

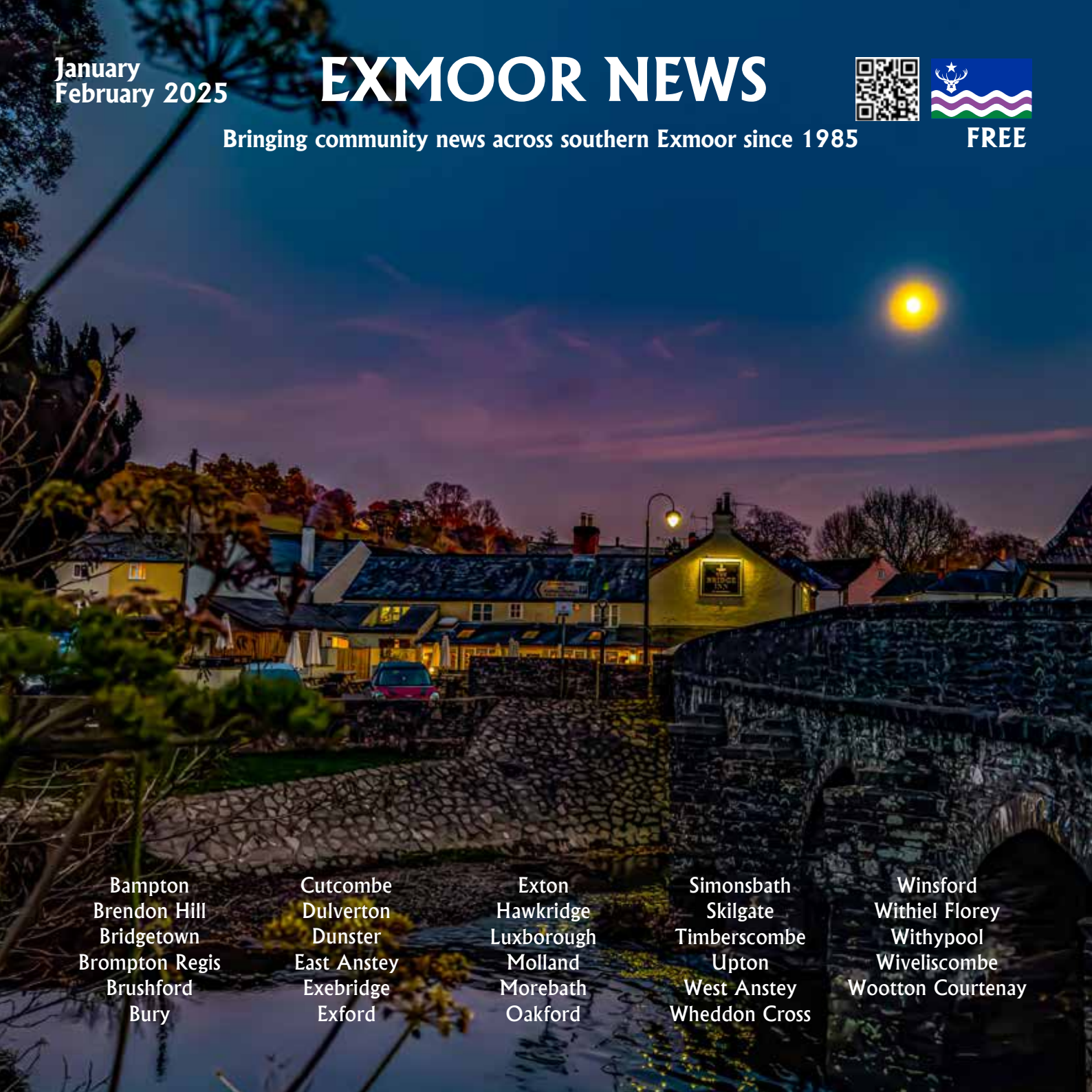
January
February 2025

EXMOOR NEWS



Bringing community news across southern Exmoor since 1985

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EXMOOR NEWS

COVERING SOUTHERN EXMOOR



The deadline for the March/April '25 issue of the Exmoor News is **Thursday 6th February '25**
Printed by Brightsea, Exeter



Cover image 2024: © Vikki Nuttall, *Bridge in Dulverton*. Vikki Nuttall, *Dulverton Photographer, Musician, Singer songwriter*.

If you'd like to see your photo on the cover, send us a low resolution image and if we can use it, we'll ask for a high resolution version.

Welcome to our January and February issue. Lots to read in here including Upton church bell story p3, Dulverton Exmoor Literary Festival p4 and p5, Tug of War Tale p10 and p11, film location article p17, Exmoor Young Voices awarded The King's Award for Voluntary Service 2024 p23, Exmoor National Park supports sea eagles p35, NHS information p38 to p40.

Just to remind you, we at *Exmoor News* encourage community news which is suitable for the southern Exmoor area. If you would like to contribute (free) please drop us an email asking to be added to our contributors' reminder list and we will send out an email a couple of weeks before the deadline asking for copy. Don't forget also to update the contact details if needed, the contact directory is in the back of the magazine. Just drop us an email to update it.

As ever we are extremely grateful to all who get involved in the production and delivery of our magazine. Also please do let our advertisers know you found them in our magazine as this helps us to keep providing it free to you.

Best wishes, Ceri Keene and Claire Savill

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We take our responsibility to maintain high editorial standards seriously.

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

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Stay active with bellringing

Want to stay active, but not sure about joining a gym? Ever thought of bellringing? It's quite an active pastime, suitable for all ages and, if you like being part of a team, it's also sociable.

The Exmoor Benefice Ringers have two accredited instructors. We meet in Exford on a Tuesday night, and in Winsford on the first and third Saturdays of the month.

Please call Sue Atkins on 01643 841408 for more information.



Upton church bell's incredible journey

After sitting silent for more than 150 years, an Exmoor church bell is ringing again—in an Australian wedding chapel. The bell, which dates from about 1550, once rang worshippers to church at Upton village and is now Australia's oldest ringing church bell. Cherie Reid, who built the wedding chapel at Kantara House in Green Point, New South Wales, said she rescued the bell from disrepair to install it 9,500 miles away from its original home. 'The whole journey [to buy the bell] has just been so wonderful. I do feel a bit of pride about the end result,' said Ms Reid.

When the original 14th century church of St James at Upton in Exmoor National Park was replaced in 1870, it was built without a bell tower. Its two ancient bells sat silent until being sold on—one to Australia and one to St Mary Magdalene church at Sandringham.

Ms Reid rings the bell at the end of wedding services at its New South Wales home. She said it had been difficult to source a bell in Australia. 'Most of them are for schools and there's nothing of the calibre of the one I sourced in the UK,' she said.

After finding the bell, Ms Reid had to fly to the UK to collect it and had to chase it to Cork in Ireland, where it was refurbished, before it was flown to Australia in 2016. 'I was a little concerned because the bell looked huge,' said Ms Reid. 'After picking it up, we hid it in the garage so it wouldn't be stolen. But who was going to steal it? It was too big!'

The family had to use a crane to remove the tower roof, install the bell, and then put the roof back on.

Cherie Reid's daughter, Karina Reid, said that it was 'incredible' to hear the bell ringing. 'I remember the first time we rang the bell; it was the end of such a process and I truly thought my mum was mad importing a bell from the UK to put in her tower. I didn't really see how important it would be. From the first moment I heard it ringing, I knew the chapel would not be what it is without the beautiful bell. We have a piece of England's history ringing in our chapel.'

Photos: Cherie Reid

The former Upton church bell dates from 1550.



Cherie Reid (left), with daughter Karina, rings the bell at the end of wedding services.



Karina Reid with a very special delivery—all the way from Upton to Australia via Ireland.

Dulverton Exmoor Literary Festival



What a fabulous festival!



