League in Taunton and another in Exeter & District League. And we have a fantastic social calendar ranging from annual dinners to dog walks, to weekends away watching the professionals play netball!

We meet on a Thursday evening all year round, 6.30-8.00pm at Dulverton Junior School. Your first two sessions are free.

For further information, please email dulvertonnetballclub@gmail.com or find us on Facebook and Instagram!



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It's hard to believe that as I write this article we are already at the end of January 2023 and it has certainly been an interesting start to the year with floods and then snow. It is inspiring, albeit early, to see signs of spring on the horizon, with seasonal flowers starting to poke their heads through the soil.

During the past twelve months, the property market has certainly been interesting: from war in Ukraine, interest rates, cost of living and changes in government. However, the property market has once again proved how resilient it can be in the UK!

In real terms, the property market in the South West tends to fare better because it is still a popular place to live. The South West is still one of the 'Top 3 Places' to live in England for those seeking a 'better' lifestyle and a slower pace of living. In addition, it is very apparent that a high percentage of the population still like to own their own home, with many people already considering a move this year.

Despite the negative publicity from media outlets, predicting that houses prices will drop by 10- 20%, we at Webbers have chosen to listen to commentators like Roger Martyn-Fagg, a behavioural economist, who is generally accurate with his forecasts, and who predicts price adjustments of around 5-7%. However, whilst Exmoor and the surrounding area continue to remain a popular destination for people to live, locally we don't believe prices will dip by these margins and would expect to see them adjust by only a few per cent. We regard this as positive and should remember that since the start of the pandemic in 2020, prices increased by circa 20%.



So, what does that mean for a seasonal spring market?

The market for 2023 has gotten off to a great and optimistic start and we have welcomed a more 'normal' and stable market. As we head into a more traditional and seasonal property market, we have enjoyed a positive January with increased levels of valuations and buyer enquiries. We are confident that, with the nature of the enquiries from both buyers and sellers, there will be a rise in instruction levels boosting the number of buyers seeking their home on Exmoor and the surrounding area.

Mortgage rates have certainly started to settle (despite media speculation), with rates at competitive levels and fixed rates available from high street lenders. This compares to where rates were back in November 2022.

Getting Ready for Spring... Do you want to beat the rush and not be on the back foot?

I know in previous articles I have touched on the 'MARKET READY' service but, as we head into spring, I thought it would be beneficial for those seeking a move this year to see how this service could help you. We have a number of clients who have decided to use this service.

Market Ready does exactly what it says on the tin...

It enables clients to have everything ready to launch a property on to the market without hitting the proverbial green light. So, when the right property becomes available for you to purchase, you are not frantically trying to get

everything in place for your own home to be marketed. This can help to remove stress, delays and possible lost opportunities if the seller of the property you are interested in wants things to move quickly. At that stage, Webbers would always review whether the price of your property needs adjusting (prices may have altered since our visit) and review whether photos need updating (depending on weather, time of year/season etc) to ensure that your home is always presented in the very best possible manner. We then wait until you are ready to launch to the market. This means you are one step ahead of the rest.

For more details about this service please contact me on 01398 323271 or email me: ginny.saunders@webbers.co.uk

Having the right agent to assist you when moving is key in any market, let alone one that has seen some significant changes in a short space of time. To have a knowledgeable local agent is invaluable; someone who knows the area and market trends of Exmoor, Dulverton and the locality. It can be quite surprising how the local markets can differ despite being only a few miles apart! We pride ourselves on giving an accurate representation of the local market to ensure that when you make the decision to sell, you are fully informed of market trends, pricing and the best form of marketing at the time to ensure you achieve the best possible price in a realistic time frame.

We work hard as we are open longer. Our office is open six days a week; the only Exmoor office to stay open on a Saturday until 4pm! Our customer care team are available to take calls from 8am until 8pm every weekday, ensuring that we are available to make the most of all opportunities. The team in the office are

all trained to the "Guild of Property Professional" standards and, together, we will ensure that our structured and caring "award winning" service gets you moving in 2023.

Office News

We are delighted and proud to announce that we have won our fourth Feefo 2023 Platinum Trusted Service Award for Customer Care for the third time running.



