

January
February 2024

EXMOOR NEWS



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EXMOOR NEWS

COVERING SOUTHERN EXMOOR



The deadline for the
Mar/Apr '24 issue of
the Exmoor News is

Thursday 1st February 2024

Printed by Brightsea, Exeter



As a new year starts, it's time for new resolutions, new challenges, new hobbies. Some new groups have been setup in the area - take a look at them in the following pages.

We are always on the lookout for something interesting to put on our pages, drop us an email with your information. It's always great to get feedback.

Check out pages 14-17, our article - An Artist's Tale - about Jenni Dutton. Amazing works of art.

Please continue to let advertisers know if you found them in our magazine, as it means we can keep providing our magazine free to you.

Best wishes, Ceri Keene and Claire Savill

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

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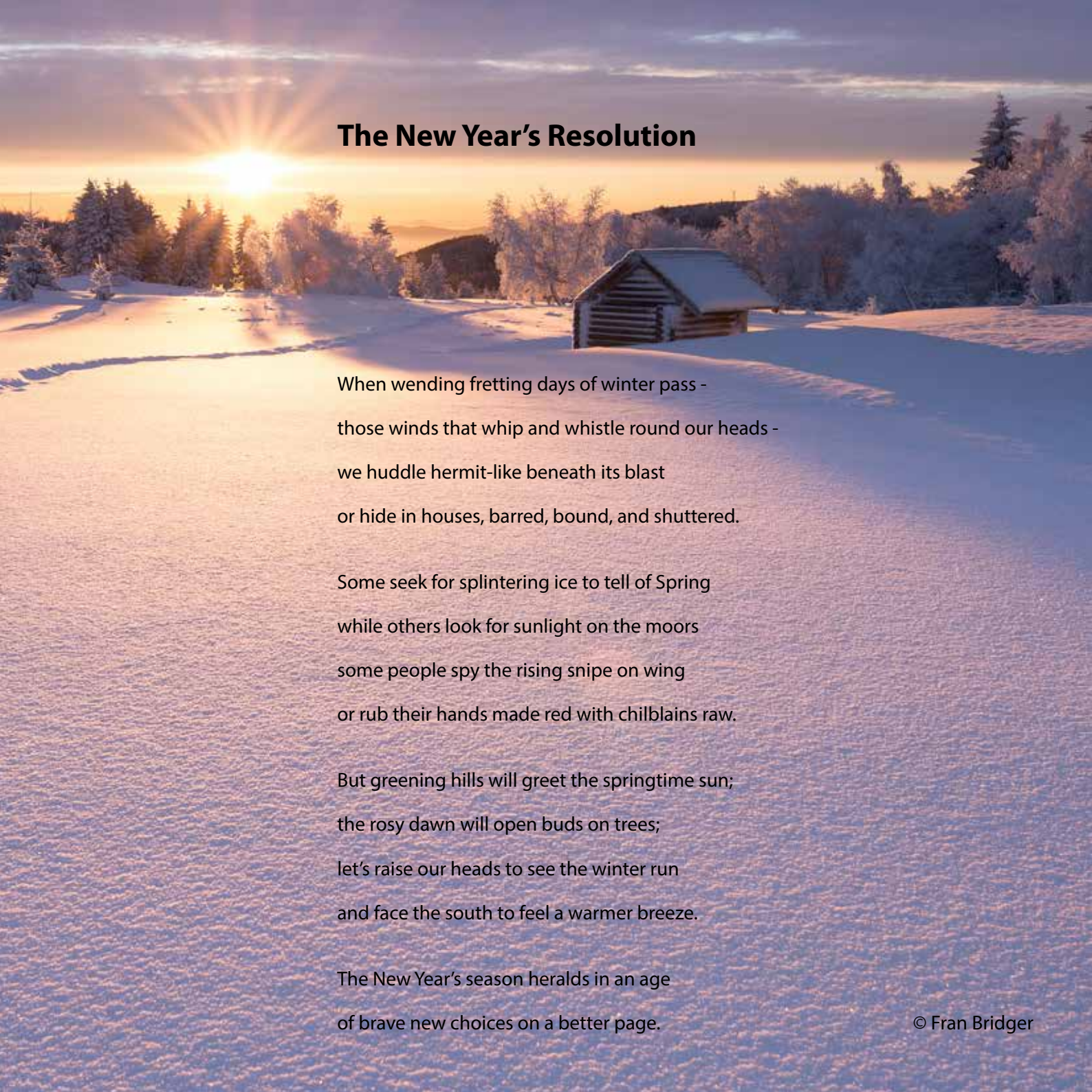
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A serene winter landscape at sunrise. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow across the sky and snow. The sun's rays are visible as a fan of light. The ground is covered in a thick layer of snow, with long, soft shadows cast by the trees and the cabin. In the middle ground, a small, rustic log cabin with a gabled roof sits in the snow. The background features a line of snow-covered evergreen trees and distant hills under a pale, hazy sky.

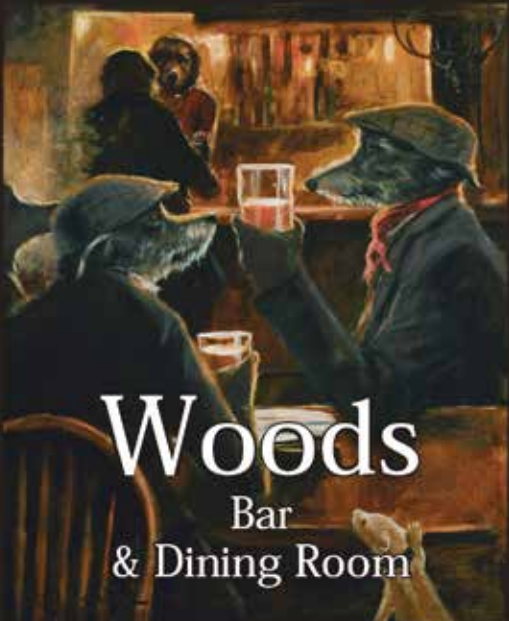
The New Year's Resolution

When wending fretting days of winter pass -
those winds that whip and whistle round our heads -
we huddle hermit-like beneath its blast
or hide in houses, barred, bound, and shuttered.

Some seek for splintering ice to tell of Spring
while others look for sunlight on the moors
some people spy the rising snipe on wing
or rub their hands made red with chilblains raw.

But greening hills will greet the springtime sun;
the rosy dawn will open buds on trees;
let's raise our heads to see the winter run
and face the south to feel a warmer breeze.

The New Year's season heralds in an age
of brave new choices on a better page.



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**18th January
Becky Searle
"No Dig Gardening"**

**15th February
Rob Vincent
"House Plant 101"**

7.00 for 7.30pm at
Dulverton Town Hall
Entry for Non members £4.00

Winsford Moor Movies

January to April 2024

Winsford Village Hall

9 January 2024

Scrapper (12A) (2023) stars Lola Campbell

The feature debut from 29-year-old Londoner, Charlotte Regan, *Scrapper* brims with sugar-fuelled youthful energy and an itchy, endless scroll of ideas.

Everything that 12-year-old, Georgie (impressive newcomer, Lola Campbell) knows about family, she learned from her single mother. And that includes the knack of filling the space left by an absent parent. While her mother was alive, she was both mum and dad to her daughter. Now that she has died, Georgie has taken on the responsibility of parenting herself. Resourcefully pulling the wool over the eyes of social services, with an invented uncle as a guardian, Georgie continues to live alone in the home she shared with her mum. She has a best friend, Ali (Alin Uzun); an income (earned through bike theft), and an idiosyncratic, fiercely guarded process of grieving. There's one thing she doesn't need in her life: the arrival of her overgrown kid of a father, Jason (Harris Dickinson).

6 February 2024

The Old Oak (15) (2023) stars Dave Turner

The Old Oak is a drama film, directed by Ken Loach and written by Paul Laverty.

A northern pub landlord confronts locals' hostility towards Syrian refugees in Loach's latest—and possibly last—piece of politically trenchant cinema. Continuing his socio-political focus, *The Old Oak* depicts another major issue: the plight of refugees. Set in 2016, it follows TJ Ballantyne (Dave Turner), a pub owner in a decaying former mining village in North East England, who forms a friendship with a young Syrian woman, Yara (Ebla Mari), when a community of Syrian refugees are moved into the area. TJ and Yara attempt to unite their disparate communities,

and overcome xenophobia from the locals and the ensuing cultural clash.

5 March 2024

A Haunting In Venice (12A) (2023) stars Kenneth Branagh and Michelle Yeoh

Set in the post-World War II era, *A Haunting In Venice* finds Hercule Poirot retired and seeking solace in the hauntingly beautiful city of Venice. However, his retirement is short lived as he finds himself entangled in a mysterious case involving a séance gone wrong, a chilling murder, and a web of secrets waiting to be uncovered. A classic whodunit, true to the essence of Hercule Poirot mysteries, the film promises a complex plot filled with twists, turns, and red herrings that will keep audiences on the edge of their seats. Poirot's unparalleled detective skills are put to the test as he navigates through the labyrinth of clues and deception to unveil the truth.

