



EXMOOR NEWS

November
December 2025

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EXMOOR NEWS

COVERING SOUTHERN EXMOOR



The deadline for the
Jan/Feb '26 issue of
Exmoor News is
Thursday 27th November
Printed by Brightsea, Exeter



Roundup of the Tippbarlake Herd.
Cover image 2025: © Nicky Beckett

New Contact Number

Please note: our phone number has also changed. You can now reach us on 07871 774222.

If you'd like to contact Ceri or Claire, we prefer email — and that hasn't changed: exmoornews@gmail.com

Don't forget to tell your friends and neighbours of the changes.

Another year draws to an end. When Claire and I took over the magazine, we were delivering to 18 towns and villages. We have recently expanded our area and our list is over 30. (Don't forget, community, charity and group information goes in free). This issue marks the 10th anniversary of Claire and I running the *Exmoor News*. It's been a rollercoaster decade with a pandemic smack bang in the middle. Do we feel we are finally getting back to normal life? Despite the difficulties rural living throws at us, I'm grateful for where we are.

Just look at the range of stories in this issue—from life at Abbeyfield, the Dulverton Literary Festival and Christmas events, to...just look at us - we live in the best place!

May we be the first to wish you a good festive season!

Best wishes, Ceri Keene and Claire Savill

E: exmoornews@gmail.com T: 07871 774222 W: www.exmoornews.co.uk

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

We take our responsibility to maintain high editorial standards seriously.

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

	2026		2026	2026	2026	2026	2027
	JAN/FEB	MARCH/APRIL	MAY/JUNE	JULY/AUG	SEPT/OCT	NOV/DEC	JAN/FEB **
Ads paid by Thurs	27 Nov	5 Feb 2026	9 April	4 June	6 Aug	8 Oct	27 Nov
Copy deadline Thurs	4 Dec	12 Feb	16 April	11 June	13 Aug	15 Oct	3 Dec
(Easter 2026 5 th April)				(** different for Xmas)			

We thank all our advertisers, contributors and distributors for their support.

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.

Rate card - Page 2

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Grand Opening by Dulverton Town Band 11:00

Saturday 22nd November

Open 11:00 to 15:00

Exmoor News Rate Card

Size 1 60wide x 92high Mono £20 Colour £28		Size 3 60w mm X 188h Colour £55	Size 4 188w x 92h Colour £83	Size 5 124w x 188h mm Colour £122	Size 6 190mm x 190 mm (no bleed) 216 mm x 216 mm (includes bleed) Colour £165
Size 2 124w x 92h mm Mono £40 Colour £55			*Bleed is when the printed image goes over the edge of the cut page. The Exmoor News page size is 210x210mm, we ask for 4mm of bleed. The image can be larger than the full page ad size but don't go too near the edge, allow appx 5mm.		

DULVERTON ACTION GROUP

Litter-picking

(usually 3rd Sunday)

Sunday 9th November

(2nd Sunday so as not to clash with Dulv LitFest)

Sunday 14th December

(2nd Sunday)

10.30 meet by the Heritage Centre

Everyone welcome!

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DULVERTON VINTAGE FILMS

Wed 10th December

THERE'S No BUSINESS Like SHOW BUSINESS

starring

**Marilyn Monroe, Donald O'Connor
& Ethel Merman**

Join us at **1 pm** for our

CHRISTMAS JOLLY

of nibbles, mince pies and bubbly
~ bring a plate of food to share ~

(please phone 323 785 by 7th Dec if you plan to
come so that we have some idea of numbers)

Tea, coffee & biscuits provided as usual

**Film starts at 2.30 pm
at Fishers Mead Community Centre**

DULVERTON VINTAGE FILMS

Wed 12th November

LIFE of PI

Suraj Sharma (2012)

Wed 10th December

THERE'S No BUSINESS Like SHOW BUSINESS

**Marilyn Monroe, Donald O'Connor
& Ethel Merman** (1954)

Film starts at **2.30 pm**
at Fishers Mead Community Centre

£3 includes tea and biscuits

Dulverton Gardening Club presents

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Thursday 20th November

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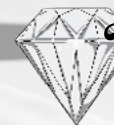
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The Regal Theatre

Barnstormers present *Gaslight*
Thursday 30 October—Saturday 1
November 7:30pm

Regal Film Society Screening TBC (Cert
15)
Tuesday 4 November 7:30pm

La Fille Mal Gardée (Ballet)
Wednesday 5 November 7:15pm

Creedence Clearwater Review—Cosmo's
Factory Tour
Thursday 6 November 7:30pm

National Theatre Live presents *Mrs
Warren's Profession*
Friday 7 November 7:00pm

Waterfront Theatre Company presents
Curtain Up
Friday 14 and Saturday 15 November
7:30pm

West Somerset College annual
production *Little Shop of Horrors*
Thursday 19 and Friday 20 November
7:30pm

Regal Comedy Night
Saturday 22 November 2025 7:30pm

The Royal Ballet live from the Royal
Opera House *Cinderella*
Tuesday 25 November 7:15pm

Exhibition on Screen *Caravaggio*
Wednesday 26 November 7.30pm

*National Theatre Live presents The Fifth
Step*
Thursday 27 November 7:00pm

Regal Film Society Screening TBC (Cert
15)
Tuesday 2 December 7:30pm

Andre Rieu *Christmas Concert: Merry
Christmas*
Saturday 6 December 7.30pm

The Royal Ballet live from the Royal
Opera House *The Nutcracker*
Wednesday 10 December 7:15pm

Minehead Panto People present *Robin
Hood and the Babes in the Wood*
Saturday 13 December—Saturday 20
December 7:30pm

Tickets for all events may be booked in
advance online at
www.regaltheatre.co.uk/whatson or
from the Box Office (tel: **01643 706430**)
between 9.30am and 12.00pm Monday—
Saturday.



Exmoor Dark Skies Festival 2025

Join us in celebrating and exploring the wonders of Exmoor after dark! This year's festival ends on Sunday 2 November.

An exciting programme has been planned, with last year's highlights inspiring this year's line-up. Expect events such as Dark Skies Yoga, planetarium experiences, family stargazing and wildlife walks, astronomy suppers and talks.

Events are being held across the National Park, hosted by the Exmoor National Park Authority, along with local businesses and community groups. Look out for the 2025 programme on the Exmoor Dark Skies Festival pages at:

www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk

We hope to see you under the stars!

Christmas is Coming



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PLEASE CALL FOR SEASON OPENING TIMES

All His Rights*—meet the artisan...

Meeting David Thorne for the first time, what strikes you is his total self-belief in his work. When he shows you the antler top walking sticks and hunting crops, for example, you can sense his pride in that work, and it is highly infectious!

This confidence is not surprising as he is self-taught. Brought up in a farming family, David learned woodwork and design at his Crediton school, before leaving with a few O-levels and returning to work on the family farm.

For nearly 40 years, he has put everything he possesses into building Penstone Country Crafts, sourcing the timber from local landowners and purchasing as logs. These are cut into planks and left to air dry for at least three years before kiln drying. David then undertakes private commissions, including hardwood kitchen tables.

Antler and oak table lamps and chandeliers have followed, reflecting his love of Exmoor and his lifelong passion for its wild red deer. Each of David's pieces embody drama and skill and are a fine illustration of England's traditional artisan skills—long may they continue.