Feefo is an independent reviewing platform where our clients can review the service they received during their experience with Webbers, whether that is from selling, buying or just showing someone around a house. This is an excellent award for Webbers Dulverton to win and we are extremely grateful to all our clients for taking the time to review us.

If Webbers can be of any assistance with your moving plans, even if you aren't ready to move and just curious to know the value of your home then please do not hesitate to contact the office on 01398 323271 or email dulverton@webbers.co.uk

Ginny

Local Director



Ginny Saunders
– Local Director



Louise Garner
– Administrator



Rebecca Whitehead
– Property Advisor



Warwick Wilcox
– Property Advisor

Dulverton Health Walks

This friendly group meets each Tuesday morning at 10am to walk at various locations. Walks last an hour or two, through our beautiful countryside. They are not very difficult and we stop, now and then, to catch up and also to appreciate the landscape.

We would be delighted to see new people so if you feel you would like to join us then please contact either: Richard Clarke on 01398 341141 or email: richardclarke567@btinternet.com or Richard Archer on 0777 3160 222 or email: archerr@hotmail.co.uk.



Photo: Walkers on West Anstey Common

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LOCAL VINEYARD ANNOUNCES CONCERTS FOR 2023



Wellhayes Vineyard, located just outside the village of Clayhanger, specialises in the production of quality sparkling wine. Owners, Simon and Alison Routh, also put on concerts over the summer months. These are an opportunity to hear first-class professional musicians in an intimate environment in an old

stone barn above the winery, with views overlooking the vineyard—and, of course, a glass of the award-winning Wellhayes Sparkling Wine in the interval!

The programme for 2023 has now been announced and starts in April with a recital by mezzo-soprano, Annabel Kennedy, who won the



audience prize in last year's Somerset Song Prize. This year the season extends longer than usual, to a concert in November by the Resol String Quartet, who are currently Britten-Pears Young Artists, and who won first prize in the Wigmore Hall Cavatina competition in 2021. Other highlights of this year's season include Hugh Wiggin and Oliver Wass in a harp and saxophone duet, and the Corvus Ensemble.



Full details are available from wellhayes.uk/2023-concerts or 01398 361612.



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12 October 2022

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Wimbleball Lake Levels

Shocking drone images showed how water levels at a reservoir fell dangerously low to just 20 per cent following a summer of droughts.

At its lowest, figures showed Wimbleball stood at only 17.2 per cent of its capacity with 3.7 million litres of water against 21.3 million litres when it is full.

Luckily, water is pumped up to Wimbleball Lake, and on the 15th January South West Water say the lake is at 94%.

The march of Spring

Sun on frost

melting the thousand crystal spines
that slide and fall from each icy blade of grass;
dissolving silently to a liquid filament of dew.
Worm casts dotting the paths beneath Devonshire
banks of beech trees, brambles and bracken
soften slowly to globules of mud.

March is melting Exmoor to crushed green
and harsh petrified browns;
hillsides covered by heather stalks and blackened gorse
from Dunster to Dulverton, Porlock to Parracombe;
untamed vistas challenging our valleys of raging rivers
rising steeply to meet the early warming dawn.

Each new day awakes
more quickly than before
carried in on gentle clouds of rosy hue
its rose-tinted fingers spread across the sky
lightly strewn from a careless giant's hand
sowing springtime into our world.

The march of spring has begun
like an egg stirring
its spirit throbbing
impatient to be alive -
and a new life is born
vibrant with beginnings.

Lambs will bleat
springing as children from trampolines
in our fields;
calves will stumble, new born, sticky legged,
with warm slick-backed heads
already bumping upwards, seeking milk.

Cows will bend their heads to breathe in
the essence of their offspring
each having a sacred identity
perfectly
loved
in this march of spring.



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On the Mount in Rural Devon

Every year on the penultimate Sunday in September, the vicar of St John's Church, Hyde Park, London, appears on horseback in an established tradition known as Horseman's Sunday. A cavalcade of over 100 horses and riders parade to the church in order to celebrate horse riding in the heart of London. The event dates back 40 years, its original purpose being to highlight the need to maintain stables along the north of Hyde Park.