Deborah Meaden and Claer Barrett with copies of their books

Below: Jonathan Dimbleby (L) and Andrew Lownie signing books



With a warm and friendly atmosphere, a whole host of top name authors and speakers the third Dulverton Exmoor Literary Festival held in November was hailed as a huge success. Every bookish

taste was catered for, from historical fiction to gardening, and horse racing to biography, and there were events for all ages, from the youngest readers upwards. There were strong ticket sales, queues for book signings and outstanding author talks that spanned a range of emotions— from hilarity to tears. The audiences at each session were fully engaged and asked some excellent and probing questions.



Caroline Quentin (L) with Gaby Huddart

Below: Discussing the book Exmoor Farms: A Year on the Moor are (L to R) farmer Alan Collins, editor Jane Pearn, farmers Jack Buckingham and Ian May (chairman of the Exmoor Hill Farming Network).

Apart from all the excitement of the festival itself, local eateries and shops were kept busy throughout, proving that books are good for business, as well as for readers! And the newly founded Friends of the Dulverton Exmoor Literary Festival attracted attendees from as far afield as Yorkshire, Suffolk and Wales. Special thanks are due to the twenty-two local sponsors, whose support undoubtedly helped to make the festival such a resounding success.

You'll find a full write-up of the 2024 festival at:
www.visitdulverton.com/dulverton-exmoor-literary-festival-sparkle/

Meanwhile, plans are already in place for this year's festival on 15 and 16 November. If you have suggestions for authors or potential speakers, festival organiser, Ali Pegrum (hello@visitdulverton.com), would love to hear from you.





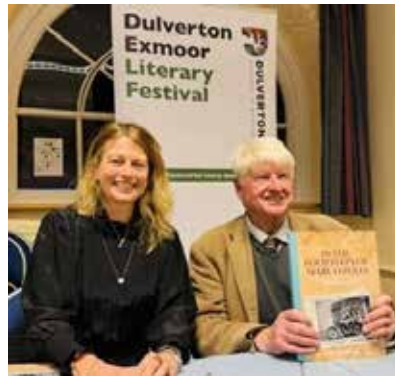
The Racing Talk – L to R Charles Blanning, Janet Vokes and Johnson White



Author Victoria Eveleigh signing a copy of her book 'Exmoor Farms: A Year on the Moor'



Book Club authors (L to R) Jennie Godfrey, Jessica Moor, Kate Lord Brown and Vanessa de Haan. With winning Writing Competition contestants (L to R) Toby Vigurs (winner) and runners-up Jack Richards and Isla Elliott-Boyle

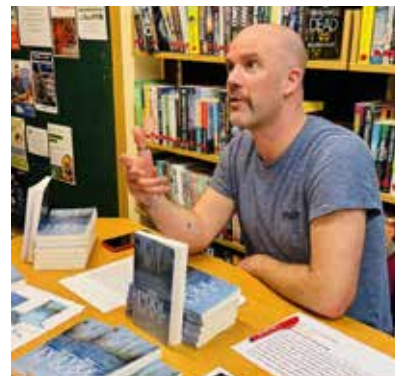


Stanley Johnson with travel editor Miranda Taylor

Below: Professor Charles Foster with Rachel Campbell-Johnston



Novelist Plum Sykes (L) chats with Times journalist Alice Thomson



Richard Collis – one of the Meet the Author writers in Dulverton Library



Thriller writers Sarah Easter Collins (L) and Louise Douglas in Dulverton Library



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WI Scrapbook for 1967 to 68



This is your chance to have
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Each month is full of newspaper cuttings, local
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Join us to have a look on:
February 11th, 10 - 12 at The Old Bakery
February 13th, 10 - 12 at Bridgehouse
February 14th, 11 - 1 in the Heritage Centre
February 15th, 11 - 3 in the Heritage Centre

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Dulverton Action Group—Litter Picking

How can you make your heart sing, feel great about your community, and warm and smug about yourself? Easy! Join our warm-hearted and enthusiastic, but diminished, group of litter pickers!

We meet once a month at 10:30 am on a Sunday and finish with a well-earned pint (or two) at the Bridge Inn afterwards. What could be better? It really is a deeply satisfying thing to do as we spread out in and around Dulverton, singly or in pairs, ferreting out the detritus that makes our beloved home and Mother Earth less beautiful. We're so blessed to have the wonderful Robin cleaning our town for us but she can't get everywhere and do everything, so we love to do our bit.

Seven of our original group have recently moved away to other parts of the country and we're feeling the loss. So, please, do join us. Call or message me, Magdalena, on 07929 761 958 and enjoy the deep satisfaction that a monthly litter blitz affords!



The Dulverton Players Need You!

Our production of Noel Coward's *Blithe Spirit* was an outstanding success, thanks to the tremendous efforts of our cast and production crews.

We have set dates for our 2025 productions, which are:

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 25 January | Quiz |
| 11-12 April | Murder mystery or short play with meal |
| 22-25 October | Full-length play |

If you have any suggestions about suitable shows and if you would like to get involved, please let us know. In the last two years, we have seen several of our members relocate to different parts of the country; for example, Charlie Blanning, a longstanding director, actor and publicity manager.

Some of our more experienced actors have decided, regrettably, that it is time to take a step back from the limelight.

Whatever your age or experience, now is a good time to get involved. Whether

you fancy treading the boards or hate the limelight, we are sure to have a role for you. It takes a large team to pull a show together, from directors to sound and lighting technicians, to stage managers, costuming and set construction—it's all up for grabs—and working together on a production is always a lot of fun.

If you would like to join us in future productions, please email our secretary, Carol Drummond at caroldrummond11@gmail.com. We will be in touch with you and we are intending to hold a meeting in January to discuss future events.

Looking forward to seeing you in 2025.



Blithe Spirit actors still in character.
Photograph taken by Rod Owen

DULVERTON ACTION GROUP

Litter-picking

(3rd Sunday)

Sunday 19th January

Sunday 16th February

10.30 meet by the Heritage Centre

Everyone welcome!

~ and all kit supplied ~

For enquiries call Magdalena
on 323 785 or 07929 761 958

DULVERTON VINTAGE FILMS

Wed 8th January

BENEDICTION

Jack Lowden, Peter Capaldi & Simon Russell Beale (2021)

Wed 12th February

The EMERALD FOREST

Charley Boorman, Powers Boothe & Meg Foster (1985)

Film starts at 2.30 pm
at Fishers Mead Community Centre

£3 includes tea and biscuits

Dulverton Films



Dulverton Town Hall

Friday 24 January

DARK HORSE (Cert PG)

Director: Louise Osmond

85 mins

At last year's Dulverton Exmoor Literary Festival, racehorse breeder and owner, Janet Vokes, shared her remarkable story about how she bred her own foal, who was raised on her Welsh allotment and went on to win the Welsh Grand National! As a barmaid in a poor Welsh mining village, Janet convinced some of her fellow residents to pool their resources to compete in the sport of kings, with a racehorse they would breed and raise. This documentary also includes local trainer, Johnson White, who was persuaded by Jane to train the horse at Philip Hobbs's Sandhill Racing Stables in Bilbrook. An incredible and inspirational real-life story that will thrill equine enthusiasts and novices alike.

Friday 7 February

NEVER TOO LATE (Cert 12)

Directors: Mark Lamprell

98 mins

A group of seniors plan to break out of their retirement home. It has been a long time since Caine, Bronson, Angus and Wendell, dubbed the Chain Breakers, escaped the torturous Vietnamese POW camp. They now find themselves sharing a new prison, the Hogan Hills Retirement Home for Returned Veterans. Each of the boys (James Cromwell, Dennis Waterman and Roy Billing) has an unrealised dream they want to achieve before it's too late. So, once again, they band together to devise a plan to escape this new hell. But the rules of engagement have changed; in fact, they can't even remember what they were and that's half the problem.