For details visit: www.penstonecrafts.co.uk
The Farmers Den, Exford TA24 7PY
www.pickedstones.co.uk

(*'Rights' are the tines or prongs on the main beam of a deer's antlers; a mature stag with a fully developed set of antlers with the standard number of points has 'all his rights'.)



David is a regular at many local summer shows and point-to-point meetings but if you missed him this year, do visit The Farmers Den in Exford, where a selection of his work is on display.





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DULVERTON TOWN HALL

Friday 14 November

THE BRUTALIST (Cert 18)

Director: Brady Corbet

215 mins

Escaping post-war Europe, visionary architect, László Toth, arrives in America to rebuild his life, his work, and his marriage to his wife Erzsébet, after being forced apart during wartime by shifting borders and regimes. On his own in a strange new country, László settles in Pennsylvania, where the wealthy and prominent industrialist Harrison Lee Van Buren recognizes his talent for building. But power and legacy come at a heavy cost.

Friday 28 November

JUROR#2 (Cert 12A)

Director: Clint Eastwood

114 mins

Juror #2 follows family man Justin Kemp (Nicholas Hoult) who, while serving as a juror in a high-profile murder trial, finds himself struggling with a serious moral dilemma, one he could use to sway the jury verdict and potentially convict or free the accused killer.

Saturday 29 November at 2pm

CINDERELLA

105 mins

Conductor : Vladimir Fedoseyev

Zurich Opera House Ballet and Orchestra present a modernised version of the well-known story, in sumptuous costumes. Filmed as a musical from Hollywood, it was a huge success at its premiere, ranking as one of the most elegant arrangements of Prokofiev's popular ballet ever received. Conducted by Vladimir Fedoseyev, one of today's leading Russian music directors, it is lavishly choreographed by Spoerli, who makes the most of the purely classical sessions of the drama, contrasting them efficiently with the grotesqueries of the ballet mistress and her spoiled daughters. Staring lead dancers Karine Seneca, Stanislav Jemakov and Marine Castel.

Friday 12 December

FOUR LETTERS OF LOVE (Cert 12A)

Director: Polly Steele

125 mins

Based on Niall Williams's best-selling novel, the film tells the story of Nicholas (Fionn O'Shea) and Isabel (Ann Skelly), who are made for each other—but fate does not always choose the easiest path to true love. As destiny pulls them together, so family, passion, and faith drive them apart. Nicholas's father, William (Pierce Brosnan), comes home one day to shatter his family's quiet, modest life. He tells them that in a moment of divine intervention, God has instructed him to dedicate his life to painting. He quits his job and sets off for the coast, leaving his shell-shocked wife and son to fend for themselves. Meanwhile, Isabel and her family live a charmed existence on a nearby small neighbouring island, their house full of music and poetry. When tragedy strikes and Isabel's brother suffers a terrible accident, the music stops, and their parents (Helena Bonham Carter, Gabriel Byrne) decide, in their grief, to send Isabel to a convent school on the mainland. The young lovers embark on their own individual journeys of heartache and misplaced love, before fate contrives to pull the threads of their lives together.

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 1030 am 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.

Dulverton Films



Abbeyfield House Dulverton—home and community



Abbeyfield's well-tended gardens.



*Zoe Edworthy, Manager,
Abbeyfield House.*

Step across the threshold of Abbeyfield House Dulverton and you could be forgiven for thinking that you have walked into a stylish, warm and welcoming boutique hotel, set in well-tended gardens. And you will certainly be greeted with a smile. It is not a hotel, of course, rather a sheltered housing scheme that combines independent living with supported living for up to 10 people aged 60 and over—a close-knit community within the community.

And the warmth is not simply physical; it is human too, which is immediately apparent when you meet manager, Zoe Edworthy, for whom the happiness and wellbeing of the residents and the eight staff members are priorities. At the same time, Zoe has steered her team and supported residents through a major change in the organisational management of Abbeyfield House and overseen an ambitious—and continuing—refurbishment programme.

The Abbeyfield Society was founded in 1956 in the UK by social reformer, Richard Carr-Gomm, to provide a supportive, community-focused setting for older people to live independently. Dulverton is now one of 100 Abbeyfield homes in England and Wales and one of 400 worldwide.

Originally overseen by a group of local trustees, it now comes under the regional umbrella of Abbeyfield Wessex. Despite this change, it is still very much at the heart of the town's everyday life.

This is not surprising, however, in the light of Zoe's own story. She has local roots, having been born and brought up in Exebridge, and has always lived and worked on Exmoor. For many years, her home has been in Dulverton, where she lives with husband Martin—everyone's favourite window cleaner—and daughters, Eva 16, and Lilia, 5. Like Martin, Zoe is a familiar face in the town. 'I have been part of the Abbeyfield team on and off for 10 years, but have also worked at the pharmacy, Brimblecombe and Farthings!' she explains.

During her time at Abbeyfield, Zoe has worked as a cleaner and a cook, before becoming assistant manager and now manager, which means she has a thorough understanding of what residents expect and need. She knows how to ensure that things run smoothly. But the path to her current role had a major setback when Covid-19 struck. 'I was pregnant with Lilia, so had to shield, and that meant giving up my part-time jobs, both at Abbeyfield and the pharmacy.' Not



The newly refurbished lounge.



Settled in, new resident, Chris Nelder

only that, but Martin had to put his work on hold during lockdown and was not allowed into the maternity ward when Lilia was born. 'Looking back now, it all seems so crazy,' she reflects. Nevertheless, those months of enforced isolation gave Zoe an even deeper awareness of the social and emotional cost of the isolation that many older people experience.

'It was a former manager who encouraged me to make the move into a management role,' says Zoe. Inevitably, this has involved regular training courses in all aspects of her role and to keep on top of all relevant and new regulations, not least throughout the refurbishment programme. 'But I can see the progress we've made, and the house looks beautiful. The main thing is seeing how happy the residents are—they have enjoyed the transformation. And all the staff have stayed on, which has helped.'

As well as the fresh, modern—and very comfortable—furniture and furnishings in the residents' lounge, there is some delightful artwork, chosen mainly by Zoe. 'I wanted to reflect our rural setting,' she explains. There are paintings and prints of hares and flowers, for example, and a colourful, framed cross stitch peacock, lovingly embroidered by

resident, Mary.

When *Exmoor News* visited Abbeyfield this autumn, we were delighted to catch up with another familiar Dulverton face, that of Chris Nelder. Chris has given many years of public service to the town; now in his nineties, he still chairs Dulverton Heritage Centre and sings with Voices of Exmoor. Chris had just moved into Abbeyfield House and, although he had found the upheaval of leaving his flat in Northmoor Road challenging, he has settled in very happily. 'To be honest,' he confided, 'I hadn't really thought about it until Zoe mentioned that there was a vacancy at Abbeyfield and I realised that the opportunity might not arise again.' He particularly appreciated the kindness of the staff and the fact that Suzanne Carey, who had previously worked at the Nelder family's local bakery, was one of the Abbeyfield's excellent cooks. (Abbeyfield House has always enjoyed an enviable reputation for its food!)

Our visit would not have been complete without a guided tour with general assistant, Rachael Gliddon. Rachael joined the permanent staff in 2023 but, in her former career as a hairdresser, had been coming to Abbeyfield House for 10 years. She also has

strong Dulverton connections, going back through the generations; her grandparents owned the town's former shoe shop and some of her grandfather's tools are on display in the Heritage Centre...