Somewhat closer to home, the Revd Claire Curtis sent me a message: "Do you remember," she asked, "we had a chat a while ago, when I joined the Exe Valley Mission Community, and I said that I wanted to pray-ride—that is to say, I planned to pray around the parishes on horseback?" I remembered our conversation, of course, and I was intrigued to know how events had moved forward in the interim.

The Exe Valley Mission Community consists of nine separate rural Anglican churches, which cover a wide geographical region to the north of the Tiverton area. These are in the villages of Calverleigh, Cruwys Morchard, Loxbeare, Oakford, Rackenford, Stoodleigh, Templeton, Washfield and Withleigh.

I visited Claire and found her brimming with excitement about the long-term loan of 18-year-old Bertie, a soft and gentle, sturdy, white Highland pony, whom she describes as a "complete answer to prayer." She was keen to tell me how Bertie's arrival came about.

Claire was ordained as a deacon in 2021 by Robert Atwell, Bishop of Exeter, and ordained priest in September 2022 by the Rt Revd Jackie Searle, Bishop of Crediton. "It was an emotional time," Claire told me, frankly. "I knew I wanted to pray-ride, but I had no idea of how to bring the concept into reality. Recently, the time felt right, and I began to pray for the ideal solution, which was for a gentle, kind horse to come my way. After just three days of prayer, a message popped up on social media, from someone local looking for a person to exercise her horse."



Claire said that she felt strongly that God was sending a clear message, saying: "Tell her your story!" So, she contacted Kim, the pony's owner. "I told her that I am a vicar and that it was my dream to be able to ride a pony to spread God's word in the community in a unique way. But I learned that Kim didn't want to lend her horse out to another location. She was looking for someone to go to her home and ride him from there; however, my story interested her, and she wanted to learn more.

"It was brilliant news!" Claire went on, "and we agreed to meet up for a ride together to chat further."

Claire and Kim rode out twice and, after visiting Claire at her home in Templeton, and further discussion, Kim agreed that she could have Bertie on long term loan, saying, "I couldn't wish for a more wonderful home for him, and I can see he has more work to do."

Claire told me that Bertie arrived with a comprehensive wardrobe of tack, rugs, blankets and toys. He has settled in well to his comfortable stable.

Claire describes her thoughts about riding Bertie around the parish: "It feels refreshing and ancient at the same time. It's a natural thing to do and people respond with such pleasure! The Diocese of Exeter's vision is, 'Growing in prayer, making new disciples, serving the people of Devon with joy' and this feels like an important part of

my ministry. People don't expect to see a woman wearing a dog collar riding a horse, and it certainly makes them smile and engage with me!"

I spent a delightful and joyful morning with Claire and the gentle, obedient Bertie. We had a window of beautiful weather that made for some great images, reflecting the special affinity between rider and pony.

Claire's enthusiasm and heartfelt joy about her answered prayer is indeed something beautiful to see and share. I have no doubt that in the future the "riding reverend" will become a familiar sight along some of the countryside's ancient green lanes..

www.exevalleychurches.org/

Voices of Exmoor

Over the last few years, we have all seen television programmes featuring community choirs. There can be no doubt that this must have contributed to the popularity and consequent growth of choirs and the estimated 2.14 million UK individuals who regularly sing in them.

posture. Joining a choir can be good for both brain and body but, most of all, it is great fun.

Voices of Exmoor is a mixed voice community choir open to all, regardless of ability, experience or whether you can read music or not. There are no auditions either. Our members just need enthusiasm, to enjoy singing with others and, in doing so, can spread an enthusiasm for their love of music.

With this in mind, we are holding a 'Sing Along' in Dulverton Town Hall on Saturday 29 April between 10am and 1pm. Drop in at any time to listen or sing and talk to our members over a cup of tea. Alternatively, come along to one of our regular sessions held every Monday in Dulverton Town Hall from 7.30pm to 9 pm.



Singing is immensely therapeutic and has been shown to improve our happiness and wellbeing. Moreover, singing in a community choir provides a sense of belonging as well as expanding our social group. Learning new songs certainly keeps our brains active and singing improves breathing and





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NEWS FROM YOUR VILLAGE AGENT



The spring flowers may be nodding their heads, bringing with them the hope of warmer days, but we still have a month or so of winter ahead of us, and the cost-of-living crisis isn't going away quietly! Below are some practical solutions that can make a big difference quickly, or call me Diane Weston, your local Village Agent on 07563723884 or 01823 331222. I can connect you to the right services and help make this winter a little less harsh.