2 April 2024

The Great Escaper (12A) (2023) stars Michael Caine and Glenda Jackson

A moving story and terrific performances from Michael Caine and Glenda Jackson lift this melancholy, real-life tale of a pensioner's escapade in France.

Navy veteran Bernard Jordan (Michael Caine) missed the boat when it came to applying to attend the 70th anniversary of the D-day landings. But, encouraged by his wife, Irene (the late Glenda Jackson in her final role), he decides to make the trip under his own steam, absconding from his care home in Hove with his essentials in a blue plastic bag. The film is unexpectedly melancholic in approach, with Caine delivering a gruffly heartbreaking performance as a man belatedly confronting crippling survivor's guilt and the knowledge that the psychological wounds sustained in battle never fully heal.

Doors open 7pm. Films start at 7.30pm. All welcome; no need to book, just turn up. Tea and cake available.
£3 members £5 non-members.

What to look forward to in 2024...

Saturday 24 February 2024 7.30pm
St Michael's Church, Milverton

Elena Urioste, Violin; Tom Poster, Piano

Programme

Felix Mendelssohn—*Violin Sonata in F Major [1838]*

Melanie Bonis—*Violin Sonata in F# minor, Op. 112*

Amy Beach—*Romance, Op 23*

Edvard Grieg—*Violin Sonata No 1 in F Major Op.8*



Friday 26 April 2024 7.30pm
St Michael's Church, Milverton

Trio Gaspard

Programme

Helena Winkelman—*Piano Trio written for Trio Gaspard's Haydn Project*

Haydn—*Haydn Piano Trio in F major Hob XV 40*

Liszt—*Hungarian Rhapsody No 9 Carnival in Pest*
Interval

Brahms—*Hungarian Dance No 16 in F minor*

Brahms—*Hungarian Dance No 4 in B minor*

Brahms—*Hungarian Dance No 10 in F major*

Brahms—*Piano Trio No 2 in C Op. 87*



Please book early; these concerts are likely to sell out.
Details and booking www.milvertonconcerts.org



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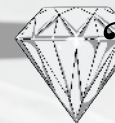
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Dulverton Town Hall



Dates Of Live Screenings

Sat February 3rd 2024
Italy v England ko 14:15
Wales v Scotland ko 16:45

Sat February 10th 2024
Scotland v France ko 14:15
England v Wales ko 16:45

Sat March 9th 2024
Italy v Scotland ko 14:15
England v Ireland ko 16:45

Sat March 16th 2024
Wales v Italy ko 14:15
Ireland v Scotland ko 16:45
France v England ko 20:00

Large Cinema Screen
Bar Open
Entry Free

Dulverton Vintage Films

Wed 10 January
Enigma (2001)
Jeremy Northam, Kate Winslet and Dougray Scott

Wed 14 February
Giant (1956)
Elizabeth Taylor, Rock Hudson and James Dean

Films start at 2.30 pm
Fishers Mead Community Centre, 12 Fishers Mead, Dulverton TA22 9EN

£3 (new price) includes tea and biscuits

Dulverton Action Group

Litter picking: third Sunday in the month

Sunday 21 January
Sunday 18 February

10.30am: meet by Dulverton Heritage Centre, Fore Street

Everyone welcome and all kit supplied.

For enquiries call Magdalena:
01398 323785 or
07929 761 958





Dulverton Town Hall

Friday 5 January

BARBIE (Cert 12A)

Director: Greta Gerwig

114 mins

To live in Barbie Land is to be a perfect being in a perfect place, unless you have a full-on existential crisis, or you're a Ken! Barbie and Ken are having the time of their lives in the colourful and seemingly perfect world. But when they get a chance to go to the real world, they soon discover the joys and perils of living among humans. A fun movie that offers plenty of heartwarming moments and good messages. A visually dazzling comedy, smartly complemented by subversive storytelling. Clever, funny and poignant, Barbie is an entertaining movie with a great overall message.

Friday 19 January

OPPENHEIMER (Cert 15)

Director: Christophehr Nolan

180 mins

During World War II, Lt Gen Leslie Groves Jr appoints physicist J Robert Oppenheimer to work on the top-secret Manhattan Project. Oppenheimer and a team of scientists spend years developing and designing the atomic bomb. Their work comes to fruition on July 16 1945, as they witness the world's first nuclear explosion, forever changing the course of history. *Oppenheimer* is an intelligent movie about an important topic that is never less than powerfully acted and incredibly entertaining. Please note early start time: 7pm, plus interval.

Friday 2 February

THE GREAT ESCAPER (Cert 15)

Director: Oliver Parker

96 mins

In the summer of 2014, the 70th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings, octogenarian, Bernie Jordan (Michael Caine) made global headlines. He'd staged a "great escape" from his care home to join fellow war veterans on a beach in Normandy, commemorating their fallen comrades. It was a story that captured the imagination of the world. Bernie seemed to embody the defiant 'can-do' spirit of a generation that was fast disappearing. But, of course, it wasn't the whole story. It was the story we all tell ourselves to make war and old age bearable. The bittersweet script explores reality with wit and a very big heart. Bernie's adventure, spanning a mere 48 hours, also marked the culmination of his 60-year marriage to Irene (Glenda Jackson). The story celebrates their love, without sentimentality and with an eye to the lessons we can all learn from this generation.

Friday 16 February

INDIANA JONES AND THE DIAL OF DESTINY (Cert 12A)

Director: James Mangold

154 mins

Daredevil archaeologist, Indiana (Harrison Ford), races against time to retrieve a legendary dial that can change the course of history. Accompanied by his goddaughter, he soon finds himself squaring off against Jürgen Voller, a former Nazi who works for NASA.

Friday 1 March

SCRAPPER (Cert 12A)

Director: Charlotte Regan

84 mins

Living alone in her London flat, 12-year-old Georgie must confront reality when her estranged father, Jason, shows up out of nowhere. Uninterested in a sudden new parental figure, she remains stubbornly resistant to his efforts. As they both adjust to their new circumstances, Georgie and Jason soon find that they still have a lot of growing up to do.

Tickets: Dulverton Films members £3, non-members £5, 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.

Smash-hit rock musical back for 2024

Landmark Theatres are delighted to announce that Jonathan Larson's Tony and Pulitzer Prize-winning rock musical, *Rent*, is coming to the Queen's Theatre, Barnstaple, from 3-13 July 2024.

Rent follows a group of young artists living in Manhattan's East Village as they navigate love, loss, and the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS. The powerful and inspiring storytelling captures the ultimate sacrifice of a life of stability for the sake of art, reminding us of the importance of following our passions and taking risks to pursue our dreams.

Loosely based on Puccini's opera, *La Bohème*, *Rent* is a must-see musical, featuring smash-hits including *Seasons of Love* and *Take Me or Leave Me*. The critically acclaimed production has won four Tony Awards, six Drama Desk Awards and the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1996. *Rent* ran on Broadway for 12 years, from 1996, and premiered in London's West End in 1998 at the Shaftesbury Theatre, where it ran for 18 months.

Rent marks the first Landmark Theatre Production. With book, music and lyrics by Jonathan Larson, Paul Jepson directs with and Musical Direction from Mark Crossland. Casting to be announced.

Paul Jepson, CEO & Creative Director of Landmark Theatres said: "We are committed to creating high quality, new and exciting live entertainment to share with the communities we work in, and are looking forward to launching *Rent*, the much-loved rock musical, which we know will resonate with our audiences, as our first production. It will provide a variety of opportunities for young creatives, and touch points for schools and young people, as part of our Talent Development and and Participation Programmes."

Performances: Monday—Saturday evenings 7.30pm (Sunday 8pm). Saturday matinee 3.30pm, Sunday matinee 12pm.

Book online at: www.queenstheatre-barnstaple.com

Age recommendation: *This production contains strong language and mature themes. Audience discretion is advised. Age recommendation 14+*

Find out more at: www.rent-the-musical.co.uk





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(Formerly EXMOOR U3A)

On 31 January we will be having our annual lunch at the Rest and be Thankful. Details of this will be circulated to members.

Our regular speaker meetings are held in Dulverton Town Hall on the last Wednesday morning of the month, 10:00am for coffee. We welcome non-members, who can attend their first meeting free of charge. Talks start at 10:30 and last about one hour.

Wednesday 28 February: Victoria Eveleigh
Farming and Writing On Exmoor

Wednesday 27 March: Nigel Phillips
Wild Life, including Rock Pool Life, Found Along the Exmoor Coastline

Wednesday 24 April: Maggie Duffy
Devon Historical and Hysterical

To find out more about membership, interest groups, speaker meetings and social activities, please email: info@exmoorfriends.co.uk



Beginning Philosophy

How do we know anything? What is the relation between mind and body? Do we really have free will? Is there life after death?