Rachael's commitment to Abbeyfield House shines through; the spacious, light and airy en-suite, bed sitting rooms are spotless, as are the residents' kitchens, where they make their own breakfasts, the reception area, residents' lounge and dining room and the main kitchen, where two hot meals are prepared and served daily. There is also a guest room, available for visitors' overnight stays, or for respite care for someone recovering from surgery, for example.

'While this is not a care home, as such,' says Rachael, 'caring for our residents and helping when needed is what we are about.' That care can range from helping to unscrew a stubborn bottle top to organising events

such as the Christmas carol concert, when local children sang for residents from the first-floor minstrels' gallery.

The value of the work carried out by people like Rachael is often overlooked and undervalued in the wider world. 'But our residents appreciate what we do and that's what matters. Their families see the value of what we do too. I feel very proud to work here.'

Visitors are always welcome to join residents and staff at one of Abbeyfield's pop-up coffee mornings. Look out for future dates and times on the Dulverton Community Facebook page. For more information about Abbeyfield House Dulverton, go to:

www.wessex.abbeyfield.com/our-properties/abbeyfield-house-dulverton

Diane Trembath



Left to right: Zoe Edworthy, Rachael Gliddon, Sarah Adams (cook), and Abbeyfield's longest resident, Gordon Gallon.

A poster for 'The Exmoor Society' event titled 'NIGHT WALK TO LARKBARROW'. The background is a dark, starry night sky. At the top left is the Exmoor Society logo featuring a stag's head. The title 'NIGHT WALK TO LARKBARROW' is in large, bold, white capital letters. Below the title, the date and time '20TH NOVEMBER • 5:00 PM • 2 MILES' are listed. A horizontal line separates this from the descriptive text: 'Join us for a captivating guided night walk to the remote ruins of Larkbarrow Farm and Cottage.' Below this, a paragraph describes the experience: 'Wander through the peaceful, darkened landscape, and enjoy the serenity and beauty of Exmoor at night. Hear about the fascinating history of this site, and if the sky is clear, explore the night sky and spot constellations visible to the naked eye.' At the bottom, it says 'A truly unforgettable experience! Book via our website below: exmoorsociety.com/walks-programme'. A QR code is in the bottom right corner. The copyright notice '© Keith Trueman' is at the very bottom.

Lecture Season 2025-2026

Why not join The Arts Society Exmoor to experience a new season of captivating lectures, starting in October? You will receive a very warm welcome. All lectures are held in Brushford Parish Hall starting at 2.30pm, with refreshments available before the lecture. To join the society, please go to our website at: www.theartsocietyexmoor.org.uk or call Jane Marchent on: **07843 414717**

3 November 2025—Art Behind Bars

The Role of the Arts in Breaking the Cycle of Crime, Prison and Re-offending. A thought-provoking talk by professional artist, writer, and lecturer, Angela Findlay.

1 December 2025—Messiah

An audio-visual exploration by Professor Raymond Holden of Handel's choral masterpiece. Composed in 1741, *Messiah* is one of the Western music's greatest achievements.

5 January 2026—Here We Go Again! The Great British Pantomime

Learn about slapstick and find out why pantomime is so popular and such a joyful, quintessentially British, celebration—with Tony Lidington, who has been a writer and director of historic pantomimes throughout England for 30 years.



Village Agent News

Dear Friends across Exmoor

We wanted to let you know that the Community Council for Somerset is now operating under a new name: Thrive. This new name reflects the work we do with communities right across Somerset—helping people meet their basic needs, tackle loneliness, access services, and feel more connected.

Many people told us they were not always sure what CCS was—or even that we were a charity. We have simplified our name and updated our look, so that more people can find and access our support.

What is staying the same:

We are the same charity, with the same team and services.

Our phone numbers and email addresses still work

Our legal name remains Community Council for Somerset (we are just operating as Thrive).

You can visit our new website at: www.thrivesomerset.org.uk. We would be very pleased if you could follow and like our new Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/thrivesomerset.

If you have any questions or would like to talk to someone, we're still just a phone call or email away. My email remains the same:

Nikkib@somersetccc.org.uk

Call: **01823 331 222/ 07940 913 698**

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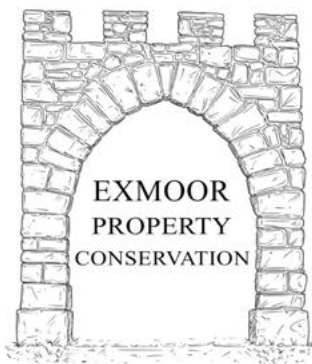
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Dulverton Table Tennis Club

The club meets at Brushford Parish Hall each Friday from 5 September, from 2.30—4.30pm, with a fee of £3 payable each week.

We are very keen to welcome new players and have three tables and spare bats for you to use. The general standard of play is average, so do not worry, come & try it! To tempt you further, we stop half way through the session for a cup of tea—and, sometimes, homemade cake!

If you are interested, please contact: Alan Smith on 01398 324353 or Richard Archer on 0777 3160 222.



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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 and to admire our stunning countryside.

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

Richard Clarke on 01398 341141
email:
richardclarke567@btinternet.com
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We look forward to seeing you soon.



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November

Tuesday 4th – Lytes Cary National Trust £19.00pp Members/
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Thursday 6th – Chiswick House £62.00pp

Saturday 15th – Bristol Shopper £22.00pp

Tuesday 18th - Carvery lunch at The Hare & Hounds and Otter Garden Centre £36.00pp includes Carvery

Thursday 20th – Exeter Christmas Market £18.00pp coach only

Saturday 22nd – Gloucester Christmas Market £23.00pp coach only

Thursday 27th - Cardiff Shopper £24.00pp coach only

December

Tuesday 9th – Clarks Village £19.00pp coach only

Thursday 11th Winchester Christmas Market £23.00pp coach only

Saturday 13th – Plymouth Shopper £22.00pp coach only

Tuesday 16th – William Arms Carvery & Ilfracombe £34.00pp carvery included

Saturday 20th - Jack & The Beanstalk Bristol Hippodrome 2pm show £75.00pp/ 65.00pp

Monday 22nd - Longleat Festival of Lights (Full day) £69.55pp Adults/ £58.15pp Child

Please see our website for other Day Excursions and Theatre Trips or call the office for a brochure

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DULVERTON
GATEWAY TO EXMOOR

Dulverton Exmoor Literary Festival 2025

One of the most talked-about sessions at this year's festival focuses on *The Salt Path*, Raynor Winn's 2018 bestseller about the 630-mile South West Coast Path trek that she and her husband—diagnosed with a terminal illness—embarked on after losing their home and income. A film adaption, released this year, starred Gillian Anderson and Jason Isaacs; much of it was shot on Exmoor.

Originally billed as a headline guest, Winn withdrew from events after an article in the *Observer* (July 2025), by investigative journalist, Chloe Hadjimatheou, raised serious questions about the book's accuracy. Chloe is presenting her findings at the festival.

The programme runs from Friday 14 to Monday 17 November. Highlights include Iain Dale and Jonathan Dimbleby on Margaret Thatcher; Hannah Bourne-

Taylor on saving swifts; Jessica Bull and Helena Kelly celebrating Jane Austen's 250th birthday; Andrew Lownie, author of *Entitled*, discussing Prince Andrew, and Iain MacGregor with Joshua Levine on the men behind the 1945 Hiroshima bombing.