Petrol costs

Find the nearest, cheapest fuel prices:
www.petrolprices.com/

Community Larders/Fridges

Free food and household items, with no appointment or referral needed. Call me to find out if there is one near you, or visit:
www.hubhub.org.uk/the-community-fridge

Somerset County Council Household Support Fund

This fund offers short-term urgent financial help to people in Somerset struggling to afford essentials:
www.somerset.gov.uk/somerset-household-support-fund/

Bishop Fox's Educational Grant

Grants for children and young people aged 11 - 24 in the former Borough of Taunton Deane for uniform or equipment. Call Sarah Olleranshaw on 01823 331 222 or visit: www.bfef.org.uk/

Surviving Winter grants

CCS Village Agents distribute grants to older people struggling with their fuel bills or if they need to make their home warmer through small repairs and fixes.

Somerset Warm Spaces

These are local community hubs open in the day providing a warm place to be, company and often tea and biscuits! We are delighted that nearly all our 30 Talking Cafes are warm spaces. Find out more here:
www.sparksomerset.org.uk/find-warm-welcome

Community Building or Community Group Support (CCS)

CCS has a team who help community/charitable groups and hubs, such as village halls, to cope with increased overheads, grant finding and sustainability. Visit: www.ccslovesomerset.org or call 01823 331222.

Emotional Support

More than winter blues? MIND in Somerset has a free 24/7 number you can call if you are worried about anything or are struggling with your mental health. Call 01823 276 892 or 0800 138 1692.

Just remember—if in doubt, give your Village Agent a shout! We are here to help Somerset thrive!



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Rotary Club of Exmoor

A huge thanks to all those who generously contributed to our 'Santa' collections for charity—although we were unable to come around the houses with the sleigh, the collections in Bampton and in Dulverton raised over £800 for which we are most grateful. We would also like to thank all our local sponsors: The George, Brompton Regis; G.J. Strong Ltd; Moor Motors; Fraser Anti Static Techniques Ltd; P.F.G Fabrications; Spar, Bampton; Exmoor Industrial Supplies; R. C. Construction; Rupert White; Castle Grove; Corks and Cru; The Anchor, Exbridge; Bampton Pharmacy; Valerie Babington (Cube Direct).

We have two walks for the charity Children's Hospice SW in the calendar. The first is the Exmoor Challenge for adults, based from Bampton on 23 April. The second is the annual big event, the Exmoor Rotary Youth Challenge, when we have over 400 young people walking 16 miles between checkpoints, based from Dulverton School, and this is scheduled later than usual on 20 May. This event is much appreciated by many schools and youth organisations as it requires many skills and teamwork, and there is a real pride in completing the challenge. Information on both these will be available nearer the date on www.exmoor-rotary.org.uk

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Under new management

Caring Wivey

Wivey Cares is a unique charity that links local self-employed carers with elderly people, so that they may be looked after and be able to stay in their own homes. Based in Wiveliscombe, it offers support to people in the town and also in the surrounding parishes of Ashbrittle, Bathealton, Brompton Ralph, Chipstable, Fitzhead, Huish Champflower, Milverton and Stawley.

Wivey Cares also runs a weekly Memory Activity Group in Wiveliscombe Community Centre to help and support people with memory difficulties. It will also help people to claim their Attendance Allowance, providing some of the funding needed to help with care needs.

The support available ranges from personal care during the day, to walking the dog and providing meals, along with companionship.

Numerous testimonials evidence and support the success of this localised care charity:

"Very impressed with the support we have received from Wivey Cares."

"We found a carer for my mother who has dementia via this service, this has proved to be invaluable."

"A very informative network of very helpful people."

"This care support network is the most necessary, friendly, useful facility we could ever have imagined."

If you would like to know more about the care available or to register as a carer then please contact Tamzin on 07508 331661 or email co-ordinator@wiveycares.net



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The Brand New Dulverton Antiques Valuation Event – What's It Worth?