I would like to start an introductory philosophy group in the New Year. I can offer a series of up to eight fortnightly meetings for a small group of those interested in thinking about some fundamental problems of our human predicament.

The meetings will involve reading and discussing a short introductory philosophy book.

Day and time to be decided. The meetings will take place at LARC, Station Road, BAMPTON. There will be a small charge to cover the cost of hiring the venue.

For more information and/or to register your wish to attend an initial planning meeting (with no obligation) please ring: 01398 331851 or 07976 681892.

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The Importance of Being... Earnest?

After critically acclaimed Edinburgh Fringe runs in 2022 and 2023 and previous London Fringe theatre success, *The Importance of Being... Earnest?* is coming to Queens Theatre, Barnstaple from Friday 2 February to Sunday 4 February 2024. It takes a wildly interactive twist on this classic comedy, making the audience the true stars of the show.

The cast includes Lucy Trodd, founding member of Olivier Award-winning *Showstopper! The Improvised Musical*; Amy Cooke-Hodgeson, founding member of award-winning comedy hit, *Austentatious*, and Tom Bulpett, who starred in *The Play That Goes Wrong* at the Duchess Theatre in London's West End.

The show opens to looming disaster: the actor playing Earnest in Oscar Wilde's famed farce fails to arrive on cue. In a monumental effort to save the show, a real audience member is quickly cast in the lead role.



But this impetuous recasting sets off a hilarious chain of events that, one-by-one, renders the rest of the cast unable to continue their performances.

As more audience members are encouraged to step into the spotlight, led backstage for costume and make-up, impromptu auditions, the painting of portraits, the chanting of mantras—doing whatever's needed to help the show go on—an absurd controlled madness ensues, until it feels as if there

are almost as many audience members in the cast as there are in the...audience.

This is a comedic masterpiece of meticulous logistics, meritoriously involved audiences and masterful stage management. *The Importance of Being... Earnest?* Is an exciting and hilarious experience both to watch and be part of, as the innovative format creates an unexpected new experience every night. It's a show for anyone who has enjoyed the high-jinks of *The Play That Goes Wrong*, *Sh!t-Faced Shakespeare* and *Austentatious*.

Developed alongside the Say It Again, Sorry? flagship open-rehearsal initiative, where audiences are invited into the rehearsal room to participate in the creative process, the show is written by Josh King and Simon Paris and directed by Simon Paris

The company's vision is for the public to recover ownership over their own creative power and contribute to the future of theatre as active participants, collaborators, and decision-makers. The aim is to connect people to their inner artist and inspire creative expression in everybody.

Queen's Theatre, 100 Boutport Street, Barnstaple, EX31 1SY
Friday 2 February—Sunday, 4 February 2024, 7:30pm (+ 2:30pm on Sat)
Tickets: www.queentheatre-barnstaple.com/event/the-importance-of-being-earnest/



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EXMOOR HEALING HUB

The Artist's Tale

If you visited East Quay in Watchet last September, you will have seen some of the compelling work of artist and maker, Jenni Dutton, who is based in Wiveliscombe. This was Jenni's second studio residency at East Quay, with a new body of work exploring the use of discarded materials, in particular human hair, shed snake skins, fur and feathers. These natural materials began to suggest narratives associated with myths and legends around shapeshifting.

Her previous residency, in 2022, focused on Jenni's involvement in @WeareWiveyXR—with displays of banners, tote bags and signs—while she worked on her powerful Oceans Crisis cloak, and a piece using plastic collected from local beaches.

"Visitors have plenty of questions and are keen to share their own concerns and thoughts," says Jenni. "This helps to make contemporary art seem less elitist. It's about connecting with people, opening up conversations."

Her love of art and making stems from a peripatetic childhood: Jenni grew up in an army family, which involved frequent moves and, eventually, several unhappy years at a Kent boarding school.

"I escaped into art," she says, "copying old master drawings—Dürer, Michelangelo, Leonardo."

The turning point came with a move to Didcot and A-levels at the local grammar school. There were no artists in Jenni's family but an art teacher spotted her pupil's potential and encouraged her to pursue her passion: Jenni went on to study fine art at the Central School of Art and Design (now Central St Martins) and Byam Shaw.

The years after leaving art school were taken up with making items, such as bags and badges, for sale at local markets, and with marriage and motherhood—before another turning point.

"I'm a city person but we had moved to Chipstable in Somerset...I was beginning to question why I was there," she reflects. "Then



Jenni with hair dress, Shapeshifting East Quay.

I had the offer of workspace at Waterrow's Hurstone Studios. It was so exciting to be one of a group of contemporary artists doing amazing things. I started to work on conceptual clothing, drawing on myths, legends and fairy tales, with hanging dresses made of paper and wire." Interest in her distinctive work took off in 1999, with her first solo show, held at Taunton's Brewhouse.

Jenni combined her time at Hurstone with teaching, including residencies, but after 10 years, it became clear that her mother, Gladys, who had been diagnosed with dementia, needed greater support and care. Jenni chose to give up teaching and her studio space to care for Gladys, but the time she spent with her increasingly frail mother would lead to the work for which she is probably best known: the *Dementia Darnings*. In 2011, she had started to stitch likenesses of family members onto a dress made of netting; Gladys would recognise faces and enjoyed watching Jenni at work. From there, Jenni went on to create large sewn portraits of her mother at various points in her life. Each portrait, which was hand sewn using Anchor tapestry thread, took about four months to complete, an intense and private process but one that enabled Jenni to express her sense of loss and to celebrate her mother.

These extraordinary and powerful portraits, representing a decade's work, have now been exhibited at venues across the UK, Europe and China. In 2018, for example, they went on display at London's annual Knitting and Stitching Show and, last year, at Norwich Cathedral. Wherever they go, the *Dementia Darnings* become a talking point. Visitors begin to share their own experiences and memories about the impact of dementia on loved ones and families. There are always tissue on hand...

Jenni followed the *Dementia Darnings* with *Absurd Sewn Selfies*, a vibrant and challenging series of hand-sewn self-portraits, created during the Covid-19 lockdowns. Meanwhile, London's Horniman Museum bought one of her hair dresses, which went on display in the museum's 2022 exhibition *Hair: Untold Stories*, and an international bank bought one of the *Darnings* for its City of London headquarters.

Her current work and residencies —Jenni has returned to conceptual clothing and multi media—enable her to engage in discussions around the issues about which she cares most, which include exploring identity, the climate crisis, and tackling waste. Recent pieces include a stunning cloak made of human hair and lined with shed snakeskins; last year, a hair dress went off to the Museum of the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York. The Green Salon Collective provides her with much of the hair she uses but private donors help too. When *Exmoor News* visited Jenni in November, a thick auburn plait had just arrived; in her storeroom, there are plaits from four generations of the same family—hair dating back 100 years. Reptile and exotics owners and sellers keep her supplied with snake sheds. “Burmese python is my favourite!” she says.

Jenni remains as curious and concerned about the world and as passionate about creativity as ever. These are qualities shared by her daughter, Briony Goffin, a Cardiff-based creative writing tutor, and grandsons, Arlo and Rufus. Such qualities, like Jenni’s remarkable work, are a precious legacy.

www.jennidutton.com

Instagram: @jennidutton9342

Diane Trembath



Jenni's first residency at East Quay, 2022.





Mum with Red Scarf, one of the Dementia Darnings.



Jenni with Self-Portrait with Mask, Absurd Sewn Selfies.

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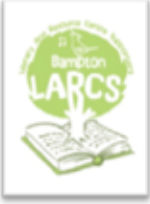
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Literary Festival — Exmoor event of the year!

The curtain came down on the second Dulverton Exmoor Literary Festival to rapturous applause on the evening of Sunday 19 November—with fabulous feedback from speakers, sponsors and audiences. It was “the Exmoor event of the year,” said one visitor. “Thank you for two wonderfully interesting and stimulating days,” said another. “Congratulations on creating the most wonderfully diverse, yet completely connected literary festival,” said a member of the press.

Sir Michael Morpurgo’s talk on Sunday was a highlight; the former Children’s Laureate discussed his classic novel, *War Horse*, with writer, Alice Thomson; treated the audience of all ages to a poetry reading, and even sang a beautiful folk song. “Morpurgo was a complete joy,” said Mrs Bland of Dulverton.



L to R: Kate Lord Brown, Amelia Toms, Fergus Brewer, Jack Richards, Sir Michael Morpurgo.

Rachel Johnson, in conversation with art critic, Rachel Campbell-Johnston, talked about her life in the political arena—attracting another huge audience. Writers, Julian Glover and Victoria Eveleigh, discussed the complexities of the use and protection of the countryside, in the company of a fascinated audience that included many Exmoor farmers and landowners.