Other events feature John Cornwell and Rachel Johnson on a Devonshire true crime story; actress turned writer, Carol Drinkwater, with local authors, Veronica Henry and Kate Lord Brown; bestselling novelist, Ruth Hogan and her agent; crime writing insights from Hannah Richell, Amy McCulloch and Sarah Pearse; and Petroc Trelawny on music and Cornwall, with violinist, Tamsin Waley-Cohen.

Now in its fourth year, the festival also offers a literary lunch with William Sitwell at Tarr Farm Inn, plus talks on the Red Dress Project, Exmoor ponies, the Two Moors Festival, farming, and adventure on foot and horseback. Visitors can also meet eight local authors, including Moleskine—the festival's first canine writer.

For children, there is a new Schools Day with former Children's Laureate, Lauren Child. Child, author of *Charlie and Lola* and *Clarice Bean*, plus free morning Story Corner sessions at The Bridge Inn. *My Exmoor* is the theme for this year's Children's Writing Competition for under-13s.

Festival Director, Ali Pegrum said: 'We are thrilled to welcome so many talented writers, bringing a much-loved slice of literary culture to Exmoor.'

Tickets and the full programme available online at:

visitdulverton.com/dulverton-exmoor-literary-festival-2025/



Winsford Moor Movies

Films start at 7.30 p.m. in Winsford Village Hall on the second Tuesday of every month.

Tuesday 11 November *Mr Burton*

A gripping account of the back story of one of the greatest Welsh actors.

Tuesday 9 December *Four Letters of Love*

Love moves in mysterious ways! A heartfelt adaptation of the Niall Williams novel.

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Non-members: £5.00.

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Dulverton author's testament to love and determination

Each year, over 7,000 people in the UK are diagnosed with multiple sclerosis; most people are in their thirties or forties. In the 1990s, Roger Hammond's beloved wife, Lyn, became one of those people. For Roger, it meant taking on the role of carer, as well as husband. After Lyn died in 2022, Dulverton resident, Roger, channelled his grief into writing *Lyn and Me*, a memoir dedicated to his late wife, and a tribute to their 43 years of married life and enduring love for each other.

Gradually, the memoir took on additional layers: a detailed look at the condition itself and its progression, and a guide to dealing with the many challenges that confront people with MS and their carers. These range from navigating the complexities of the benefits system, to simple tools and adjustments that make everyday tasks easier. Roger also sets out the invaluable help available nationally, locally and online from the MS Society.

Over the years, Lyn and Roger, who relocated to Dulverton from Harrow in 2010, ran the gamut of emotions but, despite Lyn's diagnosis, they shared a rich and fulfilling life as a couple, as parents and as grandparents. While there are sections that are deeply moving, there is humour too, and an extended chapter on Lyn and Roger's many holidays, at home and abroad, with helpful advice on what to expect and what is available for the mobility impaired traveller.

Published by *Exmoor News*, *Lyn and Me* is a rare combination: a book that is powerful, profound—and practical; Roger is donating 50 per cent of the profits from its sales to the MS Society, to go towards research and to help people with MS.

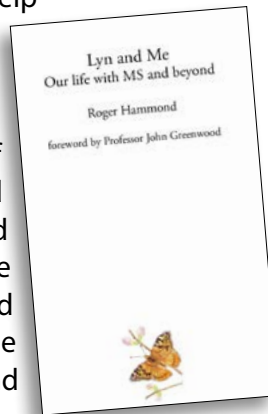
For more information or to buy a copy, go to:

www.rogerhammond.co.uk or

<https://amzn.eu/d/7fKgYIf>

Look out for Roger at this year's Dulverton Exmoor Literary Festival Meet the Local Author event, Saturday 15 November, from 1.30 to 5.30pm, at Dulverton Library. Details and tickets, which are free, available at:

visitdulverton.com/events/the-dulverton-exmoor-literary-festival-2025/



Roger speaking at the MS society in October.



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From scratch to £300m—four decades of business success

In August 1985, a young man sat in his parents' North Devon home—hastily converted into an office—and asked, 'What have I done?' as he prepared to launch his own independent financial advisory enterprise.

Now, 40 years later, Philip J Milton and Company plc looks after almost £300 million in wealth, for clients from its Barnstaple base at Choweree House and has just celebrated its ruby anniversary. Various activities have marked the milestone, including a hugely successful celebration with clients and supporters at Trimstone Manor, as well as a 40th Legacy Awards grant scheme, already swamped with nominations.

In the beginning, 23-year-old Philip Milton had just taken a 'very reckless or very brave decision' and decided to go it alone after going to work for Lloyds Bank straight from school, aged 16. Today, the firm employs 35 staff and assists investors great and small, with all manner of services from financial and tax planning to investment portfolios, pension fund management, accountancy, financial disputes, claims management, wills, probate and trusts.

Founder and managing director, Philip Milton, said: 'We have greatly enjoyed celebrating and appreciate the good wishes we have received from so many people. Our party was wonderful, and we were delighted to welcome so many clients, including some who have been with us for the entire 40 years. Thank you to all our clients, staff and community—we couldn't have done it without you.'

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DULVERTON
WEIR & LEAT
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TRUST

MP visits Dulverton Weir Restoration Project

In September, Dulverton Weir & Leat Conservation Trust (DWLCT) trustees welcomed local MP, Rachel Gilmour, and her team to the Dulverton Urban Watermill Landscape.

Established in 2016, the trust has been working with other interest groups, carrying out vital restoration works to save Dulverton's weir and leat from collapse. Widely recognised as 'the best-preserved medieval leat in England', the weir and leat have attracted interest from across the UK—showcasing Somerset's historic industrial and engineering heritage. The Tiverton and Minehead MP spent several hours viewing the weir and leat and working with trustees on how best to support the restoration project going forward.

'The Dulverton Weir & Leat Project is probably the biggest project on Exmoor in a generation,' said Rachel Gilmour. 'I am fully committed to supporting this project, which—upon completion—will have a positive impact on the local community, businesses, and tourism in and around Dulverton. Local groups, such as the Dulverton Weir & Leat Conservation Trust, are at the heart of our communities; their shared purpose provides the glue which sticks our communities together. I look forward to working with them.'

'We were delighted that Rachel and her team spent a significant amount of time visiting the project,' said DWLCT Lead Trustee, Philip Hull, 'and are very appreciative of their help and support.'

Bampton—Muddy Stilettos' Top Devon Town

Acclaimed luxury lifestyle site, Muddy Stilettos, asked its readers to vote for the best local village, town or city to call home in 2025, using its Top 300 Places to Live guide. In a regional vote across 35 counties, Bampton topped the poll of 10 potential candidates in Devon.

From towns to villages, hamlets to commuter favourites, each of the initial 300 locations were independently researched and picked by the in-the-know Muddy editorial team, and then over 30,500 readers went on to vote. The results revealed passion for each town or village's sense of community, quality of access to schools, restaurants, shops and culture, plus their feeling towards their overall immediate surroundings.

Bampton won the top Devon spot with its village feel and indie shops, grocers and eateries, including a Top 50 gastropub and award-winning wine shop. The local economy was formerly based on quarrying, leading to the beautiful stone architecture and a conservation area boasting over 100 listed buildings. Community is strong in this picturesque charter town, with the annual Bampton Fair dating back to the 13th century. With Exmoor National Park on Bampton's doorstep, Mother Nature is a big attraction, making it an oasis for walkers and cyclists.