Dulverton, the Southern Gateway to Exmoor, is planning an exciting new antiques evaluation event. Adam Partridge Auctioneers are joining Visit Dulverton to host What's It Worth? in the historic town hall, on Saturday 25 March, from 10.30am to 3.30pm.

Visitors are invited to bring along their antiques, jewellery, fine art and collectors' items. For a small fee, the specialists on hand will give a valuation and history of the items that are brought along. The fee is £5 for a maximum of three items—small enough to carry—per person. Refreshments will be available; the bar will be open, and there'll be live music too!

Adam is well known as a regular face on television programmes such as *Flog It!*, *Antiques Road Trip*, *Dickinson's Real Deal* and *Bargain*

Hunt, and is delighted to be assisting Visit Dulverton with this new event.

Adam said, "The last two years have been very difficult for so many businesses, but also for towns and villages impacted by a lack of visitor numbers. When we were asked to offer a team of valuers for this event, we instantly said yes! And with our new salesroom only a few miles away in Hele, we hope to be visiting this area a lot in the future."

If anyone has large items or too many pieces to bring on the day, Adam Partridge Auctioneers are offering home appointments on 25 or 26 March. For those wishing to sell items, the auctioneers can accept pieces on the day for future specialist auctions. No appointments are needed at What's It Worth? It will be first come, first served, with a simple ticketing system on the day.

Keep an eye on the Visit Dulverton website and social media pages for more information about the event www.visitdulverton.com/dulverton-antiques-valuation-event/

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Endurance GB—Busy Philippa!

The last time that *Exmoor News* talked to an endurance rider, it was Charlotte Noel, from Exford (in 2020), and Charlotte was in her sixties. She had entered her Argentine polo pony in a 40k novice class at the Festival of Endurance and had finished second, and was first past the post in the Red Dragon that year. She told us, “It was ridiculous; I was awarded the most exciting newcomer at a gala dinner and I’m 63.”

Here we are again, in 2023, chatting to Philippa Verry, in a very similar position, so we asked her, “What is it that attracted you to this sport?”

“I would say endurance is a wonderful sport. Horse welfare is paramount and everyone helps each other, even though it’s competitive. In my twenties, I won a dressage scholarship at Windsor Park Equestrian Club, with John Lassetter. I’ve hunted with various packs and even performed at Olympia. This just seemed a natural progression.” Competitively speaking, at 60, and in the form of your life having taken up endurance just six years ago, how did this happen?

“I bought Stilton to hunt, as after 10 seasons with the incredibly strong, Melitta, I rather fancied the idea of an easier ride! During the summers, we began taking part in the pleasure rides on Exmoor. It led us to graded endurance rides. Stilton has upgraded to open level, as he has now earned national placings and we finished fourth in the two-day, 80km

Exmoor Golden Horseshoe Ride last year. When he took a well-earned rest after that and, with a bit of extra fitness training, I brought Melitta back into work to take Stilton’s place in a competition in Dorset. She came second. I couldn’t believe it! So I entered her into another competition in Cornwall and she won it. She’s come into the sport aged 18, having hunted all her life. Any horse can do endurance, they just have to enjoy it.” You have recently published a manual of Exmoor Bridleway Rides, in which you give so much detail. How do you fit it all in with running a small farm of beef cattle and sheep as well?

“Researching and mapping the routes ensures Stilton and Melitta are kept fit for competitions and I’m so lucky to live by Exmoor; it’s the best natural training ground for endurance. I picked up a reconditioned GoPro that I wore as I rode through the routes. It took pictures and recorded my voice so I was able to transcribe it all easily when I got home.” You’ve also designed three routes for this year’s Golden Horseshoe competition

from 25km to 40 km and 80km?

“I plotted the routes joining the best bits together for the riders to enjoy. The next rather time-consuming task, with help from Amanda Hamley of the West Somerset and Exmoor Bridleways Association, who is also on the Golden Horseshoe Committee, was to visit all the landowners, whose land we planned to cross, and check that they were happy with our proposed routes. Amanda and I are part of a whole new experienced administration line-up for the Golden Horseshoe Ride, who are determined to bring the event back to its former glory over the next few years as a UK iconic endurance event.”