Friday 21 February

FLY ME TO THE MOON (Cert 12A)

Director: Greg Berlanti

132 mins

Starring Scarlett Johansson and Channing Tatum, *Fly Me To The Moon* is a sharp, stylish romantic comedy set against the high-stakes backdrop of NASA's historic Apollo 11 moon landing. Brought in to fix NASA's public image, sparks fly in all directions as marketing maven, Kelly Jones (Johansson), wreaks havoc on launch director Cole Davis's (Tatum) already difficult task. When the White House deems the mission too important to fail, the countdown truly begins.

Tickets: Dulverton Films members £3, non-members £5, students, accompanied by an adult, £2.50. Book in advance at Dulverton Town Hall's Thrift Shop, open 10.30am to 2.30pm, Monday to Saturday, or email janaross2003@yahoo.co.uk. Tickets may be available on the door. Bar open from 7pm. Films start at 7.30pm.

A tug of war tale

For anyone wanting to keep fit and active for life in an affordable way, while forging strong friendships in a welcoming environment, Joe Goodman and Dan Nicholls have the answer—tug of war! When *Exmoor News* met Joe and Dan, our youngest interviewees in this series to date, it was clear that their love for the sport is a deep as their respective Exmoor farming family roots. Not surprising, however, as tug of war, like farming, is in their blood.



Joe Goodman (left) and Dan Nicholls (centre) pulling for Anstey TOW.

According to Joe, from Lower Sower Hill Farm near Dulverton: 'I first got involved at a Young Farmers Club (YFC) tug of war event, where we were beaten by a women's team. I was pretty fit and wondered how on earth that had happened! I had to find out more...'

Joe, 34, started training in 2008, when the group had no coach, just a few helpers. 'We had enthusiasm but no direction,' Joe explained. This changed in 2009, when Brendon-based tug of war legend, Nick Skelton (not Nick Skelton, the Olympic equestrian...), became involved and started coaching the Anstey Tug of War (Anstey TOW) team. At that point, Nick was the only Englishman to have pulled for the Welsh national team—and he was a farmer. 'In the 10 years until he died in 2019, Nick took us to a high level; we became a really good South West team.'

Dan, 22, from Woodlands Farm, West Anstey, grew up in a family with strong tug of war connections, particularly through his father, Ronald. Like Joe, Dan became actively involved through the YFC, where he found a warm tug of war welcome. 'Farming can be quite isolating but we are extremely lucky, as tug of war gives us the opportunity to spend time with like-minded friends of all ages and different backgrounds,' said Dan.

The Nicholls family strengthened its local

tug of war connection when Ronald, who had worked for years with teams across the South West, became Anstey TOW's coach after Nick's death. 'Ronald has taken us to a new level that I could never have imagined when I started,' said Joe.

He and Dan were quick to dispel any assumptions that tug of war is only for super-strong, super-fit burly men. There are now as many women's teams in the UK as there are men's; there are 4X4 competitions—four men and four women on a team—and newcomers of any fitness level are welcome. 'We recruit many people who have never found their niche, sportwise,' said Joe. 'Tug of war can bring them out of their shell; after just two or three training sessions, you see them growing in confidence and competitiveness.'

Ronald's stewardship has led to a string of successes for Anstey TOW. 'Last year, in the national championships, we came second in the 4X4 and were in the two top teams in two weight categories,' said Dan. 'That qualified us for the British and Irish championships, where we came second.'

Joe and Dan also pulled for the Anstey team who won the 2024 national YFC competition, a continuing source of pride; Joe had pulled for the winning team back

in 2017, as well as with Dan in 2019 and 2023. There have been other major competition wins too.

While they have loved competing at local, regional and national level, Joe and Dan stress that it's not essential. 'You take it as far as you want,' said Joe. It's a manageable commitment; the team trains for two hours every Tuesday and Friday during the season, which runs from March to October, or you can just go along on Friday evenings. Ronald is always on hand to encourage the pullers—as well as spotting potential. And, unlike some sports, financial outlay is minimal...just one pair of special boots that can be repaired and that will last a lifetime. The only additional costs are travel, for those taking part in competitions.

As Joe says: 'It's got everything you could want in a sport; it's open to women and men; you can do it at different fitness levels, and you can improve. It's a true team sport—there are no stars. There's a saying that it takes eight people to win a pull, one person to lose it. Size is not an issue and there are different weight categories. There's a place for everybody on the team.'

'And you can take part at any age; it's not about strength...it's about technique and being mentally sharp. You're pushing through your legs, not subjecting your joints to wear and tear, so you can carry on doing it for as long as you are able.'

Tug of war is one of the most ancient of sports. Archaeological evidence found in art and carvings in Egypt, Greece and India shows that it dates back thousands of years, as part of physical contests and festivals. In India, tug of war was linked to mythology and is thought to represent the age-old battle between good and evil. In China, where tug of war dates back at least 1,500 years, it was used



Anstey TOW in action.

to promote unity and strength, and to ensure favourable harvests. (Good news for today's tug of war farmers!) In Norse mythology, there are references to a form involving the god Thor, symbolising strength and endurance and, across Scandinavia, tug of war was used in fertility rituals and to and mark seasonal transitions.

Here in England, where it had been enjoyed for centuries, the sport was formalised in the 19th century, with rules and organised competitions. It became popular in schools, in the army and police and fire services, and at public events, and was included in the Olympics from 1900 to 1920, with Great Britain's team excelling. But when a new Olympics rule was introduced, stipulating that each sport had to come under the umbrella of an international body, it was dropped, as there was no such body for tug of war at the time. That changed in 1960, with the formation of the Tug of War International Federation, so the International Olympic Committee has had 65 years to reconsider! Given that breakdancing is now recognised as an Olympic sport, there must be a place for tug of war, not

only one of the world's oldest sports but one of the most continuously popular.

If you would like to know more, about Anstey TOW's see their Facebook page: Visit here: www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100065016283249

Do get in touch—they would love to hear from you.

Diane Trembath



Anstey TOW's 4x4 team.



Anstey TOW, proving that winners are grinners.



Anstey TOW—pulling for Exmoor.

We welcome your community information
- events, groups etc, it all goes in free.

You can be added to our contributors' email
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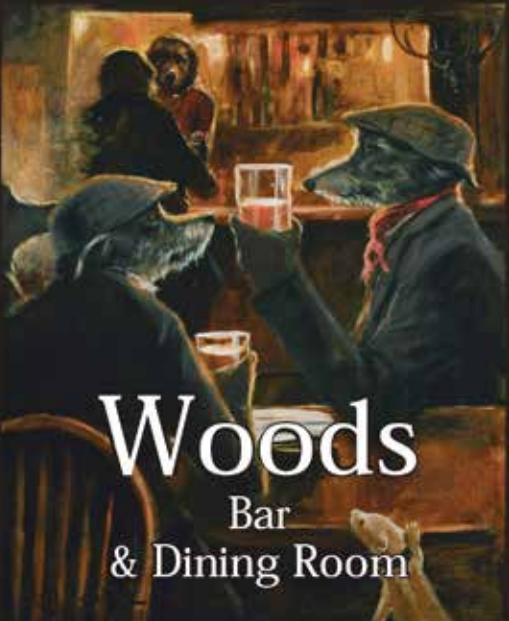
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Winsford Moor Movies

14 January Thelma

Hopefully, a perfect comedy for a gloomy time of year. A grandmother conned by a phone scammer sets out on a quest to reclaim what was taken from her. June Squib, the lead actress, is understatedly funny and commanding.

11 February The Critic (tbc)

Set in 1930s London, Ian McKellen stars as a critic who is determined to survive, despite the newspaper's owner wanting to get rid of him. Gemma Arterton plays an actress devastated by the critic's extremely negative theatrical reviews. Blackmail, deceit and murder ensue.

11 March Small Things Like These (tbc)

Based on the novella by Claire Keegan and set in a small-town 1980s Ireland. See what happens when Bill (a coal merchant) finds a bruised and shivering young woman locked in the convent's coal shed. The book was very powerful and the film has had fantastic reviews.