Dulverton also did well, coming sixth in Muddy Stilettos' Best Places to Live Somerset and Bristol poll, winning praise for its independent shops and restaurants, including Seven Fables, Woods Bar and Restaurant and Acorn Antiques, as well as annual events such as Dulverton Exmoor Literary Festival and Dulverton by Starlight.

The Best Place to Live lists provide information on everything from eating out and best schools to the commute and local arts/culture, but the final decision came from the readers' own personal experience.

Find out more about Bampton's Muddy Stilettos' success here:

www.devon.muddystilettos.co.uk/best-places-to-live/devon/

and Dulverton's here:

www.dorsetsomerset.muddystilettos.co.uk/best-places-to-live/somerset/dulverton/

Muddy Stilettos

A Gem on the Edge of Exmoor

With over forty years in the international jewellery and gemstone trade, Trevor Ellis brings expertise, craftsmanship, and a global perspective to Ellison Davies, his new venture based in South Molton on the edge of Exmoor.

Trevor began his career in the early 1980s with a prestigious Midlands jeweller, where he qualified as a gemmologist. He went on to work with one of Germany's leading gem merchants in Idar-Oberstein, the heart of Europe's gemstone trade. From their UK offices in Hatton Garden

and Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter, he spent a decade sourcing, grading, and trading some of the world's finest gemstones and pearls.

In the 1990s, he established his own business, expanding into diamonds and antique jewellery working closely with some of London's top dealers. In 2000 he established his first office in the Jewellery Quarter and within ten years had become one of the largest pearl wholesalers outside of London, going on to open 2 retail shops for pearls and antique jewellery respectively.

After years of travelling the globe, and in search of a slower

pace of life, Trevor relocated to North Devon eight years ago, where under the name Ellison Davies, he now blends together all of his specialist knowledge, offering a collection of modern and antique jewellery, exquisite pearls, and excellent workshop facilities providing expert repairs, remodelling and bespoke design. The business also offer competitive prices for unwanted gold and silver items.

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Lynton and Lynmouth Christmas Weekend

Friday 28– Sunday 30 November 2025
Lynton and Lynmouth, Exmoor National Park

This year, the charming twin towns of Lynton and Lynmouth are pulling out all the stops for an extended Christmas Weekend, now running over three days from Friday 28 to Sunday 30 November 2025—promising twinkling lights, festive markets, community competitions, and heart-warming entertainment for the whole family.

Nestled in the dramatic scenery of Exmoor National Park, Lynton & Lynmouth transform into a winter wonderland each year — but 2025 is set to be their biggest and brightest celebration yet.

What to expect this year

Friday 28 November–Light Up Lynton and Lynmouth

Christmas lights switch-on in both towns, including Lynmouth's iconic Lobster Pot Christmas Tree

Bring your letters to Father Christmas at Lynton Town Hall

Enjoy Twilight Taverns in Lynmouth:

Candlelit drinks, festive nibbles, and live music

Caffyns Farm Christmas Craft Fair opens with an evening of artisan stalls (5pm-9pm)

Saturday 29 November–Market Day and Live Music

Explore the Lynton Town Hall

Christmas Market (10am-5pm) and Caffyns Farm Christmas Fair (10am-6pm)

Enter the deliciously festive Cottage Pie Competition at The Crown Hotel
Enjoy live music in Lynmouth into the evening

Weekend highlights – Saturday and Sunday

The Lyn Valley Dog House Christmas Dog Agility Weekend: free, fun, and furry! Dogs of all shapes and sizes will compete in novelty agility categories (Crown Car Park, 11am-3pm)

Best Dressed Window Competition (businesses) and Best Dressed House Competition (residents) Judging via social media and a secret judge!

Sunday 30 November–final festive flourish

Lynton and Lynmouth continue the celebrations with another full day of markets, lights, and seasonal cheer

More festive fun around the towns

In-store exclusives and festive treats across shops, cafes, and restaurants

Guess the Chocolates in the Jar at No 1 Lynton—all proceeds to Devon Air Ambulance

Local music, mulled wine, magical photo moments, and plenty more festive surprises

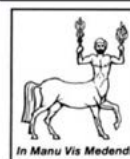
Why visit?

'This weekend is all about community spirit, creativity, and celebrating Christmas in the most magical coastal setting,' says an organising team spokesperson. 'Whether you're here for the markets, the lights, or simply

a cosy pub evening by candlelight, there's something for everyone—and we can't wait to welcome you.'

For full event details visit:

www.visitlyntonandlynmouth.com/lynton-lynmouth-christmas-market-shopping-weekend/



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Dulverton Development Forum

Dulverton Development Forum is pleased to be one of the sponsors of this year's Dulverton Literary Festival. But what is this organisation? Aimed at improving the social and economic wellbeing of the town, it was formed around 1986, after the vicar at All Saints' Church, the Reverend Richard Brown, had attended a one-day course—*Developing Your Community*, organised by Bristol University Extra-Mural Department. He was so impressed that he persuaded me to contact the lecturer, Bernard Lane, to see if a course would be possible in Dulverton.

I had just become Community Education Manager for Southern Exmoor, based at Dulverton Middle School. Bernard came to the school, once a month on Saturday afternoons. After just a few residents attended the first session, news spread, and we were soon up to at least 20 local people who cared for the future of our community. We realised that Dulverton needed to be more proactive, especially in the tourism industry, if we wished to keep our local hotels, B&Bs, pubs, shops and businesses.

Many other towns and villages were promoting themselves in the tourism industry and, just because Dulverton had been a tourism destination for at least a century, we knew we could not expect this to continue

by doing nothing. We realised that some sort of tourism brochure was needed. We divided into groups to organise the wording, visuals and advertisers, and printed 70,000 brochures, which were distributed via Tourist Information Centres and ourselves. We continued to do this for many years.

We also felt that Dulverton needed a wet weather attraction. Visitors walking around the town, going down to see the Barle and up to All Saints' Church, would then ask what else was there to do? The idea of a heritage centre was considered. This could also ensure that old photos and other information from the past could be preserved and not risk being destroyed.

Bernard organised visits to various other towns across the country, to see examples of good practice. But where could we site a centre? We became aware that Mr German was planning to sell Dulverton Ironmongers and the old cottages at the back of the store could be for sale as a separate entity.

We raised funds for a feasibility study by a Bristol-based architect and we agreed that this could just be what Dulverton needed. We formed the Dulverton District Civic Society to undertake the project; most of the forum members then became trustees of that charity and worked hard to bring the Dulverton Heritage Centre project to fruition.

Later, local people were concerned that decisions affecting the town were being taken by local councils and authorities without any community consultation. The current Guildhall Car Park was then an area of wasteland, but West Somerset Council had decided that it should be used for building craft shops, with accommodation above. At that time, parking had become very problematic, with lorries delivering goods to local shops in Fore Street daily blocking the road. More car parking was needed and a back entrance to what is now the Co-op. Keith Ross and Steven Pugsley were forum members

and decided to stand as councillors at the next election. Consequently, at his first committee meeting, Keith persuaded the council not to pursue their plan and, eventually, the car park was built.