Duchesses Behaving Badly became the in-house title for a lively talk with historical biographers, Andrew Lownie and Catherine Ostler. Their books about Edward VIII and the Duchess of Windsor, and the 18th century Duchess of Kingston, sold like hot cakes in the pop up event bookshop run by Waterstones of Barnstaple.

Other topics in the weekend’s programme included our local lost railways, British wine, the benefits of challenge and adventure, and creativity in its many forms, the latter with former Condé Nast MD, Albert Read, portrait photographer/artist, Harry Borden, and editor, Miranda Taylor. Fiction lovers were treated to a talk with three remarkable novelists—Sarah Turner, Hannah Richell and Janet Ellis—all of whom have new books in the pipeline. Janet, a former *Blue Peter* presenter, said: “The atmosphere couldn’t have been nicer and (the whole event) sparkled!”

Dulverton resident and historical novelist, Kate Lord Brown, judged the festival’s Children’s Writing Competition and Sir Michael Morpurgo handed the prizes to winner, Fergus Brewer (age 6), and runners- up, Amelia Toms (age 12) and Jack Richards (age 6). Fergus’s imaginative and creative story delighted the audience: read it on the Visit Dulverton website.

The dates for the 2024 Literary Festival are already in the diary—the weekend of 16/17 November. Expect another programme packed with top authors and speakers! All enquiries to Festival Director, Ali Pegrum of Visit Dulverton.

The event was sponsored by local businesses Tozers Solicitors, Amicus Law, *Exmoor News*, Stockham Farm Exmoor, The Exclusive Cake Company, Exmoor Character Cottages, First Design, Hedley Price, Jeff Pegrum Landscaping, Maitland Walker, Osteo & Physio Tiverton, Risdon Hosegood, The Sip Shed, Town Mills, Ware Construction, Wellhayes Vineyard, Winsbere House, The Bridge Inn Dulverton, James Pryce Tractors, Masons Kings, Rothwell & Dunworth and Fabula Arts.



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Chronic pain persists over a long period and can be challenging to manage. It can be made worse by environmental and psychological factors. People with chronic pain often suffer from more than one painful condition. They also have an increased risk for developing problems with physical functioning, cognition, and emotional reactions.

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Paul Tam – Hypnotherapist

Winter is a difficult time, but especially for those with ailments that are exacerbated by the cold and damp. It is even more trying for those suffering chronic pain. Pain is not a bad thing as it lets the body know there's something wrong; relief can be had through painkillers, but long-term use of analgesics or opioids can have

adverse effects on your body or even lead to addiction.

Chronic pain is aggravated by anxiety and a feeling of despair associated with constant pain. When will it stop? Anxiety about the pain leads to tension which in turn is no help to the experience of pain. Many have tried hypnotherapy with some success. It won't stop the pain nor cure the cause, but it can help to control the level, using hypnotherapeutic techniques that can be learnt, so that you can do this for yourself as and when needed.

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*Carvery Lunch at the Hare and Hounds & Sidmouth – Tuesday 6th £28.50pp includes a carvery

*Affinity shopping centre Bideford or Barnstaple- Thursday 22nd £17.00pp coach only

*Slimbridge wetland Centre – Tuesday 27th February Adults £31.50pp /Seniors £30.50pp includes entry

MARCH

*Crocus week at Ford Abbey - Tuesday 5th £29.00pp includes entry

*Clarks Village - Tuesday 11th £15.00pp coach only

*Carvery Lunch at the Hare and Hounds & Sidmouth -Thursday 14th £28.50pp includes a carvery

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Exmoor Moorhens

Exmoor Moorhens are a community group from across Exmoor, who meet every second Monday in the month at Exford Memorial Hall, starting at 7.30 pm. We do not meet in January, as there are sometimes some adverse weather conditions, which can cause problems for those who drive.

However, on Monday 12 February, we hold our AGM, to discuss the year gone by and have a social evening catch-up after Christmas and the New Year.

On Monday 11 March, Claire Ashby is coming to talk to us about her time at Camp Bastion; those who have heard her speak say it's a very interesting talk. Further talks will be advertised in due course. Do come and join us: more details from Ines on: 01643 831016 or Myra on: 01643 831706.

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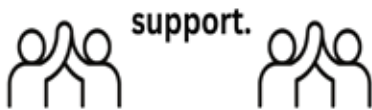
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There is space for a new member to join the established Bampton Creative Writing Group from the first term of 2024 starting on Tuesday 30 January.

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Various aspects of writing are explored: from dialogue and plot to poetry and autobiography. Sharing of our writing within the group is welcomed but not compulsory. There is no harsh critique or pressure; we enjoy a lot of laughter and some great writing!

All are welcome and previous writing experience is not necessary.

Please contact me if you would like to find out more and join our merry band of scribes! Andrea Corrie andrea.corrie@outlook.com or call 07862 286479

The benefits of journalling

In one of our sessions, we look at journalling—keeping a diary. There are several reasons why this is a good practice to adopt:

Self-Reflection and Personal Growth

Journalling provides a private space to reflect on your thoughts, feelings, and experiences. You can decide whether you are going to keep your journals private or share them with others and perhaps use them as a basis for publication. After my first book, *Into the Mourning Light*, was published in 2014, I began to write a blog, which has evolved into a form of electronic journal. Many of the blog posts explored similar themes and contributed to the content of the second book, *Living in the Mourning Light*, published in 2019. Words are never wasted!

Emotional Release

Expressive writing in a journal can be a therapeutic outlet to vent your feelings, and a journal is a good place for a rant! It is also useful to look back if you are using your journal as a marker for your progression along a particular path

Goal Setting and Achievement

Keeping a journal allows you to set and track goals.

Memory Preservation

Journals serve as a tangible record of your life experiences. Documenting events, thoughts, and memories helps create a personal archive. It is very useful to date when things happened.

Enhanced Creativity and Problem Solving

Journalling encourages you to explore ideas, solve problems, and think more deeply about various aspects of your life.

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Ginny



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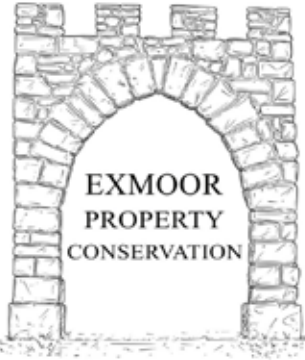


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The Royal British Legion's Dulverton and District Branch thanks everyone who donated to the 2023 Poppy Appeal.

The total collected was £5,076.14.

Thanks also to all the shops, house-to-house collectors, and the 52 volunteers who braved the weather for 15 days outside the Co-op.

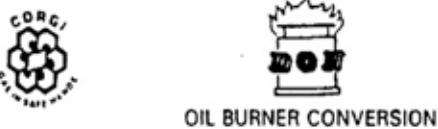
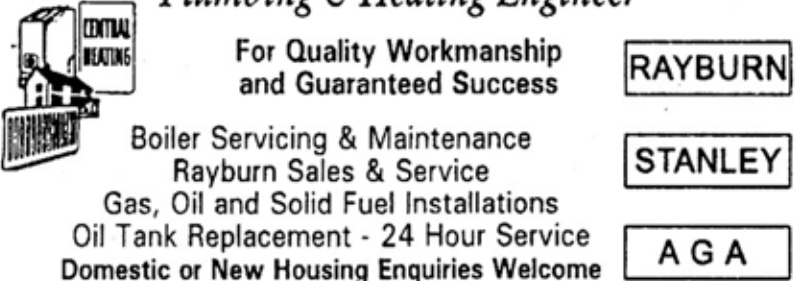
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Exmoor Young Rangers tackle coastal plastic

Last autumn, Exmoor National Park Young Rangers worked hard on an extreme 'Plastic Free Exmoor' Beach Clean at Glenthorne Beach.

They collected a large amount of ocean debris from the high tide line, including 'ghost gear' such as old fishing line and lobster pots, large pieces of rubber, plastic bottles, polystyrene, buckets and tyres. Some of the debris had also been left above the tide line by previous visitors to the beach.



Sophie Tyler, Learning and Engagement Officer with Exmoor National Park Authority, leads the Exmoor Young Rangers. "We are so proud of the way in which Young Rangers make a difference, through volunteering and inspiring future generations to connect and care for our amazing Exmoor landscapes," she said.

"The climb back up to County Gate, carrying sacks of plastic litter in heavy rain and wind, was tough going, but they forged on regardless. They even learnt how to recycle the fishing line found via the Anglers National Line Recycling Scheme pipes.

"Whether it's beach cleans with Plastic Free Communities in West Somerset, rock pooling sessions, or school residentials at our Pinkery outdoor

learning centre, activities like this are so important to engage with young people as early as possible, and provide the opportunities for them to get involved. It can create a lifelong connection with and appreciation for National Parks and our wider environment; it also provides opportunities to build confidence and shape career ambitions”

If you would like to find out more about learning opportunities with Exmoor National Park, visit:

www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/learning

For volunteering opportunities visit:

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Line up is subject to change, however a top-quality night of laughter is guaranteed!
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Painting the Modern Garden: Monet to Matisse

Tuesday 27 February 2024: 7:30pm

Exhibition on Screen—based on the sell-out show at the Royal Academy of Arts, London.