8 April Conclave (tbc)

Based on Robert Harris's best-selling novel about a papal election following the unexpected death of a beloved pope. Ralph Fiennes plays Cardinal Lawrence, who is charged with running the covert election process. The cardinal uncovers a trail of deep secrets that could shake the foundations of the Church. It's a gripping drama.

All films are shown in Winsford Village Hall on the second Tuesday of the month, starting at 7.30 p.m. Tickets are available at the door: members £3.00, non-members £5.00. Coffee/tea and cakes are available after the film.



News from the Bampton Players

What time is it? It's panto time!

Well, very nearly—the Bampton Players have begun rehearsals for the pantomime that we will be presenting at the Riverside Hall from 20 to 22 February 2025. Get the dates in your diaries! This one's not to be missed.

This year it's *Alice in Wonderland* and, while it is a traditional panto with a very big cast, it is also a musical. All of the songs have been specially written to add even more excitement to the story. You said you wanted the panto back, so a year ago we started work. The wait is almost over. Our last panto, Robin Hood, was back in February 2020 – just before... Well, you know what stopped everything back then. Let's not talk about that. Now we're raring to go. Oh yes we are.

Following our award-winning success with *Wind in the Willows* last summer, we are back working with animals and, er, playing cards—as you do! So come and see what Alice gets up to; you'd be as mad as a hatter not to!

Tickets are on sale from Bampton Fresh in the new year.

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Exmoor Dark Skies Festival 2024 was hugely successful, with more than 2,000 people joining us across the festival period for a wide range of activities including stargazing walks and talks, dark skies yoga, e-bike night rides, astro party and planetarium sessions.

Planning is already under way for our Dark Skies Festival 2025 (sponsored by BMW Vertu, Bridgwater) and dates are confirmed as Friday 17 October to Sunday 2 November. If you are interested in holding an event or wish to find out more, please get in touch with the Rural Enterprise Team. You can also show your commitment to protecting our Dark Skies by registering as a Dark Skies Friendly Business. Contact our Rural Enterprise Team to find out more and start your application: ruralenterprise@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk

We are also busy planning the Exmoor Nature Festival 2025. The festival, which runs from Saturday 17 May to Sunday 1 June, is designed to embrace and celebrate wildlife and wellbeing within the Exmoor National Park.

We will be inviting our partners and local businesses to get involved and add their events to the festival calendar. Keep an eye out for further updates.



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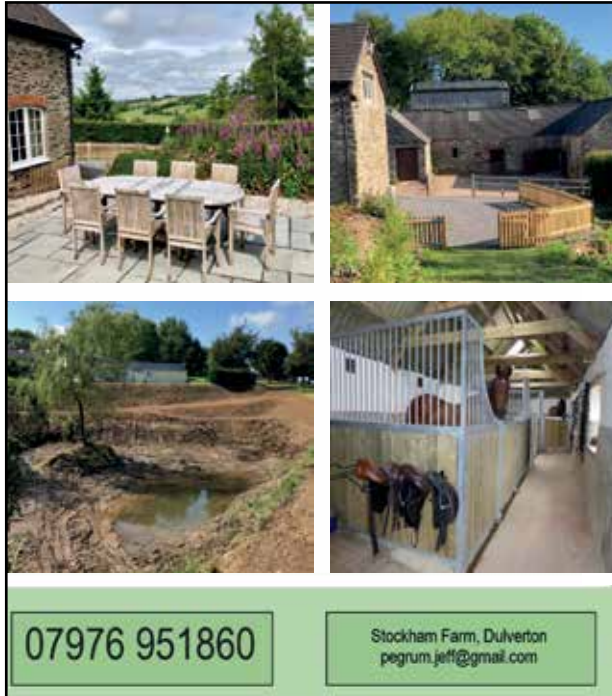
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Opportunities for Exmoor's accommodation providers

Have you ever spotted a familiar Somerset location during a television programme or film? It wouldn't be hard, as film and television production companies spent almost £3 million across the county last year, more than twice as much as the previous year. Screen Somerset (part of Somerset Council) currently lists 68 filming locations across Exmoor, with many across the southern area covered by Exmoor News. This means growing opportunities for local accommodation providers—because film and television crews frequently need somewhere to stay!

Screen Somerset aims to make the county as film friendly as possible, assisting filmmakers in finding their perfect location and helping shoots run smoothly so they are keen to come back. It provides a single point of contact, local knowledge, and works with the council's highways, parking and property services. It is proactively promoting the county to regional, national and international location managers, working closely with Creative England's Filming in England Partnership, which promotes filming outside London.

Somerset's accommodation providers are being urged to make the most of this blockbusting trend by putting themselves forward as lodgings for crew, who often stay locally when filming. Visit Somerset is compiling a list of 'film friendly' accommodation to help productions quickly find suitable lodgings. Film friendly accommodation needs to be open to discounted group rates, flexible around changing schedules and anti-social hours, and have good parking and IT connectivity. Accommodation providers can put themselves forward for the Visit Somerset listing, completely free of charge, by emailing info@visitsomerset.co.uk

Film and television production brings big economic benefits and supports jobs, in the short term through the spend in the local area—particularly in the hotel and hospitality sector—and, in the longer term, through screen tourism when the county appears on screen.

Film and television crews need landowner permission before they can film for professional or commercial purposes; that applies whether land is privately owned or owned by Exmoor National Park Authority. There are also regulations covering the use of drones within Exmoor National Park. Find out more about filming on Exmoor at: www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/enpa/press-room/filming-on-exmoor



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Dulverton Parish Rooms

Following a recent refurbishment, including the discovery of a beautiful parquet floor, Dulverton's historic Parish Rooms have re-opened, ready for groups and individuals to hire for meetings, clubs, activities and events. The first floor, which was previously the Exmoor Society office, is now the Dulverton Players' base. The ground floor, accessed via Rosemary Lane from the High Street, is a large spacious hall, with its own kitchen and WC. Heated (and cooled) by smart ceiling units, this light, airy space is very versatile and is being equipped with chairs and tables. Hire rates are negotiable and competitive, as the voluntary trustees want the space to be used for the purpose intended by the Wills family when they gifted it to the town over 100 years ago.

For more details, contact Bill Gash on billgash@gmail.com

You will be able to book online here: www.hallbookingonline.com/dulverton/index.php





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New Year Greetings

This season we are championing young musicians and our first two concerts were a stunning example of youthful, energetic and inspiring performers with the Marmen String Quartet last September and pianist, Alim Beisembayev, in October .

We are continuing this theme with our Sunday afternoon concert on 9 February, which features four young professionals just starting out on their journey into the world of professional music. All these superb musicians have a strong link to Taunton, having lived and studied here before going on to the hone their skills at prestigious colleges around the country. They have each chosen their repertoire, providing a diverse programme of exciting music, now available to view on our website: www.milvertonconcerts.org

For our final concert on 8 March, we welcome trumpeter Aaron Azunda Akugbo , accompanied by the amazing Zeynep Oszuca, who accompanied Jess Gillam a few years ago in our concert at St Andrew's, Wiveliscombe.

And finally, not forgetting our youngest future musicians, we recently organised a fabulous workshop for primary school children with The Stringcredibles, a City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra string quartet.

We look forward to welcoming you in 2025.

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Exmoor Rotary's very good year

We have recently had a succession of very successful fundraising events, so many thanks to all who came along and supported them. Our Shelterbox Supper raised a whopping £1,227—sufficient for two boxes providing the basic essentials of shelter and tools for families in emergency needs.

Our pub quiz, held simultaneously in four local Exmoor hostelries, raised £530 for the Calvert Trust (Exmoor) to help provide adventure holidays for disabled people. At Bampton Charter Fair, we welcomed many old friends to our stall in Brook Street and made some great new friends too. Over £200 was raised for the CHAT charity in Tiverton, with our whisky galore raffle and a bookstall in the church. Good examples of Rotarians giving up their time to provide some fun and raise money for others.