The forum thought it would be useful to find out how other small towns based in National Parks or Areas of Outstanding Beauty managed to work with the authorities to support new and emerging needs of people living there. The Dulverton and District Twinning Association was formed, and we created a four-way link between towns in Poland, France and the Basque country in Spain.

Meanwhile, we become the promoter of Take Art, offering quality theatre, music and dance events, and booking annual visits by Bristol Old Vic Theatre School. With funding from Dulverton Town Council, Somerset West and Taunton Council, and the European Union, we also printed the book *Dulverton Bounds*, with 12 walks around Dulverton.

We hope readers agree that, over 40 years, we have managed to fulfil various differing needs of our special community.

Jan Ross

Who would have thought that the festival would be celebrating its 25th anniversary?

To this end, founder Penny Adie has written its life story.

Tales from the Box Office will be on sale in the New Year at most retail outlets or from the author.

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Exmoor Endurance Rider's England Success

Wheddon Cross endurance rider, Amanda Hamley, and Lady, her 15-year-old Standardbred, have helped England retain the Home International Cup for the second consecutive year, with second place in the Two-Day 86km.

The Endurance Home International Championships took place on last weekend of August, at the Three Rivers Ride in Rockbourne, Hampshire, with teams from Scotland, Wales and England competing to win the coveted Home International Cup.

'Riding for England for the second year in a row, has been such an honour,' says Amanda. 'Three Rivers is a fabulous ride, so I was excited to be competing with Lady in the Two-Day 86km, after tackling the 60km in Ireland last year, with my thoroughbred, More Salutes, as part of the England team.'

'Lady is my very keen partner in crime. Focused, bold and enthusiastic. She took on the course with ease and came over the finish line in a blaze of glory. After retiring her twice from competing, I never dreamt we'd be riding on the England Team one day.'

'Representing your country at the Home International is a huge privilege, but it is also fun. It brings people together that you might not otherwise meet, includes team parades, team vetting's and teamwork. You laugh, cry and make friends for life. It's a special competition with a special selection of horses and riders on every team.'

The Endurance GB International Committee congratulates Amanda Hamley and the England team on their success at the championships.

You can find out more about Endurance at:
www.endurancegb.co.uk





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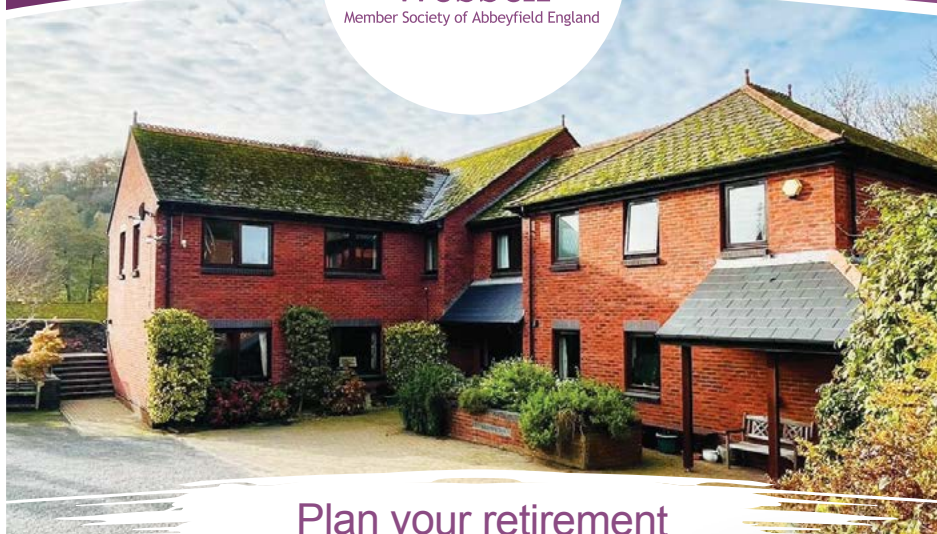
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The Therapist Collection Reflections from our Clinic

Herbal Journeys: Lis Jorgensen, Medical Herbalist

This week, with the onset of autumn, I have been reflecting on the value of commitment in the journey to health. My work as a herbalist enables me to give time to clients. To listen, explore together, all the layers and factors of their experience. This brings insight on both sides, allowing me to prescribe appropriate herbs but also helping individual clients to understand and help themselves.

I have recently heard from the family of a young person we treated for two years. Often, people do not have the patience to keep working and supporting such an endeavour. The modern expectation of quick fixes pervades, but this family persevered to support a neurodivergent child, struggling to balance their energy, immunity and education after Covid.

Treatment was focused on scaffolding resilience by supporting the nervous, immune and digestive systems, also the family unit. This allowed the patient time to grow and heal within a consistent and caring structure. I was happy to hear recently that the young person had passed their GCSEs this summer and is settling into college, finding ways to blossom

Holding space, reflecting, helping to make sense of the whirlwind...I find this work a privilege and I take my hat off to all those going above and beyond to support their loved ones.

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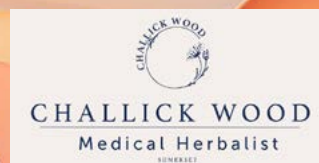
Julia Walder: Perinatal and Holistic Therapies

Five years ago, Willow Grace started as a little area, just me in our spare bedroom, hoping to create a safe space where women could come and feel supported and cared for. From those first quiet beginnings, Willow Grace has grown step by step, shaped by the amazing women and families who have trusted me with their stories. Each appointment, each conversation, each shared moment has added to the heart of what we do and given me the resilience to carry on.

Now, five years on, I have opened the doors to a brand new space, affectionately nicknamed The Empire, as it feels that this is what I have conquered. It feels like such a milestone, not just because of the space itself, but because of what it represents: community, resilience and the power of women supporting women. I believe there is nothing stronger than women supporting women.

When you walk through the doors, my hope is that you feel the same warmth and care that was there in that very first room at home. A place to rest, to heal, to connect and to know you are not alone.

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Walking Football at Dulverton

Dulverton Town Council and Dulverton Football Club have launched a Walking Football group, open to all ages and genders at the Dulverton Sportsfield.

As its name suggests, Walking Football is a slower version of the game—ideal for keeping fit, maintaining an active lifestyle, or returning to football in later life or after an injury. Benefits include improved heart health, reduced blood pressure, increased muscle, better mobility, and social connection. Players often find new friendships and enjoy being part of a supportive group.

Starting in October, there are sessions planned for the rest of this year, and a full programme for 2026. Games take place at weekends until spring, then move to evenings. Look out for dates on posters and social media.

Matches are played outdoors on grass, so bring suitable

footwear and clothing. Standard FA Walking Football rules apply, with all players covered by Dulverton FC's insurance. A medical form must be signed before play, available at each session. The council has also applied for funding to provide goals, cones, and bibs.

For details, check Dulverton Town Council and Dulverton FC social media, or contact Christine Dubery (07891 982121) or Jon Snell (07388 658616).



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Come! Let us all now celebrate
with Christmas gifts and Christmas cake
with warm mince pies and carolling
hang fairy lights from gaudy strings;
ignore your work for all is well
ignore the truth behind Nowell*.

Postpone these thoughts, let's pause awhile
translate the message of a child
with joyful news of sins forgiven
a promised path for us to heaven.

On weighty words we pause and think
do we deserve this blissful drink
put hand on heart in reverence
have we each day in goodness spent
could we have helped a friend in need
or is our cry just me, Me, ME!