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From the exhibition walls to the wonder and beauty of artists' gardens like Giverny and Seebüll, the film takes a magical and widely travelled journey to discover how different contemporaries of Monet built and cultivated modern gardens to explore expressive motifs, abstract colour, decorative design and utopian ideas. Guided by passionate curators, artists and garden enthusiasts, this remarkable collection of Impressionists, Post-Impressionists, and avant-garde artists of the early 20th century reveals the rise of the modern garden in popular culture and the public's enduring fascination with gardens today.

Long considered spaces for expressing colour, light and atmosphere, the garden has occupied the creative minds of some of the world's greatest artists. As Monet said, "Apart from painting and gardening, I'm no good at anything." An ideal film for lovers of art or gardens

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Gold Award for Dulverton's National Park Centre

The Exmoor National Park Centre in Dulverton has been awarded Gold in the Visitor Information Service of the Year category at the Bristol, Bath and Somerset Tourism Awards 2023/24.

The centre provides visitors and residents with inspiration and information to explore Exmoor and the local area, featuring interactive displays, local films and up-to-date information. Centre Manager, Anne Brice, leads a small, dedicated team of experienced and knowledgeable staff, affectionately known as 'Exmoor Experts'. They offer bespoke advice and guidance, as well as leaflets, maps, publications, and details of local events and activities. The centre also sells books, maps, guides, and locally produced goods.

In their application, the team highlighted their focus on customer service: "Listening attentively to enquiries, given everyone's needs are different," and described how they combine their wealth of Exmoor knowledge with an "ever so important smile and warm approach" that has earned top marks from user feedback.

Dan James, Exmoor National Park's Rural Enterprise Manager, who oversees the Centres, said: "We are delighted that our fantastic staff have been recognised with this award. It is a testament to their hard work and dedication, striving to provide the best possible service. We are very proud of our centre and the role it plays in promoting Exmoor as a wonderful place to explore, and telling the story of our National Park and the need to care for this special landscape."

The Dulverton Centre is one of the three

Exmoor National Park Centres, along with Dunster and Lynmouth, which have previously won Silver and Gold respectively and gone on to take Bronze and Gold at the South West Tourism Awards.

Further details of the Exmoor National Park Centres, and their current opening times, can be found at: www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/enjoying/national-park-centres

The award follows a decision taken by Exmoor National Park Authority to relocate the centre into the authority's head office at Exmoor House in Dulverton, following the 2024 season, as part of cost-saving measures required to address the real term's funding reduction for the National Park.

Dan James continued: "We understand that this proposal has caused some disappointment. Our members were clear in their deliberations that this was a decision necessitated by a continued decline in funding, and in no way reflected the value of the service, which is recognised in this award. Nobody wants to take a decision like this, but with core funding being reduced by over 50 per cent in real terms we can no longer do everything in the same way.

"However, I am pleased that rather than lose the service, the authority has been able to propose a relocation. This allows significant cost savings to be realised, while maintaining face-to-face information provision for users of the National Park within Dulverton, the

southern gateway to Exmoor.

"We hope to work closely with the community and stakeholders to ensure a smooth transition. This award recognises the fantastic customer service offered and we believe that this is far more valuable in supporting people to discover and explore all that Exmoor has to offer than the physical space utilised."

The Bristol, Bath and Somerset Tourism Awards ceremony, which celebrates the achievements and excellence of the region's tourism industry, took place on 30 November at the Bristol Hotel.

Other Exmoor based winners included: Porlock Visitor Centre (Silver - Visitor Information Service), The Royal Oak Inn, Luxborough (Bronze—Pub of the year) and Bossington Hall (Gold—Bed and Breakfast / Guesthouse of the year).

For more information, visit: www.somersettourismawards.org.uk



From L—R: Shelley Trace (Information Advisor) and Anne Brice (Centre Manager) receive the Gold Award from Vanessa Glossop, with host and TV presenter Ben McGrail.

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Public insights help shape Exmoor's future Partnership Plan

Supporting nature was the most important priority for people who responded to a public survey carried out by Exmoor National Park Authority in 2023. The Authority ran a five-month public opinion survey to help guide the development of a new Partnership Plan for Exmoor National Park, to be launched next year in the National Park's 70th Anniversary year.

Almost 1,000 people responded to the survey from across Exmoor and beyond, giving their views not only on the issues concerning them most around the National Park, but also on future priorities. A report summarising the key findings has been published on the Authority's website at: www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/about-us/key-documents/partnership-plan-review-2023

Clare Reid, Head of Strategy and Performance at Exmoor National Park said: "One of our key roles as a National Park Authority is to work with our partners to develop a Partnership (Management) Plan for this special area every five years.

"We have a lot of research and data to feed into the new plan, but it is also important for us to hear the wide-ranging views of the public. Exmoor is protected as a National Park for the nation. It is our role to work together with those that live here, help manage this landscape and enjoy all it offers, to ensure it remains as special tomorrow, as it is today."

The survey results highlight the aspects of Exmoor most valued by the public, from its wooded valleys and its diversity of habitats to its open moorland.

Loss of wildlife, invasive species, and habitat degradation emerged as the primary concerns under the theme of 'conserving and enhancing Exmoor'.

Within the theme of 'helping people understand and enjoy Exmoor', issues like irresponsible dog walking, game shoot management, and accessibility of footpaths and bridleways took precedence.

Top issues raised in considering 'support for the prosperity of local communities and businesses' revealed concerns about job opportunities, affordable housing, sustainable transport, and loss of cultural heritage, such as skills and traditions.

The highest ranked priorities for the future were around improving wildlife habitats, maintaining Exmoor's beauty, and facilitating nature recovery.

Other priorities identified include maintaining and enhancing the network of paths and bridleways used for people to enjoy Exmoor and helping more people to learn about, understand and care for Exmoor. Meanwhile, ensuring the high quality, well-designed development, promoting green businesses, and improving energy efficiency emerged as crucial elements for supporting local communities and businesses. Developing and promoting more sustainable forms of travel for both residents and visitors also emerged as a high priority.

Sarah Bryan, CEO of Exmoor National Park Authority, remarked: "The survey results underscore the passion that both residents and visitors have for Exmoor's special qualities, and highlight those issues requiring focused attention. This invaluable input will guide the drafting of our new Partnership Plan, ensuring it aligns with the aspirations of the people we serve and this wonderful landscape.

"It is clear from our own evidence and the results of this survey, that everyone with a passion for Exmoor has to do more for nature. At the same time, we recognise that the National Park is a living landscape, home to a rural population of 10,000 people and is also a national treasure, serving the nation as a place for recreation and inspiration.

"It was particularly interesting to read the 2,000 comments made in responses, which reveal how much people value Exmoor, but also how views on its future can in places be quite polarised. With current public spending being squeezed, there are some big challenges ahead as we strive to find a balance that helps to keep Exmoor special for all, but we are committed to working together to achieve some big ambitions."

The survey results will now be used alongside data gathered through the State of Park report and discussions with partners to develop a new five-year management plan for the National Park. A draft will be published for consultation in the spring before being adopted later in 2024.



Local Vineyard's Record Harvest

Located on the southern edge of Exmoor, just outside the village of Clayhanger, Wellhayes Vineyard produces award-winning, quality sparkling wine. The wine is made in an old stone barn, by Simon and Alison Routh—from 2,500 vines on a south-facing slope adjoining the farmhouse. First planted 15 years ago, 2022 had been their best harvest to date, producing just under 4 tonnes of grapes (producing around 3,500 bottles).

This year they have smashed that record with a whopping 6 tonnes of grapes; and the quality—given the amount of rain that fell over the summer—is surprisingly good. The process of producing the sparkling wine is a long one, however, and the wine from this year's harvest will not be available until 2028 at the earliest.

In the meantime, demand for Wellhayes Sparkling wine is high and it regularly sells out. Indeed, the current vintage has run out and the next vintage is not due to be released until May next year. For those who have not yet tried Wellhayes Sparkling Wine, the vineyard tours, which run from May to September, are a good introduction. They include a visit to the winery, with an explanation of the process of making sparkling wine; a walk through the vineyard with a talk about the challenges of growing vines in England, and finish off with a cream tea, samples of the liqueur chocolates made with the spirits made on site and, of course, a glass of the sparkling wine.



Harvesting the Chardonnay grapes, 28 Oct 2023

Vouchers for these tours are available through the website: www.wellhayesvineyard.co.uk

Welcome to the Sip Shed!

The Sip Shed is owned and run by Lorne Maclean and Zara Hinds, who, having spent over 30 years in senior hospitality roles in London, decided to use their expertise to set up their own cocktail business. They were also keen to find good country walks for their two Labradors, George and Henry.