We also held a special event to thank Eddie Farwell MBE, who—with his wife, Jill—co-founded Children's Hospice SW in 1991. It is 30 years since the first hospice opened at Fremington. This year, money has again been raised by our two Exmoor Challenges, one for adults and one for children and, thanks to the generosity of many, the total stands at £8,816. Over the years we have been supporting them we have contributed £169,000. Truly remarkable.

The year ended with our annual Santa collections at Dulverton and Bampton.

A Happy New Year from us all; we look forward to seeing you in 2025.

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**The King's Award
for Voluntary Service**



Exmoor Young Voices awarded The King's Award for Voluntary Service 2024

We are delighted to announce that Exmoor Young Voices has been awarded The King's Award for Voluntary Service 2024—the highest honour for UK volunteer groups, equivalent to an MBE.

This prestigious royal recognition highlights our commitment to supporting young people on Exmoor, helping them overcome challenges and create opportunities to live and work locally. Our success would not be possible without the dedication of volunteers, advisers, and partner organisations who have supported our mission and amplified the voices of Exmoor's young people.

We extend heartfelt thanks to every young person who has shared their story, attended meetings, or contributed to our work. This award is a testament to the collective effort of all who have given their time, knowledge, and passion to make a difference.

Representatives from Exmoor Young Voices will receive the award crystal and certificate from the Lord-Lieutenant of Somerset, Mr Mohammed Saddiq. Two volunteers will also attend a garden party at Buckingham Palace next summer to celebrate alongside other recipients.

This award honours not only our charity but everyone working to ensure that young people can thrive on Exmoor. Thank you for your continued support in making this vision a reality.

William Lock
Chair, Exmoor Young Voices

Dunster Festival seeking trustees

Dunster Festival is seeking new members to join its Board of Trustees.

The festival was established in 2017 to bring high-quality live classical chamber music and associated arts events to Exmoor. We run an annual festival in Dunster over the Spring Bank Holiday weekend, as well as a programme of education and outreach work, taking musicians into the local community to reach those who may not otherwise be able to access the festival itself. This includes concerts in care homes and hospices, family concerts, and interactive performances for children in schools.

As the festival continues its successful development, we are now seeking to strengthen the Board of Trustees, who meet approximately four times a year.

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David Godsal, Chair, on
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Saturday 8 March 2025 at 12 noon

St Nicholas' Church in Brushford boasts one of the oldest chests in the country, a 13-century font, a mediaeval screen and a fine little organ, which was meticulously restored in 2014. How often do a few pedals, two manuals and a sprinkling of pipes in a small village church receive that sort of treatment?

The instrument is of exceptional quality, capable of making an enormous sound. What therefore could be better than hearing it put through its paces by fine musician, Gary Cooper! In fact, it's worth going to church just to listen to him play—even giving the congregation a mini-recital at the end of each service.



So that others can hear this tiny gem, Gary has kindly agreed to give a concert at 12 noon on Saturday 8 March to raise money for the church. It will last about an hour followed by lunch. The programme, including Bach and Mendelssohn, promises to be child friendly. Tickets are selling quickly, so do book now!



Gary Cooper

Adults: £15 to include lunch; children under 12, £8.

Tickets on sale: Carnarvon Stores, Brushford; The Tantivy, Dulverton, and from Penny Adie adie.exmoor@btinternet.com

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Stretch your arms high above your head and shout Good Morning three times. (If anyone answers give a loud laugh – the happy sort that Santa gives).

Perhaps white frost is scattered like crystal leaves across the window. You want to see it and touch it.

Put on warm clothes and hide behind the curtain. Be still. Look through the window. Is it dark? Is it getting lighter?

Listen. Can you hear the sound of morning? Birds chattering? Crackling ice? Vibrations of silence? What can you hear?

Go outside. The moon is disappearing. Skeletal trees are swaying with coldness. Morning time birds are chirping in the hedgerow. What can you see?

Be still. Take a deep breath. This is your day. Be big.

**After Adrian Mitchell*

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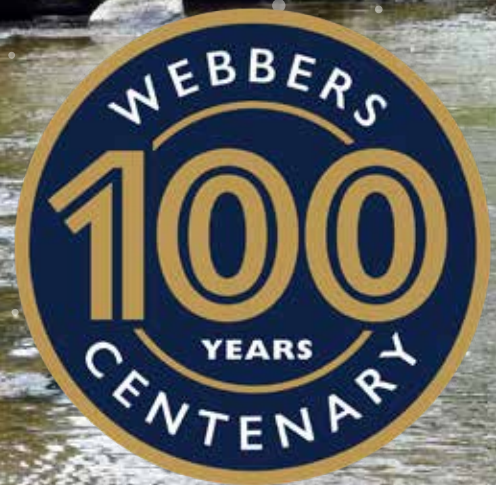


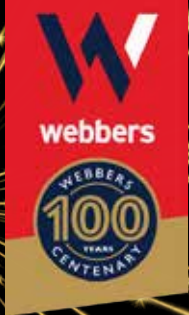
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Every three months, three local good causes are chosen to be in the blue token customer vote in Tesco stores throughout the UK. If you shop at Tesco, you're probably familiar with the scheme: when you pay for your shopping at the checkout, you receive a blue token. Near the store exit are three boxes—one for each local cause—and all you have to do is pop your token into the box of your choice.

The scheme, managed by community charity, Groundwork, is open to all schools, registered charities and not-for-profit organisations. Examples of eligible applications include schools that run breakfast clubs or want to start a food-growing area, voluntary organisations running food banks for local families, and Brownies or Scouts groups who need help with new play equipment.

Nominate and support a local project that matters to you



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Find out more about Tesco Stronger Starts, apply for a grant or nominate a project at the scheme's website; www.tescostrongerstarts.org.uk

It's clear, easy to follow, and gives you all the information you need, with some great examples of local groups, schools and charities that have already been awarded a grant.



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Help and advice in our local community

Regular readers of these community columns will know that we help people with a vast array of problems. Many are finance related, particularly given the impact of the cost of living increase on households across the area. By and large, people do not know what benefits or financial assistance they may be able to claim but even if they think might get help, they don't always know how to go about applying—or are understandably too proud to ask. Quite often, eligibility for certain benefits opens the door to other assistance and, in today's world, the problems that people present to us are becoming increasingly complex.

We have specialist teams to advise on things like debt and energy, as well as identifying the help available to those with special needs, such as people with cancer and anyone with a life-limiting illness. We can help with housing problems and social needs and, if we can't provide the help needed, we can refer people to organisations that offer advice and support for people with specific needs.

In our articles, we have covered shoddy workmanship, the rights that people have when holidays don't measure up, employment issues, and what to be aware of when buying a car. We are here to listen and give free, impartial advice to anyone who needs it.

For us, the start of a new financial year is a time to reflect on what we have achieved in the previous year, in terms of the numbers of people we have helped, the problems we have advised on, and the impact that has had. We are continually

striving to improve our efficiencies and find more ways to help more people. This year, for instance, we introduced a new email advice service, and we are looking at ways to make getting advice more accessible, such as making more information available on our website.

We also understand that not everyone is computer savvy and sometimes people just want to talk to somebody on the telephone or in person, which is why we have a permanent recruitment and training programme to grow our volunteer numbers. All our volunteers receive full training and continuous support, and volunteering with us can lead to paid employment opportunities. You don't need to be an expert in any particular field, you just need to care and have a willingness to listen; our training and support will see you through the rest.

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Exmoor National Park supports the Sea Eagle

Exmoor National Park Authority (ENPA) is launching a white-tailed eagle public perception survey and engagement events, to share how it is partnering with England's White-tailed Eagle Reintroduction Programme, led by the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation RDWF and Forestry England, to support the species' conservation.

From 2019 onwards, the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation and Forestry England have been working to restore white-tailed eagles to southern England, through a reintroduction project based on the Isle of Wight, licensed by Natural England and NatureScot. A total of 37 eagles have been released to date and, in 2023, a pair bred successfully for the first time. The same pair reared a further two chicks this year, and three other territorial pairs of eagles are now established on the South Coast. It is hoped that this project will lead to establishing six to eight pairs of white-tailed eagles within 60km of the Isle of Wight.