This year’s event takes place on 19, 20 and 21 May at the Exford Showground. For further information contact GHS2023@hotmail.com

Pleasure Rides:

Easter Monday 10 April—North Molton, contact Debby Appleby at mollandmare@icloud.com

Sunday 16 April—Wheddon Cross, email amanda.hamley1@gmail.com

1 May (May Day)—Filleigh, email sheilatapp3@gmail.com



Picture by Hamish Mitchell
Media/Horse & Hound

“I keep seeing on the news that my bills could be going up soon.

It’s making me really worried especially as I spent more on Christmas than I should have done. How can I get my spending back on track in 2023?”

Lots of people are asking themselves this very question just now but there are lots of things you can do to be more in control of your money and be better prepared for the future.

1. Be very clear about exactly how much money you have coming in and going out each month, and be realistic about what you really need for essentials like food and travel.

2. Set yourself a budget that you can stick to. You may find our budgeting tool useful to help you.

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/budgeting/budgeting/work-out-your-budget/

If any of your bills do go up during the year, you can go back to our budgeting tool at any time, create a new plan and stay in control.

3. See if you can reduce any of your living costs.

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/help-with-debt/dealing-with-your-debts/reducing-your-regular-living-costs/

4. Make sure you are getting all the income you are entitled to.

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/help-with-debt/dealing-with-your-debts/check-if-you-can-increase-your-income/

This will show you if you are entitled to support such as benefits or government grants. It will also tell you if you are being paid the correct wage.

5. As credit or store card bills land on the mat it is perfectly understandable that these debts add to your worries but the priority has to be paying your rent/ mortgage, energy bills and Council Tax as failing to pay these has serious consequences. The following links give advice about which bills you need to prioritise and support available to help pay these and other bills:

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/help-with-debt/dealing-with-your-debts/work-out-which-debts-to-deal-with-first/

www.citizensadvice.org.uk/debt-and-money/budgeting/budgeting/get-help-with-bills/

When you have planned how to cover your priority bills, the budgeting tool can then help you plan on how to repay credit/store cards and overdraft charges.

Here at Citizens Advice Torridge, North, Mid & West Devon we have a specialist team of people to help with debt problems and money management. Visit our website www.ruraldevoncab.org.uk and click on Get Advice.

Alternatively, you can ring our free, local Adviceline on 0808 27 87 999.

Would you like to help people resolve their problems? Demand for our services is increasing dramatically and is likely to continue to do so for some time. We rely heavily on our volunteers and are always keen to recruit more. We give full training and ongoing support so, if the idea of working with us appeals to you. please email recruitment@ruraldevoncab.org.uk and find out more!

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Who is the scheme for?

The aim of the scheme is to bring together those in need of help and support in the Dulverton community with local volunteers able to offer help. It is not there to replace the work done by social

services and professional care agencies but will operate on a much more personal and responsive level. The people who need support may be the elderly, disabled, single or young parents or carers, those temporarily in need through illness or anyone who may be isolated within the community.

Why have a Good Neighbour Scheme?

Good Neighbours can play a key role in community life. They can:

- offer valuable but informal support and advice – a helping hand
- reduce feelings of isolation, exclusion and loneliness.

How does it work?

We have a co-ordinator who will receive all requests for help on our dedicated phone line. The co-ordinator will then phone round to find a Good Neighbour volunteer able to help. If you can offer volunteer help, please ring the helpline.

What help might be given?

The help offered by Good Neighbours may include:

- errands, shopping or collecting prescriptions
- preparing emergency meals
- household tasks or gardening
- companionship
- letter writing or form filling
- helping people after discharge from hospital
- reading to partially-sighted or blind people
- providing information
- dog walking

We have fridge magnets that can be a useful reminder. These will be available from Hanover House, Dulverton Post Office, the Copper Kettle, Isis, How's the Hair (all subject to availability). If you would like a fridge magnet posted to you, please email: dgn@btinternet.com

How do I make contact?

Telephone 07395 171409 from 10am – 4 pm Monday - Friday

New craft fairs for Dulverton

Dulverton is the location for three new craft fairs this year, the first of which will be held in the Town Hall on Saturday 8 April. Organised by local nano-brewery, Cottage Beer Project, as part of its events programme, a wide variety of high quality, local artisan businesses are taking part. They include Sip Shed (cocktails), Springers Cottage Soaps, Billie & Co (dog and human apparel), Leather Lady (leather jewellery) and many more.