Perhaps gave flowers to a friend?
An act of kindness, made amends?
Or is your day not long enough
to help a neighbour living rough?

Perhaps you have some hidden part
a generous spirit in your heart
a place where pain is overcome
with welcome for the wayward son?

It's time to help an ailing friend
a time when broken bridges mend
a time when love should fill your heart
with kindness as the greater part.

This Christmas be uplifted high
by God's love, then wonder why
you never understood the Star
its simple message broadcast far.

Come Christmas take another view
to live for others, not just you
or are you wretchedly beguiled
you disregard the Saviour child?

Fran Bridger

*Noël comes to us from the Latin verb *nasci*, meaning 'to be born'. In the Book of Ecclesiastes, the birth of Jesus is called *natalis*. A variation of this word, *nael*, made its way into Old French as a reference to the Christmas season and later into Middle English as *nowel*.
(Extract from Quora)

EXMOOR FRIENDS

WIDENING HORIZONS

We have some additional events coming up in November. All are held in Dulverton Town Hall. Everyone welcome; admission free for your first visit, unless stated.

Thursday 6th 6—9pm: Table-top Games Evening

Join us for an evening of fun, skill and strategy: turn up with a board or card game of your choice or just come along and join a group. Bar open for refreshments. All welcome, non-members £2.00. Under-16s must be accompanied by an adult.

Tuesday 18th 6.30 for 7pm: Helana Edginton—Animal First Aid Talk

Veterinary nurse, Helana, will give advice on how to handle an emergency situation for your dog or cat. Her favoured charity is StreetVet which delivers free essential veterinary care to the pets of people experiencing homelessness.

Wednesday 26th 10 for 10.30am: Phil Dolan & Kate Waterman—Age UK Somerset

Phil Dolan, CEO at Age UK Somerset, and Kate Waterman, Finance Manager, will talk about the growth and history of one of the UK's largest charity organisations and its diverse work to support so many people.

No monthly talk in December or January: our next will be 25 February 2026 (Sir David Calvert-Smith).

For further information please email: info@exmoorfriends.co.uk

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Keeping our children safe

You might have been surprised by an age check when you logged on to your favourite social media page this month. That is because the government has implemented tough new rules as part of the Online Safety Act—and they are already changing the way some platforms operate.

If you're a parent or a person with responsibilities for children and young people, you will share my determination that children have a right to a childhood that is not marred

by seeing things that can harm them, online.

For some, the new safeguards may feel trivial or irritating and not worth changing your online experience. But online safety and age-appropriate content *is* a real problem, and far more common than you might think. Research by the Children's Commissioner found that most children have seen pornography by the age of 13. From accidentally clicking on the wrong search result, to a child in the playground pressuring a friend to watch something they should not, harmful content is out there and far too easy to stumble upon.

Some people have voiced concerns that these changes affect their freedoms



but we cannot allow freedom to be used as a shield for tech companies to avoid their responsibilities. This is about protecting the most vulnerable. It is about giving children the space to grow up without being exposed to things that they are not meant to see.

I am glad the UK is leading the way on this. It is now time for every platform to step up, and for us to hold them to account if they fail to.

The introduction of the Online Safety Act puts the responsibility for protecting children squarely where it belongs: on the companies who run these platforms and who profit from them.

Ofcom, the regulator, will be monitoring compliance closely and has made it clear that if platforms do not follow the rules, there will be consequences. These could include fines up to £18 million and potential criminal liability for directors.

The government changes are an important step forward. I welcome them and I am sure many of you do too. Children should be safe. Safe at home. Safe at school. Safe online.

From the office of the Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner

www.avonandsomerset-pcc.gov.uk/



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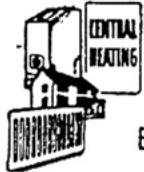
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No condemnation for reborn chapel

A historic Dulverton landmark is enjoying a new lease of life after years of uncertainty.

Dulverton Congregational Church—known locally as ‘the chapel’—was closed for several years, even rumoured to be condemned. But, this year, members and supporters rallied to secure its future and breathe fresh purpose into the 1831 building.

The chapel is closely linked with Victorian philanthropist, Sir George Williams, founder of the YMCA, who was born in Dulverton. Determined to preserve its heritage and mission, members have teamed up with a new leadership group to reopen the church and plan for its future.

Restoration work continues in the coming months, with local

craftspeople repairing and repainting in original colours. Exmoor National Park Authority’s granted permission to replace windows and much of the original Victorian glass will be reused. Professional inspections showed that the main hall’s floor had been replaced with new timber and damp-proofing, allaying fears about its condition.

Monthly services have resumed. In October, the Reverend Caroline Stott, president of the Congregational Federation, inspected progress and lead a rededication service. The next service, on 16 November, coincides with the Dulverton Exmoor Literary Festival, when new secretary, Jonathan Hunt, gives a talk entitled *George Williams and Dulverton—According to His Biographers*.

Deacon David Perry said: ‘We want to tell the story of this historic building, George Williams, and the Nonconformists who shaped modern Britain. Our ideas are still developing but are attracting great interest.’

‘There is still much to do,’ added Jonathan Hunt, ‘but the first step was to ensure that we have a living church community, serving Dulverton and Jesus Christ, as it has for nearly 200 years. This would have been possible without our volunteers.’

From fears of closure to signs of revival, the chapel is again central to Dulverton’s heritage and community.



Frontage view of church buildings



The 1831 frontage has a new welcome sign.



The Reverend Kevin Kevin Dudman, regional officer of the Congregational Federation, with David Perry, in front of the George Williams photograph, at one of the services earlier this year.

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Your rights when events are cancelled

Events are staged throughout the year, but Christmas is a particularly busy time. When you book tickets, keep an eye on the organiser's website and social media profiles for the latest updates. You won't be entitled to a refund if you change your mind about going or realise you can't go anymore, but if an event is cancelled, your refund rights will depend on how you bought the ticket.

If you bought your ticket from an official seller and the organiser cancels, moves, or reschedules the event, you should get a refund. The official seller is the best point of contact to ask about how to get your money back.

If you are having no luck getting a refund, check to see if the seller is a member of the Society of Ticket Agents and Retailers (STAR): www.star.org.uk. If they are, you can use STAR's complaints procedure and dispute resolution service: www.star.org.uk/dispute-resolution. STAR members should provide a refund at face value if the event is cancelled

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and the organiser has agreed to refunds.

You will probably get only the face value of the ticket back—the amount printed on it. If you had to pay any booking or card fees, you might not get those refunded.

If the official seller is not a member of STAR, you may be able to get your money back through your card company or bank. If you bought your ticket from a ticket-reselling website, refunds depend on the site's terms and conditions. If you bought from a private seller and the event is cancelled or rescheduled, it is unlikely that you'll be able to recover your money, but we still recommend contacting the seller.

Be aware of scams. In these situations, scammers can prey on those who have been affected, so if your event is cancelled and people or companies get in touch offering to recover the money on your behalf, be alert to the possibility that it may be a scam.