To support the existing population of these incredible birds, the project aims to carry out a small number of additional releases and is working with ENPA to achieve this in the Exmoor National Park. The hope is that these birds will boost the emerging population of white-tailed eagles along the south coast of England.

The area has been identified as a key location after the presence here of several of the white-tailed eagles released by the project. Satellite tracking shows the

birds' precise locations and, over the past few years, Exmoor has become a white-tailed eagles hotspot, with seven different birds visiting. Many people have also been lucky enough to see the birds and logged their sightings.

White-tailed eagles formerly bred on the Exmoor coast, and the extensive areas of coastal woodland and abundant marine fish species, such as grey mullet, provide exceptional breeding habitat. Detailed research into the diet of the Isle of Wight birds has shown that they favour fish as they mature and begin breeding.

Zoe Smith of the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation, and originally from Exmoor, said: 'We've used the satellite tracking data, which provides extremely detailed information on the movements of all the birds we have released on the Isle of Wight, to identify the best areas to support the establishing population through a series of small-scale releases. This has shown that Exmoor is one of the key sites. We think that releasing a small cohort of up to 20 birds over three years would help reinforce the English population by aiding the geographical expansion, and we would like to know what people think of this idea.'

'Eagles from the Isle of Wight have been frequent visitors to Exmoor over the



past five years and we know that many people have enjoyed seeing them. We can see from how people have reacted to the eagles over recent years, that once they get to know the behaviour of the birds it dispels any concerns surrounding this species. There's a common fear for example that white-tailed eagles could predate livestock, but there's been no record of this since the Isle of Wight project began. As their other common name, sea eagle, suggests, they prefer to hunt fish but will also eat birds (including gulls and corvids), small mammals and dead animals (carrion). For young birds, carrion makes up a large proportion of their diet but, by their third year, white-tailed eagles will gravitate towards wetland sites, home to their preferred diet of fish.'

ENPA Senior Ecologist, Ali Hawkins, said: 'White-tailed eagles are an important flagship species in coastal ecosystems and used to be found right across the UK but are now one of our rarest species and listed as a species of Conservation Concern. Working with the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation over the last few years, we

have been doing a lot of liaison with local landowners and shoots regarding white-tailed eagles already visiting Exmoor. With its remote wooded coastline, deep incised valleys and abundance of food it's easy to see why the eagles are choosing to spend time here and people have greatly enjoyed seeing them.

'We'd really like to hear what people think about white-tailed eagles in our public perception survey and invite everyone to come to our events and to talk with the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation and Forestry England who are experts on these birds, and our Exmoor National Park conservation staff and rangers.

'We think that reinforcing the population of these spectacular birds would greatly support our work to make Exmoor richer in wildlife and return an important species to our National Park. Moreover, evidence from projects in Scotland and the South of England shows that eagle tourism is extremely popular and could be of great benefit to the Exmoor economy, especially in winter.'

Steve Egerton-Read of Forestry England said: 'White-tailed eagles are a truly iconic species. The positive reaction that people have had to them since the reintroduction project began in 2019 has been incredible. It demonstrates how returning lost species like this can reconnect people with nature and help support its recovery. We'd encourage anyone interested in finding out more to come along to one of these events and take part in the survey.*'

Exmoor National Park recently held white-tailed eagle information events and family activities at National Park Centres.

*You can find the Exmoor public perception survey at: <https://forms.office.com/e/faPyJW3C96>

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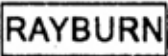
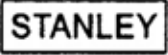
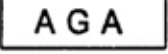


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BBC's Sarah Cawood (left)
with SWFFL's Sally Pizii.



Fishing for Life on BBC

BBC *Morning Live* came to meet and hear all about South West Fishing For Life (SWFFL), the charity that supports people who have been through or currently have breast cancer.

Presenter Sarah Cawood, who has suffered from breast cancer, spent the day with the Wimbleball group on Exmoor, where SWFFL was founded. Sally Pizii, our fishing co-ordinator, gave Sarah a lesson on how to cast and to find out for herself the benefits of the gentle exercise of casting. It's not all about the casting and fishing but being out by water in beautiful locations away from everything and enjoying special 'me time'—to reflect, learn a new hobby, and make new friends with likeminded people.

After a morning of fishing on a very cold windy day, Sarah joined the other members for a lovely lunch and heard how fishing had helped and is helping people get over their experience of cancer. Everyone sits round the table chatting about life...and the fish that got away! SWFFL is all about Fun, Fishing, Food and Friendship. SWFFL was included in a *Morning Live* programme on 24 October 2024. (Breast Cancer Awareness Month runs throughout October every year.) Watch the programme on BBC iPlayer (40:55 minutes in): www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m00246zj

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Somerset's new bowel cancer self-referral service

A new service that makes it easier for people to get checked for bowel cancer has launched in Bridgwater. It is open to people aged 40-49, who are registered with a local GP in Somerset.

Every year in the UK, over 2,500 people under the age of 50 are diagnosed with bowel cancer. It is often harder to diagnose through the traditional referral via a GP, with one in four people being diagnosed as an emergency, and often at the latest stage.

The main symptoms of bowel cancer include:

- bleeding from your bottom
- blood in your poo
- a change in your toilet habits—you might be going more or less often, or have diarrhoea/constipation
- losing weight
- stomach pains.

Traditionally, people would contact their GP if they had concerns, and they would provide a faecal immunochemical test (FIT), which looks for blood in the poo, even if it's too small for the naked eye. If the test is positive, it will indicate that there is bleeding, requiring further investigations.

The Somerset NHS Foundation Trust project team has been working with innovative cancer detection specialists, C the Signs, to use its cancer detection platform to pioneer an online referral form that allows people to check their symptoms. All eligible patients will be sent a FIT, and the NHS team will ensure that the results of the FIT are shared with the patient and, if required, further investigations arranged.

Somerset NHS Foundation Trust's cancer programme manager, Rosie Edgerley, said: 'Our data showed that there are younger people being diagnosed with late-stage bowel cancer in Somerset, with the highest proportion being in the Bridgwater area. We also know that it can be embarrassing for people to talk about



Somerset
NHS Foundation Trust

their pooing habits with a healthcare professional, which is why we are working with a company called C the Signs to develop an easily accessible online referral form which checks people's eligibility and allows them to complete a FIT test, which if positive, will lead to further investigations.'

Miss Shelly Griffiths, one of the trust's consultant colorectal surgeons, who has also been involved with the project, said: 'This new service is an easy way for people to seek help for a problem with their bowels, without having to make an appointment to see their GP. We know that the earlier we find a problem, the more able we are to treat it, and we would encourage anyone with concerns to use this new service.'

C the Signs is a cancer prediction system that can identify patients at risk of cancer at the earliest and most curable stage of the disease. It has now been developed to allow patients with bowel symptoms to access their risk and recommend any appropriate tests. Using the latest technology, research and evidence, C the Signs enables healthcare providers to give their patients the best chance of surviving cancer.

C the Signs CEO and co-founder, Dr Bea Bakshi, added: 'At C the Signs, we are committed to simplifying the pathway to cancer detection and making it more accessible for patients. This initiative allows people to monitor their own symptoms and access crucial tests without the usual hurdles. By providing this direct route, we are ensuring more timely follow-up care, which can make all the difference in catching cancer earlier and improving outcomes.'

On average, 10-15% of people who complete a FIT test have a positive result needing further investigation. This does not mean that cancer has been found, in fact, 96%



of people with a positive result do not have cancer.

GP and clinical director for the Bridgwater Bay Primary Care Network, Dr Harry Smallwood, said: 'In recent years, there was a feeling that we were seeing more young people diagnosed with bowel cancer. This was supported by evidence presented to me showing higher rates of bowel cancer in some areas of the county. The new pilot means we can increase access to this simple test and investigate patients faster, while freeing up GP appointments for other conditions.