The Sip Shed concept comes from their time house hunting in Devon, where they discovered many interesting outbuildings that could potentially be converted into Sipping Sheds. Their bottled cocktails were subsequently launched in the summer of 2022.



Each Sip Shed cocktail is freshly made and hand crafted from their home kitchen in Uplowman, Mid Devon, using local ingredients and supporting other local businesses wherever possible. Sip Shed offers over twenty cocktails, which are changed to reflect the seasons and include their own innovations such as The Hummingbird, Man Goes Coconut, Pampelmousse, and Yuletide Punch. These are supported by the classics including a fabulous Margarita, Old Fashioned, Negroni and Bramble.

Sip Shed cocktails are presented in elegant 20cl and 50cl glass bottles, which are deliberately unbranded to encourage re-use or return. They provide the perfect treat—to take home or give to a friend, or as an attractive alternative to wine for a dinner party.

Lorne and Zara advertise and promote their bottled cocktails through local markets, agricultural shows and food and drink events, while providing an online shop at www.sipshed.co.uk

Subject to availability, the team will also travel to your house to host events, whether that be cocktail-making classes or hosting drinks parties, birthdays or small weddings.

Sip Shed would love to hear from you!

Email: team@sipshed.co.uk tel: 01884 561366

Crossways House, Uplowman, Tiverton, Devon, EX16 7DP

www.sipshed.co.uk Instagram @sipshed Facebook @Sip Shed Devon

Day of Action to Look after Planet and People

If you live in North Devon or Torrington, save the date: 27 January 2024...to join local environmental charity Plastic Free North Devon's (PFND) Cleanse and Clean Day of



Action.

Wherever you are in Torrington or North Devon, Plastic Free North Devon is encouraging local people to add 27 January 2024 to the calendar to join the charity's annual Day of Action.

Each year the charity galvanises the community—groups, individuals, schools or businesses to head outside for a 'Cleanse and Clean'. The campaign aims to encourage everyone to get in the great outdoors and pick up rubbish as they go, connecting and giving back to nature at the same time.

This year the charity is focusing its efforts on the Day of Action and wants to engage as many people as possible to build a feeling of connectedness with the planet. The growth and impact of the campaign requires a community effort, so it's encouraging you to get involved in any way that you can.

Any action no matter how big or small can be entered into our prize draw to win a dryrobe® Advance of your choice. Competition details to be released in January 2024.

How can you get involved in the Day of Action 27 January 2024

1. Organised Cleans:

Go to an organised clean on the Day of



Action. All details will be available on plasticfreenorthdevon.org and social media channels in January 2024.

2. Set up or help run an organised public clean:

Setup a public clean in your community on the Day of Action—guidance and kit can be provided. Or help at one of the charity's organised cleans.

3. Individual Action:

Carry out your own Cleanse and Clean; this could be a stroll around your village, a bracing dip in the ocean or a cycle around the park on the Day of Action, picking up rubbish as you go. Record how much you collected and where and then enter into the prize draw.

4. Businesses:

Organise a clean at your workplace on the Day of Action or in the week leading up to the Day of Action 22—26 January. Record what you have collected, send to PFND and we will enter everyone who took part into the prize draw.

5. Schools:

Organise a clean at your school in the week leading up to the Day of Action 22—26 January. Record what you have collected, send to PFND and we will enter everyone who took part into the prize draw.

Whatever action is taken can be logged and then entered into the draw to win a dryrobe®Advance! Just send in your stats from your action to enter the competition.

To enter the competition email:
info@plasticfreenorthdevon.org
for more info.

To find out more about how you can get involved, setting up cleans or just further information about the campaign please contact:
info@plasticfreenorthdevon.org

If you have an established litter-picking group, we would love to hear from you and get you involved too.

You can see more information about the campaign on the charity's website www.plasticfreenorthdevon.org or social media pages: Facebook, Instagram and X formerly Twitter.

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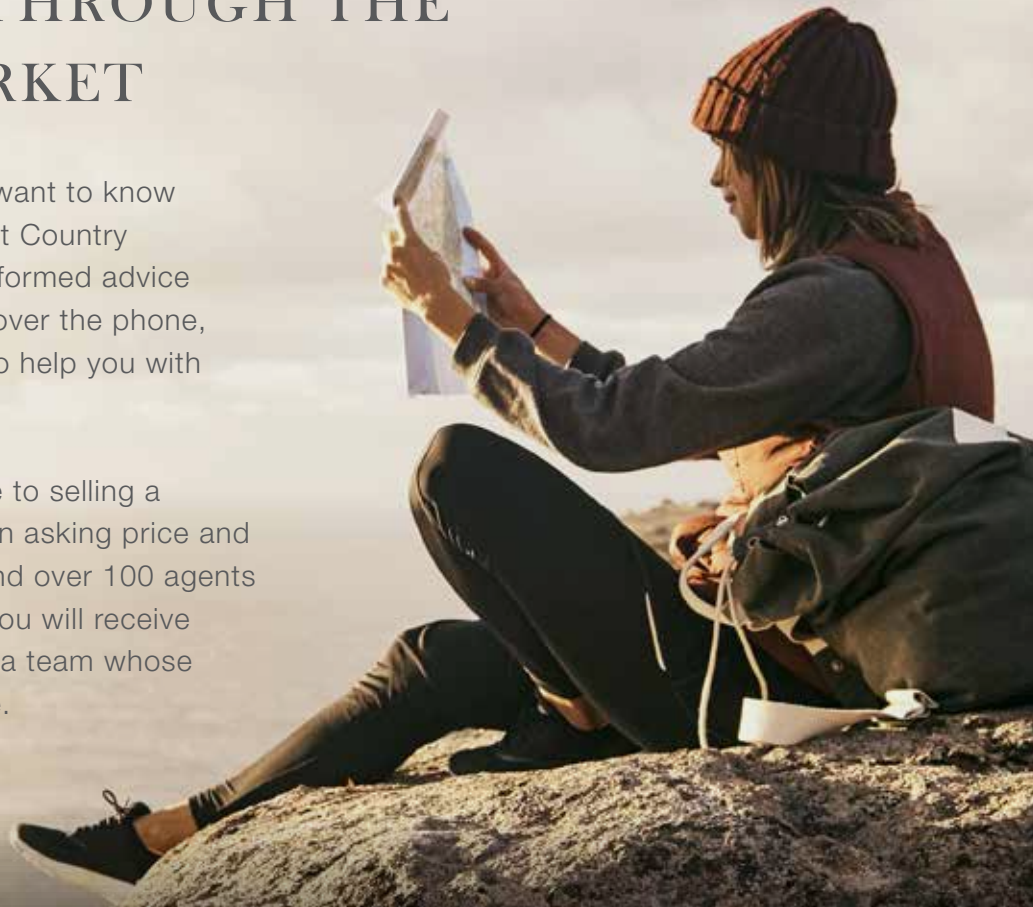
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Helping North Devon's young explorers

The Ocean Explorer Academy (OEA) becomes the latest project supported by the North Devon Coast National Landscapes Sustainable Development Fund (SDF). The funding enables more North Devon school students to access nature, explore the local bountiful biosphere, and learn how to champion community active planet protection.

More local students will be able not only to take part in the popular OEA programme, but to stay involved in the project's lasting legacy, which includes family-inclusive, in-person sessions, access to volunteering opportunities and clubs, and online webinar series. Sessions are run with local conservation groups, exposing students to a wide variety of local experts and community volunteers. Students learn about their pathways into nature conservation, boosting their own journey into nature protection.

Since January 2023, the OEA has delivered more than 40 sessions to 124 students, providing more than 290 hours of volunteer service with local conservation organisations. Students have learned new skills, used saws, drills and magnifying glasses, contributed to citizen science surveys, and taken positive climate action. They have delved into rock pools, investigated organic farming methods, upcycled camping and bodyboard waste from local holiday parks, made wildlife habitat boxes, and have taken to the high seas to snorkel with inquisitive, native Atlantic Grey Seals at Lundy Island, the UK's first Marine Conservation Zone.

Libby Bowles, Plastic Free North Devon (PFND)'s Education Coordinator, spoke about the Ocean Explorer Academy's growth and development: "Since starting the Ocean Explorer programme with Ilfracombe Academy in 2021, it has developed organically, not only as a positive mental health and wellbeing practice, but also as a brilliant introduction to meaningful citizen science. Teaming up with the North Devon Coast National Landscape, particularly on the Finding Nature's Footprints project, is fantastic. It exposes our students to real-life science and conservation in action. It's vital for young people to be directly involved in tangible action. The programme gives a well-rounded variety of experiences and enables students to continue their citizen science journeys long after completing the OEA programme. I wish OEA had existed when I was at school."