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



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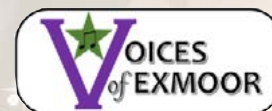
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In July, the Voices of Exmoor treated Dulverton Farmers Market shoppers to a flash-mob performance and encouraged them to join in with the chorus of *Oom-Pah-Pah* from Lionel Bart's musical, *Oliver*. In September, the choir felt very privileged to take part in the Royal British Legion's concert commemorating and celebrating the 80th anniversary of the ending of WW2. They performed a special selection of songs, including their first public performance of *A Flower Remembered*. Audience participation was encouraged, when the choir led a medley of WW2 songs. The Voices of Exmoor would like to thank everyone who has supported our performances this year and look forward to entertaining you at our Christmas Concert, in aid of this year's charity, Exmoor Search and Rescue.

We invite you to join us for our annual concert of seasonal songs and entertainment on

Saturday 13 December 2025 at 7.30 pm in Dulverton Town Hall TA22 9EX. Tickets £10, available from The Tantivy, Dulverton. Merry Christmas, everybody!

For more information, visit:

www.voicesofexmoor.co.uk or

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WiveyPool Pool House update

This summer's fundraising event, *The 1927 Swim Challenge*, was a resounding success and congratulations go to everyone who took part! Together, swimmers completed an incredible 105,960 lengths – the equivalent of 2,906 km (1,806 miles). That's the same distance as driving from WiveyPool to Kyiv, Ukraine – fittingly, the home country of some of our swimmers.

The challenge raised nearly £6,000 in sponsorship and donations, all of which will go towards our much-anticipated Pool House project. While fundraising was the main goal, many swimmers also embraced the personal challenge.

The new Pool House carries a total cost of £250,000. Through budgeting, grant funding and thanks to the incredible generosity of our community, we have already secured £234,500. Although we're not quite at the finish

line, we remain optimistic: several grant applications are still pending, and our Crowdfunder platform remains open for anyone who wishes to contribute.

The final Pool House design will not include a roof terrace or sails as originally envisioned, but instead will benefit from energy efficient solar panels on the roof. This change allows for a more spacious ground floor, which we look forward to putting to excellent use year-round.

Construction will commence mid October, so we will unfortunately be closed for six months. All being well, we are excited to welcome swimmers back for morning lanes in April 2026 to the refreshed and upgraded WiveyPool.

We are hugely grateful to everyone who has supported us so far – your efforts are bringing the Pool House dream alive.

www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/wiveypool-pool-house



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Fabula Arts Shakespeare Summer School

The first Fabula Arts Shakespeare Summer School took place in August. Five brave young actors, aged 9 to 14, experienced three days of workshops at South Molton Community College, followed by a fourth day where—alongside four professional actors from Sun and Moon Theatre—they performed an abridged version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the beautiful Knackershole Garden Theatre.

The younger participants took on the roles of fairies. In their initial workshops, they explored how the fairies are, in many ways, the guiding forces of the story, and they learned about the rhythmical, poetic style in which they speak.

The 12—14-year-olds played the Mechanicals, the working-class amateur actors who put on a play of dubious quality for the Duke's wedding. In their first workshops, they explored their characters and experimented with different forms of 'bad acting.'

On the day before the performance, we welcomed David and Melissa from Sun and Moon Theatre, who guided the group

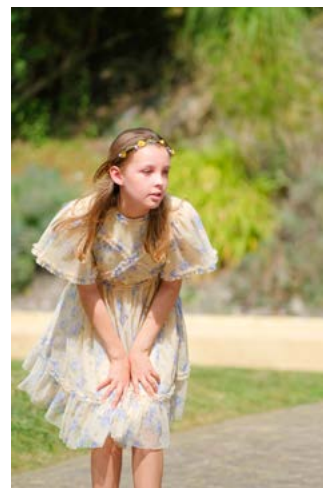
through how a professional cast might prepare for a show. There were breathing exercises, voice work, scene rehearsals, and many tips on how to deliver the best performance possible.

The final performance—like the wonderful theatre at Knackershole—was brilliant. The weather was warm, and our audience enjoyed sitting in the sunshine, watching the organised chaos unfold on stage! The whole cast was magnificent, but especially our young Summer School actors.

So many thanks are due to SMCC for the workshops venue, Sun and Moon Theatre for the collaboration and Knackershole Garden Theatre for hosting the performance. We look forward to Summer School 2026!

Find out more about Fabula Arts at:
www.fabulaarts.co.uk

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A Dog's Day Out—Christmas is Coming

I love getting ready for Christmas, don't you? The smell of the spruce pine tree in our living room; the logs piled up round the wood burner, and hot mince pie aromas coming from the kitchen. She's planning our annual pre-Christmas run up north, with presents for the family too. Yippee! I love visiting our cousins.

'That sounds fun. I arrived here last Christmas, Buddy. I came as your fairy godmother. Do you remember?'

How could I forget?

'We always dressed on Christmas Day for dinner. I've still got my coronet with me. I like wearing gold and red velvet. What about you, Buddy, what will you wear?'

Not now, Piggy. I'm looking at this real tree she re-potted in the garden and it's grown a foot in each direction. How are we going to get it back into the living room...? Hold on a minute, that's a great idea! We should give party hats to Maisie,

Pixie, Roxy and Pip and whasisname the thug, Rocky. Yep, instead of a dog treat tied up with a bow. What are you rummaging in there for Piggy, have you lost a chew again?

'You would look great as a bride, Buddy, and I saw a pair of curtain nets in here yesterday that would make a lovely veil.'

Are you being serious, Piggy? Wrap the curtain nets for Roxy. She has a satin-smooth coat like mine. There's a box of Christmas paper with gift tags and the tree decorations upstairs. I was born with a brown patch around this eye, so I've decided—I shall be a pirate at our Christmas dinner! We will have to measure the width of the back door to see if the tree will fit through it.

'What shall we do for Honey? We shouldn't forget her.'

Ah, she is our heavenly angel now, with gossamer wings, so she will always be sitting on the top of our tree—28 feet! Ho ho. It will just slide through if we angle the pot in first.

Buddy Brown (pure Jack Russell) a roving reporter

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Exmoor Benefice Ringers: Sue Atkins		01643 841408
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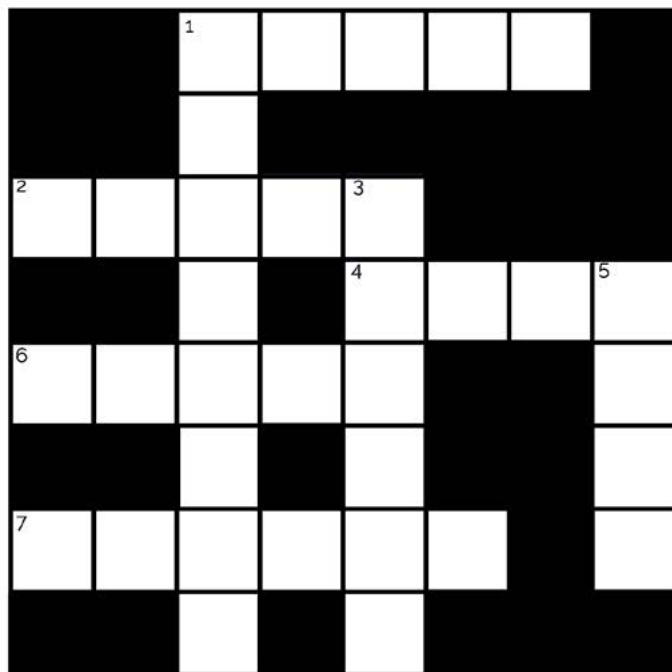


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