'Seeing blood in the bowel motions can often be a frightening and embarrassing experience and one that patients can put off seeking advice for, hoping it will go

away. Even if the test is positive it does not always mean a patient will have bowel cancer, there are many benign reasons why blood may be present, but firstly we want to exclude the cancer and investigate and treat patients faster, so they're more likely to have a better outcome.'

The new self-referral service will be available to people in Bridgwater and surrounding areas in several ways, including supermarket pop-ups, local businesses, workplace events (including Hinkley Point C) and localised advertising placements.

Patients can text the word 'poo' to 82228, for free, or visit our website to access the self-referral form: www.somersetft.nhs.uk/cancer/somerset-bowel-service/



Somerset NHS Foundation Trust's new bowel cancer self-referral service project team.

Nurse Parfitt bows out

In autumn 2024, Helen Parfitt, a nurse at Taunton's Musgrove Park Hospital retired after an impressive 48 years in the NHS.

Helen was always going to be a nurse—from the time she was in primary school and her mum was in hospital for 18 months. And what a nurse she turned out to be! Helen arrived in Taunton on her student nurse placement in 1976 and it was at Musgrove Park Hospital that she fell in love with children's nursing, inspired by Mary Lawrence, who was ward sister at the time. Helen went on to complete an obstetrics course at Queen's Charlotte's and Chelsea Hospital, one of the UK's oldest maternity units, where she gained experience in midwifery, before undertaking her children's nursing registration at Great Ormond Street Hospital.

'Going into nursing has been the single best decision of my life and, other than maternity leave, I've been at Musgrove Park Hospital for over 40 years. I can't believe the time has come to leave,' said Helen. 'After completing my training in London, I returned to Musgrove Park to work on Ward 18, which is now Acorn Ward, and it's fair to say that so many things have changed for the better since then. For example, back then, mothers used to sleep on camp beds next to the cot, so we had to be careful not to fall over them when we went in to do the observations at night!

'Babies died of meningitis in those days but less so now that several vaccines are routine. Treatment has improved with cystic fibrosis too, with so many people with the condition living to adulthood, some even having children of their own. I'm not old enough to have seen the beginning of penicillin, but there was great excitement when we gave the "new" Acyclovir anti-viral infusion.'

Helen then left the children's ward to pursue her love of nurse teaching and set up the hospital's Return to Practice programme and an induction course for overseas nurses to gain UK registration.

'I helped nurses to come back in the profession so if I ever felt guilty about leaving hands-on nursing, I was consoled with the fact that I've helped other people into it!

'For my masters degree, I chose "registered nurses" use of infusion pumps" because we needed to buy new ones. After testing four different makes on eight wards, my 18,000-word dissertation concluded that any of them were acceptable...we chose the simplest, which also happened to be the cheapest, so everyone was happy.

'Florence Nightingale once said, "First...do (the sick) no harm", and literally thousands of nurses did the dreaded calculations test as part of the IV drugs assessment. I would like to be remembered as supportive, as well as rigorous.'

In 2009, Helen joined Musgrove Park Hospital's pharmacy team, as its first medicines management nurse.

'Early on in my time in pharmacy, I helped design prescription charts for children's pain relief and epidurals, adult acute pain, and variable rates of insulin infusion, and they are still being used today.

'After 40 years I dropped to four days a week and stopped being the "POD goblin" looking in the patient lockers to check the medicines there against the prescription sheet. The whole discharge from hospital process is usually pretty speedy, but it's important that patients go home with the right drugs. Part of my role has been to look at incident reports to see what we can learn to reduce to risk of errors happening.

'Five years later I stopped teaching the IV course, but have been pleased to still be involved in a project to extend this role to our registered nursing associates. I would like to think I have done my bit and am leaving somewhere near the top of my game. I haven't quite made my 50 years in the NHS, as I did a degree in English Literature before I began my nursing career. Now I've left Musgrove Park Hospital I don't have big plans to sail around the world, but I have started decluttering the house, as well as a bit of gardening. I'm just looking forward to enjoying life with a bit more time and space!'



Helen Parfitt—almost half a century of service to the NHS.

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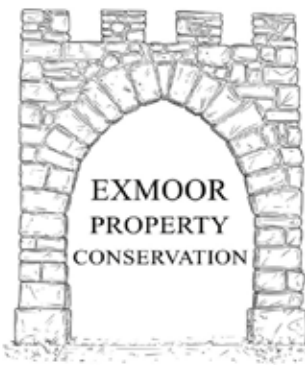
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A Dog's Day Out—Never Never Land

I hope it snows again today. Who said that Honey?

'Not me Buddy...Goldilocks over there.'

Who?

'Your fairy godmother, Buddy.'

Ah. Do you think she misses her palace, Honey? Perhaps it was a place where they had lots of snow.

'She told me she used to go on sleigh rides, pulled by two grey ponies.

That's nice. We've got lots of ponies in the village so she must feel quite at home here.

'Pirates came out the other night, she said, and poured salt all over the road outside that turned the snow to brown slush. She said it made her fur dirty when she went for a walk and it made the village ponies' legs messy too.'

I haven't seen any pirates, Honey. I've seen bin men.

'Definitely pirates, Buddy. She said their ship flew past with flashing yellow lights in the middle of the night while we were asleep under the duvet.'

Have you told her there is a pile of towels by the front door and not to roll in the sofas until she's used one. It's the in-house rules. I'm not a lover of snow myself.

'Me neither, Buddy.'

My favourite sun bench in the front garden gets covered in the stuff and it gets in between my toes and gives me chilblains. Ask fairy godmother to roll over a bit, Honey; there's just about room for the three of us in front of the fire and there's another log about to go on it.



(Buddy recommends Carr & Day & Martin's Gallop Shampoo, specially formulated to enhance grey ponies. 500 ml for £8.50)

Buddy Brown (pure Jack Russell, a roving reporter)



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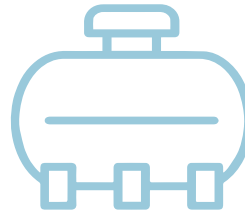
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Kate Pegram—Homeopath

Is it time to rethink your relationship with sleep?

In my practice, sleep issues are extremely common and a long-term lack of it leads to burnout and many other detrimental effects to our health. When life gets busy, sleep is often one of the first things that we sacrifice. Whether we're staying up late to finish work, binge watching a TV series or falling into endless doom scrolling!

Creating a sleep routine will help your body know when it's time to sleep:

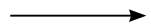
1. Avoid heavy meals, caffeine and sugar up to six hours before bedtime.
2. Give yourself some time to wind down before sleep: by stretching, having a relaxing bath with calming essential oils, or chilling with a book.
3. Make your bedroom a sleep haven: keep it dark, quiet and cool.
4. Cut down your screen time: blue light tricks your body into thinking that it's daytime, which then stops your body releasing the sleep hormone, melatonin.
5. Use homeopathic remedies as part of your calming routine.

Here are three excellent remedies for aiding sleep:

- * Coffea Cruda—eases the racing thoughts of an overactive mind preventing sleep.
- * Chamomilla—calms irritability and restlessness, (especially in teething children).
- * Nux Vomica—helps with insomnia caused by stress, overwork, or late-night stimulants.

Sleep is your superpower— in these winter months, let it restore your body, sharpen your mind, and boost your emotional resilience. You're worth it!

www.evolutionhomeopathy.com



Paul Tam—Hypnotherapist

Pain

Everybody feels pain at some time. Mostly, it is the occasional pain, such as backache or muscle strain, which is made more intense because of mental tension as you tense up. It is precisely at this time that it is important to relax your mind, which in turn will relax your body.

How do you do this when you feel you can't move due to the pain, together with the fear that any movement might cause that pain to become more intense? Hypnosis can help. This can be achieved through learning self-hypnosis techniques during hypnotherapy sessions. Hypnosis can relax your mind and all the muscles in your body. When your muscles relax, the pain can seem less severe. You might say this is simply mind over matter. It's not easy to achieve but, given the tools to do this through hypnotherapy, it can become almost automatic and more immediate, using certain personalised triggers. It's worth a try.