Laura Carolan, North Devon Coast National Landscape

Coastal Officer said: "The Ocean Explorer Project is innovative and looks at investing in the future of young people, teaching them about the importance of their local environment for the future. Our small grant scheme is all about supporting projects in North Devon that benefit the area in some way, so this project fitted well."

Here is what some of the students, parents and teachers had to say about the programme:

"Ocean Explorers is really important - it teaches you how to make a difference, gives you loads of opportunities and helps you get into volunteering in nature." Student.

"We really appreciate the support with our outdoor learning curriculum, which would be a struggle to continue without your excellent work. We are really looking forward to working with you again this year, and pleased to hear you are ramping up the citizen science side of things- anything we can be a part of to proactively support environmental awareness and action is brilliant." Teacher.

"Ocean Explorers has got me doing so much that I never thought I'd do, and it's brought up my confidence so much. I would definitely do it all again." Student.

"I'm so delighted to see my daughter grabbing such adventurous opportunities." Parent.

Claire Moodie, Plastic Free North Devon CEO, added: "I am so blown away to see and hear the difference this programme is making to some of our young people's lives. Opening doors to careers, exploring places they have been to, deeply connecting with nature, building confidence, and connecting with their peers are all key to helping our young people flourish, while maintaining and growing their respect and understanding for the very thing their existence depends on—a healthy and functioning planet. We are incredibly thankful for this injection of funding into the programme, as we move into its third year, and we are still looking for funding to support the growth and delivery of this project long into the future. Please email claire@plasticfreenorthdevon.org if you are interested in supporting this legacy project."

For details or to find out how to get involved as an OEA funder or volunteer or to bring it into your local school, please email: info@plasticfreenorthdevon.org

Plastic Free Devon: www.plasticfreenorthdevon.org

North Devon National Landscapes: www.northdevon-aonb.org.uk



Beware scammers!

“I mostly shop online and I’m always looking for a bargain. However, I’m worried about scammers...what do I look for to avoid getting caught?”

More and more of us are shopping online—it’s convenient and can save a lot of time. However, scammers are getting increasingly sophisticated with their tactics, which can make them hard to spot. What you can do, though, is take steps to protect yourself.

The golden rule is that if it seems too good to be true it probably is. This goes for products that are ‘must haves’, are sold out at major retailers, or are heavily discounted. If you’re buying from a site you haven’t used before, do some research first. See what the company’s returns and refunds policy is and look up the company’s address, which should be displayed on their website, and make sure it is a street address and not a PO Box. Read reviews, not just the ones on their website but check out other review sites.

Be wary of people contacting you out of the blue on social media or via text and email and scammers will often ask you to pay in unusual ways like sending money through a transfer service such as MoneyGram or Western Union or even pay via vouchers. They may well put you under pressure to buy quickly; take your time.

Scammers are clever and sneaky and regularly adapt, making them harder to spot. Anyone can get scammed so, if you do get caught, don’t feel embarrassed or ashamed. Rather, get practical; report it either to Citizens Advice: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/scams/reporting-a-scam or to Action Fraud: www.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/fa/fraud/action-fraud/

If you have transferred money within the last 24 hours, contact the police on 101 but, if you feel unsafe, use 999—and don’t forget to contact your bank, even if more than 24 hours have elapsed.

Here at CA TNMWD we get asked all kinds of questions and get to hear about all kinds of scams amongst other things. Would you like to help us help people with their problems? We are always looking for more people to volunteer with us so that we can increase the number of people we are able to help. Our website is a good source of information about us, as well as providing links for specific advice: www.ruraldevoncab.org.uk or for more information, contact: recruitment@ruraldevoncab.org.uk

If you have a problem and need our help it’s worth remembering that our local AdviceLine is free; just ring 0808 27 87 999.

Funding for farming in protected landscapes

Are you an Exmoor farmer with great ideas on sustainability?

A reminder that Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) programme funding is open to applications on Exmoor that can be delivered between this year and March 2025.

Funding is available for one-off projects, supporting farmers and land managers to carry out projects that:

- * Aid #nature recovery
- * Mitigate the impacts of #climatechange
- * Support nature-friendly, #sustainablefarming businesses
- * Promote easier access on public rights of way

And much more...

Here are just a few examples of what's happening throughout Exmoor thanks to FIPL funding:

Over five kilometres of wildlife rich hedgerows, 540 hectares of regenerative farming, and research into improved management across 700 hectares of moorland are among a raft of projects on Exmoor that have been awarded funding through the government's Farming in Protected Landscapes programme.



Volunteer with us!

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- Enhance your cv
- Help you get back into work
- Give you the opportunity to meet new people
- Keep your mind active
- Help you learn new skills
- Enable you to make a positive impact in the community

The Citizens Advice service is committed to valuing diversity and promoting equality. We welcome volunteers from all backgrounds, including Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) volunteers, disabled volunteers, volunteers with physical and mental health conditions, LGBT+ and non-binary volunteers.

To find out more about our roles and to apply, email Recruitment@ruraldevoncab.org.uk or scan the QR code



Tree planting and orchard restoration

New trees within fields and on field boundaries create more habitat and link wooded areas for woodland wildlife. They are also needed to help deal with the impact of Ash Dieback disease. This includes the potential for re-establishing orchards and historic landscape features.

Moorland grazing management

Innovative 'No Fence' radio collars have been fitted to cattle grazing on Molland moor (Photo). The collars are designed to encourage grazing in a way that breaks up Molinia grass (Purple Moor Grass) and improves regrowing conditions for young heather and other wild plant species. It's a virtual fencing technology that works with an app to train the animals to respond to an audio signal as they move towards a boundary zone.

Meadow Restoration

Species rich grasslands support a wide range of wildlife, including pollinators; they enhance the landscape, encourage water retention in the soil, and help conserve any archaeological features present. This can include enhancing habitat corridors through the landscape and restoring meadows back to flower-rich condition.

For more information visit:

www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/living-and-working/farming-in-protected-landscapes-scheme

or email: conservation@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk and an FIPL Officer will be in touch.

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A Dog's Day Out

There's a Fly in my Soup: Spoiler Alert

They wouldn't let me talk to Pip when we went to visit.

"She was having a female thing, Buddy. You know."

And they've bought a puppy! Horrible things, wriggling around all over the place, dragging everything they can lay their teeth into across the floor. I put him in his place.



"He's for the kids. Are you turning into one of those grumpy old men?"

Hmmm. A future rat catcher more like. Did you notice Percy's humping things?

"I don't think we really need to talk about that, Buddy."

I suppose time is catching up with us – how many inoculations have you had now? And you've been complaining about a sore shoulder too.

"It's the long car journey that did it. I need some sun on my back again, Buddy."

All worth it though, Honey, eh? They've got four cats in North Yorkshire now.

"Couldn't put the black and white one in its place this time though, Buddy. He leapt into the air when we cornered him. Missed your eye by a whisker. Maybe we're not as agile as we used to be?"

Give me half a chance, Honey, and I'll show you I can still chase a quad bike. Did you hear their hen crow in Yorkshire—the one the children hatched in an incubator during lockdown? It's starting to imitate their cockerel. It's quite exciting—they think it might be going through a sex change. How old would they be now, three or four? Just spring chickens really. Still I can't wait to go up and see them all again and what happens next. What about you?

Buddy Brown (pure Jack Russell, a roving reporter



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2 George Arcade, South Molton, EX36 3AB

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Travels from Dulverton: Chapter 8

Well, here we are again. Another year comes to a close as we take our first tentative steps into 2024, with a fresh set of hopes and dreams.

Around the 21—22 December every year is the Winter Solstice. A pagan festival celebrating the shortest day and longest darkest night, before the gradual return of the longer, warmer productive months of spring and summer.

We were lucky enough to visit Avebury in the early hours of 21 December to infuse ourselves with some Yuletide vibes, ready for the big day. Druids led the ceremony, creating a circle within the stone circle where we all stood.

Opposite the circle stands the famously haunted Red Lion pub. On a visit a few years ago, I experienced a phenomenon here of the spirit of a child running through me that confirmed to me there is more to this life than most of us are willing to accept. I was jolted, knocked off my feet almost (no alcohol had passed my lips btw). Afterwards I felt dizzy, with an overwhelming sense of no time and no space, of being everything and everywhere all at once, as well as of being nothing and nowhere. On our return home, I researched the Red Lion; it turned out that the spirit of a young boy runs through the pub, knocking people off their feet. I was lucky enough to experience the spirit of this child, his energy, his exuberance, and his eternity.

Back at the ceremony, they honoured the four cardinal points: north, south, east and west, and the five elements: earth, air, fire, water, and aether. At the end of the ceremony, they passed around a bottle of homemade honey mead. Anyone who wanted to was welcome to take a swig, and to set their intentions for the coming year as part of the ceremony.