The Easter event has activities for children; is dog friendly, of course, and there are traders already confirmed to attend. It's hoped that there will be no duplication of stall types, to ensure fairness for the traders, but also for a greater mix for the public to visit. If there are small businesses that can demonstrate a great product and display at events, they are welcome to register their interest. Contact dan@cottagebeerproject.co.uk and he'll send the link to the required form.

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A Dog's Day Out—Man About the House

Have you seen that up there Honey? It's another one of those mysterious spots.

"Where?"

Up there, on the corner of the ceiling by the window. It's a dark patch with a white fluffy bit in the middle.

"Fungi."

Funny?

"No. It's fungi, a mould that grows on damp wood."

How do you know that!?

"She's got a book about it on the shelf, a Collins Little Gem—it's paw size. There's a whole series of subjects, one about trees, butterflies. All sorts."

We should point it out to her.

"I wouldn't, Buddy; some things are best left unsaid, can cause stress. You know what's happened with that Harry."

You're right. It will be summer soon and the heat will be back and so will the workmen. I'll tell decorator Dan instead. I'll show him my shed too; there are fluffy white spots in there.

"Wrong department – gardening or carpentry, show Darren or Simon. I heard her on the phone this morning and all last week. She said you've got to get in early if you want the best to do a job. She was leaving messages for Jason."

Who is Jason?

"I think he is the roof man. Must be Tom and Dick she said not

answering—just have to wait until he feels better."

Didn't he come last year?

"The year before. Last year the scaffolder was here and then Kevin dropped a liner down the chimney."

We got on well with Kevin, didn't we—he liked us? She was pleased with the scaffolding too; she saw it as a work of art. The platforms and the walkways he put up were creative.

"Some are an eyesore, she said. We'll definitely be seeing that scaffolder again."

What was his name, Tim?

"There's going to be quite a big celebration soon; perhaps she should wait and put it up then. We could cover it in flags and hang some bunting."

A party! Oh you know how much I love parties. A birthday?

"Bigger than a birthday, Buddy, a coronation. Much more to eat and drink."

Whoopee! Who's it for, I'll write them a card.

"Charles".

Oh I know, the plumber.

Buddy Brown (pure Jack Russell), a roving reporter

In memory of my terrier friends, Millie and McCoy, who sadly passed away earlier this year.



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Understanding a dog's movements can aid us in determining less obvious underlying illnesses or health issues.

For example, choosing to sit or lay down rather than standing could be a sign of discomfort or weakness in your dog. A funny walk like skipping could indicate an issue with its knees.

Bunny hopping could indicate a weakness or pain in its hips.

Changes in a dog's coat e.g. hair sticking up, curls and/or zig zag patterns could be a sign of underlying muscle and soft tissue soreness.

Dogs are really good at hiding pain so the signs can be extremely subtle. Repeatedly licking their lips and yawning whilst being touched could be cause for concern.

If you've got any concerns or questions regarding your canine friend please don't hesitate to get in touch



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Travels from Dulverton: chapter 4

The year is now well under way, and with Burns Night and Valentine's

Day under our belts, the mornings and evenings are hastily getting lighter. A minute's more light each morning and evening. In no time, we will be enjoying evening strolls down the river and up in among the trees, drinks in pub gardens, and impromptu BBQs.

The snowdrops and crocuses pass the baton to the bluebells, pansies, dandelions and daffodils as spring unfurls for another year of pollination, creation, growth, abundance, and harvest.

While taking the dog for his early morning walk, the dawn chorus gathers momentum, the bird song is louder, there's more complexity in



the detail, more passion and enthusiasm. I heard recently that the birds wake up the trees and plants, the vibration from the sound of

the bird song travels through the leaves and branches, signalling them to breathe. The magical process of photosynthesis, by which plants breathe in carbon dioxide and release oxygen during the daylight hours.