Similar techniques can be applied to other potentially painful situations such as a visit to the dentist. It may be the fear of the pain of the drill, or fear of the anaesthetic needle. In all cases, one must be open to the process of hypnosis and have trust.

Chronic pain requires a different approach, which is personalised during a hypnotherapy session. Suffice it to say, if you are willing to accept hypnosis and hypnotherapy, they can really help.
www.tamtherapy.co.uk

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Our Priorities

Properties/Target Hardening

Although Exmoor is a relatively low crime safe area, we will be concentrating on some of our isolated/vulnerable properties over the winter. Following the successful Police Posts held in some of smaller villages during the summer, we will advertise dates where we will offer crime reduction advice and cycle registering

Farm Contact Crime Prevention

PCSOs regularly visit and speak to farmers offering crime prevention Farm and Horse watch. As well as rural community visits, we attend the Cutcombe Market once a month and offer crime prevention and advice.

Drug, Drink Driving and Drug Dealing If you are concerned about someone who may be drink/drug driving or dealing drugs in your community, you can report your concerns by ringing 101/999 (if urgent), via Crimestoppers online or by ringing 0800555111. You can remain anonymous and your information may save a life.

Crime Statistics (published October 2024)

Violence against a

person	x 9
Theft	x 3
Public Order	x 5
Other	x 3

Please take a few moments to read the important information below:



Fraud Alert

People in Avon and Somerset have reported receiving fraudulent text messages, telling them to pay a fictitious parking fine. This is an example of 'phishing', when cyber criminals use fake messages to lure people to click on links within a scam email or text message, or give away sensitive information.

In this case, recipients are encouraged to click on a link to pay, which takes them to a website that looks convincingly like an official government page. They are then asked for their email address, vehicle registration and

card details to make a payment, usually £20. If you receive a text message like this, DON'T click on the link, as fraudsters can steal your personal and financial data to commit identity fraud and take your money. Even clicking on the link and not entering any information could result in malware and computer viruses being downloaded onto your device. Report by forwarding the phishing text to 7726. This enables your provider to investigate the origin of the text and act, if found to be malicious.

If you have been coerced into giving away money or information to dishonest people, report this to your bank immediately (call 159 to be automatically connected to their fraud service) and to police via Action Fraud on 0300 1232040. By reporting you could protect many more people from being affected.

Thanks to everyone who has reported and brought this scam to our attention.

WhatsApp Scam

What does it look like? Fraudsters pretend to be a relative, friend or someone you care about. They may contact you via WhatsApp stating they have a new number due to an emergency and will ask you to send money. They will often claim that their phone has been lost or damaged, or that they are unable to access their bank account. The criminals behind these scams are preying on people's kindness and desire to help others in need. WhatsApp is more commonly used for this particular scam but fraudsters may use other methods of communication such as email, SMS, or via social media.

What should you do?

Call your relative/friend on the number you have saved for them.

Avoid sending any money until you are satisfied that they are not a scammer.

Where to report?

If you have been a victim of this scam, you can report to Action Fraud either online (www.actionfraud.police.uk) or over the phone (0300 123 2040).



If you have sent money as part of this scam, contact your bank to report the fraud.

You can forward scam texts messages to 7726 and emails to report@phishing.gov.uk.



Farm and Horse Watch

If you have a farm or small holding and wish to find out more about Farm and Horse Watch, contact us for free registration. We are planning some farm visits in the area, continuing to offer crime prevention and advice and offer sign-ups to Farm Watch if not already registered.

Dulverton Health Walks

The Dulverton Health Walks group meet every Tuesday morning at 10am to walk at different locations. The walks are not too difficult and last between one to two hours. We stop quite often for others to catch up—it is not a race—and to admire our beautiful countryside.

If you would like to join our very friendly group, please contact either:

Richard Clarke on 01398 341141
email: richardclarke567@btinternet.com

or Richard Archer on 0777 3160 222
email: archer8r@hotmail.com

We look forward to seeing you soon.



Dulverton Town Hall

Friday January 31st to Saturday March 15th

31 January	France v Wales (20:15)
1 February	Scotland v Italy (14:15) Ireland v England (16:45)
8 February	Italy v Wales (14:15) England v France (16:45)
9 February	Scotland v Ireland (15:00)
22 February	Wales v Ireland (14:15) England v Scotland (16:45)
23 February	Italy v France (15:00)
8 March	Ireland v France (14:15) Scotland v Wales (16:45)
9 March	England v Italy (15:00)
15 March	Italy v Ireland (14:15) Wales v England (16:45) France v Scotland (20:00)

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The festive season—Exmoor style

There is always something in the air as the year draws to a close and we step into the festive season. A sense of something significant heading our way from over the horizon (not the Coca-Cola™ lorry), but something spirited and tangible—not a snowball, either.

My boss was telling me more about her childhood on Exmoor. Her grandma milked the cows and bottled the milk and then she and her uncles would deliver it around the farm's local community. Every community had its dairy farm providing fresh, unpasteurised milk. The Dulverton cows walked themselves through the streets, to and from the milking yard. What a wonderful sight that must have been. There is a freedom to country life; the work is hard and the play is hard—so fundamentally different from urban life. It is more productive and yet also more efficient, as with the tortoise and the hare; the hare rushed around while the tortoise paced itself purposefully, allowing time to smell the roses as it achieved its goals.

A work friend's daughter runs a farm and we were lucky enough to source a meat box of fresh Dexter beef, grass-fed, loved animals; you can taste the difference. She says they talk to them and stroke them every day, culling two animals a year,

one to keep and one to sell. We also sourced our turkey and pigs in blankets locally. Chutneys were exchanged, surplus fresh vegetables from gardens left in the canteen for others to take. We are also spoilt for choice for delicatessens and farm shops; Somerset's rich offerings filled fridges and shelves with preserves, cheeses, bakery, ready meals and even hand-made bunting and bags.

So here we are once again; goodbye to 2024, hello to 2025—enter stage left. Christmas festivities meticulously planned through the year have been in full swing, Dulverton by Starlight was a treat; we always say Dulverton was built for the purpose of Christmas, with its perfect town square, and the glorious church, its bells proudly ringing out. Starlight 2024 was no different, with mulled wine stalls, charity stalls, tasty delights and incredible hand-made crafts, all lovingly prepared. There could be nothing more Christmassy than walking through the streets with all the tree lights glistening, and shop fronts and cosy front rooms decorated and subtly lit by the warm glow of candles, wood burners and tree lights.

We raise a glass and say, 'Cheers! Onwards and upwards in 2025!'

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
Morebath P.C.: Clerk: Mrs Sue Squire	morebathparishcouncil@gmail.com	.01598 710526
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 & Hawkrigde P.C.: Clerk: Rebecca Tomalin	withypoolhawkrigdeparishclerk@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
Exmoor Benefice Ringers: Sue Atkins		.01643 841408
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: Peter Maggs (Chairman)	www.theartsocietyexmoor.org.uk	.07875 501471
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:	www.dulvertontennisclub.co.uk
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 Pre School at Cutcombe First School:	.01643 841462
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

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
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 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
Bampton St. Michael's Community Hall, Station Rd.	..... www.stmichaelshall.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
Cutcombe Horse Show & Gymkhana: Angela Edwards	.....	01643 831549
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
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 Branch: Brig Peter Maggs (Chairman)	..... www.britishlegion.org.uk	07875 501471
TA22 Voluntary Lift Scheme (formerly Brushford Voluntary Lifts):	.....	07528 326880
Tiverton Model Aero Club: Sec: Mr. P Veale, 9 Higre flih St., Dulverton TA22 9HB	.....	01398 323409
Village Agent Nikki Bonner	..... info@somersetccc.org.uk	07940 913698 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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