As we head into 2024, it's easy to get distracted; making plans for the future, we quickly forget the wishes and goodwill that get packed away with the Christmas baubles for another year. Normality returns,

slightly less magical and meaningful, we return to the status quo of the everyday. But, perhaps it's possible to carry it all on. Keeping our energy levels buoyant, setting our resolutions and our intentions, carrying the goodwill into the new year.

We still have the colder winter months to come. Before the buds spring forth new life once again. The longer days will soon draw out but, in the meantime, January and February offer some space and quiet stillness before we get going. The no-thing, nothing much occurring, nothing to do but wait out the dark stillness until the business of the warmer months returns. But, in this nothing, our hopes and dreams are seeding to germinate.

One of our first jobs is going to be renewing our passports; it's time for a foreign adventure. We are also going to take on some land, which will enable us to grow some of our own produce. But until then we are going to enjoy the peace, buoyantly.

Happy New Year and Good Tidings to All.

Mary Ford



THE LOCAL DIRECTORY

PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS

Bampton T.C.: Clerk: Penny Clapham	clerk@bamptontowncouncil.gov.uk	.01647 253066
Brompton Regis P.C.: S Buchanan	brpcclerk@gmail.com	.01984 641706
Brushford P.C.: Clerk: Jan Aldridge	clerk@brushfordparishcouncil.org.uk	
Cutcombe P.C.: Clerk: Liz Stitt	cutcombeclerk@gmail.com	.07919 001801
Dulverton T.C.: Sec: Miss A. Rose	clerk@dulvertontowncouncil.co.uk	.01398 324561
East Anstey P.C.: Clerk: Mrs Jill Larcombe	eastansteypc@yahoo.co.uk	.01884 252647
Exford P.C.: Clerk: Sian Tedstone	clerk@exfordparishcouncil.org	.07919 001801
Exmoor P..C.: Clerk: Rebecca Tomalin	exmoorparishcouncil@gmail.com	.01643 831638
Exton P.C.: Clerk: Andrew Moore	clerk@extonparishcouncil.co.uk	.01984 641539
Oakford Parish Council: Chair: Mr Geoff Baylis	cllr.GBaylis.OakfordPC@gmail.com	.01398 351266
Upton P.C.: Clerk: Mrs P Purvis	uptonparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk	.01398 371548
Winsford P.C.: Clerk: Jennifer Yates	winsfordparishcouncil@gmail.com	
Withypool & Hawkridge P.C.: Clerk: Rebecca Tomalin	withypoolhawkridgeparishclerk@gmail.com	.01643 831638
Wiveliscombe T.C.: Clerk: Sarah Towells	townclerk@wiveliscombe.com	.01984 631914

LOCAL CHURCHES AND CHAPEL CONTACT NUMBERS

All Saints Church, Dulverton: Revd Dowell Conning	revdconning@gmail.com	.01398 322867
All Saints Dulverton, Parish Office: 1 Church Walk, Dulverton, TA22 9ER	allsaintsdulverton@gmail.com	.01398 322867
Dulverton Benefice/All Saints/Community choirs: Gary Cooper		.07419 212354
All Saints Church, Dulverton, Bell Tower: Anne Markwick		.01398 323823
Brushford: Revd Dowell Conning	revdconning@gmail.com	.01398 322867
Exmoor Benefice: The Rev. David Weir, The Rectory, Exford, TA24 7LX		.01643 831330
Catholic Church: Priest: Father David		.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

The Arts Society Exmoor: Mrs Penny Pulver (Chair)	www.theartsocietyexmoor.oreg.uk	.01398 331007
Draw Life Live: Tony Keene	www.drawlifelive.com	
Dulverton Art Group: Sec: Mrs G Rose, 2 Stable Mews, The Square, Witheridge		.01884 860495
Dulverton Camera Club: Sec: Peter Main, 4 Valley View, Morebath, Tiverton, EX16		.01398 331556
Dulverton Players: Chair: Christopher Dubery		.07989 455590
Oakford Players, Chair: Mr Tony 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	
Brushford Short Mat Bowling: Sec: Sam Takle		.01398 324147
Cutcombe Cricket: Sec: Peter Thompson	cutcombecricketclub@gmail.com	
Dulverton Angling Assn: c/o Pat Veale, 9 High St., Dulverton, TA22 9HB		.01398 323409
Dulverton Badminton Club: Sec Judy Smith		.01398 324353
Dulverton Cricket Club: Carl Hooper	dulvertoncricketclub1858@gmail.com	07866 256769/01398 324494
Dulverton Cricket Club, Colts: Mrs Christine Dubery		.01398 323474
Dulverton & District Tennis Club: Hazel Richardson	hazelr@btinternet.com	.07889793571

Dulverton & Exmoor Squash Club: Membership Sec: Chris Winter	chriscwin@aol.com	.07710 046107
Dulverton Jnr. F.C: Sec: Mrs Christine Dubery		.01398 323474
Dulverton Netball Club: Sec: Mrs Kate Atkins	dulvertonnetballclub@gmail.com	.07966 676305
Dulverton Snooker: Sec: Mr. D. Bodger, 39 Fishers Mead, Dulverton, TA22 9EN		.01398 323899
Dulverton Sports and Social: Chair: Carl Hooper		.01398 324494
Dulverton Sportsfield Management: Adrian Smith		.01398 323834
Dulverton Senior Table Tennis: Richard Archer		.01398 324160
Dulverton Town F.C: Sec: Mr. J. Atkins, 1 Exebridge, Dulverton. TA22 9AY		.01398 323787
Exmoor Croquet Club: Chair: Connie Heywood		.01398 341566
Moorland Hall Sports:	info@wheddoncross.org.uk	
Wimbleball Fly Fishers:	enquiries@fishingthwest.co.uk	

PRE-SCHOOL GROUPS

All Saints School & Nursery:		.01398 323231 & 01398 323223
Anstey Parent and Toddlers Group: Anstey Village Hall		.07823770168
Bampton School Nursery: School Close, Bampton EX16 9NW		.01398 331121
Little Owls Nursery at All Saints C of E School, Dulverton		.01398 324360

SCHOOLS

All Saints C of E School: Fishers Mead TA22 9EN		.01398 323231
Bampton CE Primary School: School Close, Bampton EX16 9NW		.01398 331121
Bampton School Nursery: School Close, Bampton EX16 9NW		.01398 331121
Brompton Regis Toddlers: Mrs.E. Luxton		.07766 703566
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
Exford CofE VC First School:		.01643 831365
Little Berries Pre School at Exford First School		.01643 831365
Little Owls Nursery: All Saints School, Fishers Mead TA22 9EN		.01398 324360



If you see something that needs changing in the directory – please do let us know.

Email exmoornews@gmail.com

WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS

Anstey W.I.: Karen		.01398 341106
Bampton Ladies Group. Mrs. Diane Holland		.01398 332755
Bampton Patchwork and Quilting Group. Mrs. Diane Holland		.01398 332755
Cutcombe & District M.U.: President, Pam Anson		.01643 851616
Cutcombe & District W.I.: Mrs. Pam Anson		.01643 851616
Exford Moorhens: Chairman: Mrs. I. Collett		.01643 831016
Oakford Moorland Ladies Club: Chair: Mrs Louise Wilder	louie.c@tiscali.co.uk	.01396 351277

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
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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
Bampton St. Michael's Community Hall, Station Rd. www.stmichaellhall.org.uk		01398 332158
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: Tracy Beviss		01643 841257
Dulverton Action Group: Magdalena Harding		01398 323 785
Dulverton & Southern Exmoor Twinning: Chair: Steve Ford, Dulverton		01398 323016
Dulverton Bridge Club: Sec. Brian Hughes	www.Bridgewebs.com/dulverton	01398 331219
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 Gardening Club: Roger Hammond		01398 323954
Dulverton Heritage Centre: Kathy Currie		07493 518350
Dulverton Vets		01398 323285
Dulverton Vintage Films: Magdalena Harding		01398 323785
Dulverton Voluntary Drivers: Mike Beale		07743 885115
Exe Valley Market Bus: Jennie Chappell	jennie@chappell.me.uk	01398 351666
Exmoor Patient Group: Chair: Sandra Wilson, W Nightcott, Dulverton TA22 9RT		01398 324687
Exmoor Bee Keepers Association: Sec: Caroline Ralph	exmoorhoneyshow@gmail.com	01984 656240
Exmoor Community Bus: Ann Kelland,	ann.kelland@yahoo.co.uk	07970 149123
Exmoor Community Bus Assn:		07925 044 262
Exmoor Friends (formerly Exmoor U3A): Andy Jeffries		01398 323462
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
Good Neighbours:		07395 171409
Oakford Village Hall: Bookings: Mrs Dawn Williams	dawnannwilliams1@gmail.com	01398 324035
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	07563723884 or 01823 331222
Upton Village Hall Yoga Phoebe	yogawithmeaning@hotmail.com	0794 228 7734
Voices of Exmoor Amanda Taylor		01598 428005
West Somerset Advice Bureau:		01643 704624



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