Recycling at its finest. We can thank the trees for the fresh air that we breathe. They support our existence and give us life, asking for nothing in return apart from a little space to grow. The birds nest in their branches, like beautiful little alarm clocks, each with their own song waking the trees, as their sound vibrations travel through the leaves, shaking and waking their cells at a molecular level to kickstart another day for us all.

There hasn't been much travelling from Dulverton over the winter months. A good spring clean and some home improvements are required before any further overnight travels. During our road trip last summer, we gathered many mementos. Pebbles, fossils, bits of old glass and pottery, feathers, odd bits and bobs picked up along the way. They may be adding significant weight to the van and need consolidating into one vessel, a shrine of remembrance to our maiden voyage, and idol for future adventures.

We did squeeze in a day trip to Saunton Sands, managing to pick up a £100



fine and re-education programme, while accidentally travelling at five miles over the restricted speed limit, and dodging the gigantic potholes along the North Devon link road. One of the potholes caused a slow puncture in one of our tyres, costing a further £100 to repair.

If only our governing bodies were as committed to our wellbeing as the birds and the trees are...let's hope they don't decide to start charging!

Mary Ford

Photos © Matthew Ford



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All Saints Church, Dulverton, Bell Tower: Anne Markwick		01398 323823
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Exmoor Benefice: The Rev. David Weir, The Rectory, Exford, TA24 7LX		01643 831330
Catholic Church: Priest: Father Michael		01643 702201
Dulverton Congregational Church: Chapel Street: Mr David Perry		01398 324059
The Traditional Anglican Church: Loxbeare, Priest Reverend Aird		01769 581042
Exmoor Benefice Choir: Mrs B. Staples		01643 851396
St Peter's Church Oakford: Rev'd Stephanie Gordon-Jeffs	office@exevalleymissioncommunity.org	01884 250417

ARTS

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Dulverton & Exmoor Squash Club: Membership Sec: Chris Winter	chriswin@aol.com	07710 046107

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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: Mrs Jennie Chappell smilerjenniec@hotmail.com	01398 351666
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	1643 831125
OTHERS		
Abbeyfield House	01398 324136
Bampton Heritage and Visitor Centre (inside St Michael and All Angels Church, Bampton) www.bamptonheritage.org.uk or bamptonheritage@btinternet.com	
Bampton Library and Resource Centre, Station Road	01398 332466
Brushford Parish Hall: Bookings enquiries@brushfordparishhall.org.uk	07941 139846

If you see something that needs changing in the directory – please do let us know.
Email exmoornews@gmail.com



Brushford Luncheon Club: Treasurer: Margaret Albery	01398 324587
Care Direct for help and advice: www.somerset.gov.uk	0300 1232224
Cutcombe Flower & Produce Show: Tracy Beviss	01643 841257
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
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 Hammond	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: Jennie Chappell	smilerjenniec@hotmail.com
Exmoor Patient Group: Chair: Sandra Wilson, W Nightcott, Dulverton TA22 9RT	01398 324687
Exmoor BeeKeepers Association: Sec: Caroline Ralph	exmoorhoneyshow@gmail.com
Exmoor Community Bus Assn:	07925 044 262
Exmoor National Park Centre	01398 323841
Exmoor Pony Centre: Ashwick, Dulverton, Somerset, TA22 9QE	01398 323093
Exmoor Pony Society: Sec: Mrs Jay Gee, Little Ash Farm Cottage, Ash Lane, Withypool, TA24 7RR	01643 851777
Exmoor Rotary Club: Humphrey Berridge (PRO), Station Hse, Luke St, Bampton	01398 332324
Exmoor U3A: David Newth	01398 324615
Good Neighbours:	07395 171409
Oakford Village Hall: Bookings: Mrs Dawn Williams	dawnwilliams1@gmail.com
Royal British Legion Dulverton: Peter Donnelly	01398 323030
TA22 Voluntary Lift Scheme (formerly Brushford Voluntary Lifts): Chair: Bart Middleton	07528 326880
Tiverton Model Aero Club: Sec: Mr. P Veale, 9 Higre flih St., Dulverton TA22 9HB	01398 323409
Village Agent Diane Weston	info@somersetccc.org.uk
Voices of Exmoor Amanda Taylor	01598 428005
West Somerset Advice Bureau:	01643 704624



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