



IMPACT REPORT

Q2 2020/21

JULY-SEPT



October 2020

OUR VISION is of dynamic communities shaping their own futures.

OUR MISSION is to inspire and support communities to be thriving, resilient and inclusive.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

* These figures represent where we have had direct, personal contact. Support and funding advice was provided in all e-bulletins, so many more will have had the opportunity to benefit from our advice.



KEY

DEVON COMMUNITIES OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK:

- ▶ Understanding Community Needs
- ▶ Brokering Relationships
- ▶ Capability Building Within Communities
- ▶ Support for Community Resilience
- ▶ Opportunities for Individuals to Become Active Citizens

COVID-19 RESPONSE DURING Q2



SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES THROUGH THE NEXT PHASE OF COVID-19

DCT has continued to operate our dedicated helpline and provide CV19-themed regular digital content including e-bulletins, social media content and website resources. Rather than focusing on emergency response, as in Q1, the support in Q2 provided recovery advice as communities moved out of lockdown. Read more on pg. 4.

Gathering intelligence from communities

DCT carried out 4 surveys/polls, generating 64 responses, to gather community feedback and information on topics including enterprise support and Devon's Local Outbreak Management Plan. More about the results of these surveys may be found in our latest CV19 report, which will be published here: www.devoncommunities.org.uk/coronavirus-information

Online focus groups

DCT facilitated a total of 8 themed online focus group meetings with 106 local leaders and representatives participating.

These groups not only provided up-to-date, targeted information and advice to different audience groups, they also provided a space to share challenges, issues and best practice.

IMPACT

196 communities have received support and advice to cope with the effects of Covid-19.

- 📍 Town and Parish Councils
- 📍 Community buildings incl. village halls
- 📍 Social enterprise and businesses
- 📍 Community groups and organisations

Not only does this map demonstrate the reach of the DCT helpline and related support services, it also ensures that the intelligence and feedback we have been gathering reflects the experiences of a large section of the County.





Jessica Bishop

DCT
OBJECTIVE
COMMUNITIES
BECOME MORE
RESOURCEFUL
AND RESILIENT



COMMUNITY BUILDINGS: WORKING COLLABORATIVELY TO ENSURE ACCURATE ADVICE

DCT has been running our Covid-19 helpline for six months and one of the main user groups has been community buildings such as village halls, and the organisations that use them. During Q2 alone we had **286 direct contacts** with community buildings. Our help has progressed from the initial crisis as bookings were cancelled and halls started to close, through assisting those halls that were playing a part in supporting their communities through lockdown, to most recently helping halls re-open under the regulations, and supporting user groups understand how they should now operate.

Behind the scenes, enabling us to respond quickly to ever-developing situations, is a structure that stretches across England. Each rural county has a community development charity, like DCT, which has village hall and other community advisors who are in contact with rural and small town communities. These advisors are also in constant contact with each other, identifying the CV19-related issues that communities are struggling with, helping to produce solutions and compile advice.

Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) is the umbrella organisation that acts as a hub, collecting and disseminating information and advice. ACRE is in almost daily contact with Government departments seeking clarification on regulations and official guidance; helping officials frame fair and workable Covid legislation and interpretations.

There is no 'one-stop-shop' to obtain information that helps halls, Parish Councils and community organisations. Our helpline team and our colleagues across the country have to trawl through many Government documents to extract the relevant legislation and guidance, examine potentially conflicting directions and frame pragmatic advice that is workable for the many volunteers who are delivering vital community services.

While they may sometimes be the vehicles for bad news or yet another new piece of guidance, our frequent newsletters and constant updating of technical guidance are appreciated by those struggling to understand what is being broadcast and published.

“Thank you for that. Your support and advice is much appreciated as it gives us confidence to continue with the opening of what is becoming a busy village hall, once again.” Helpline user

“That is really helpful thanks. That makes sense but I am really glad you are there to confirm just in case.”
Joan Phillips, Holcombe Rogus Village Hall

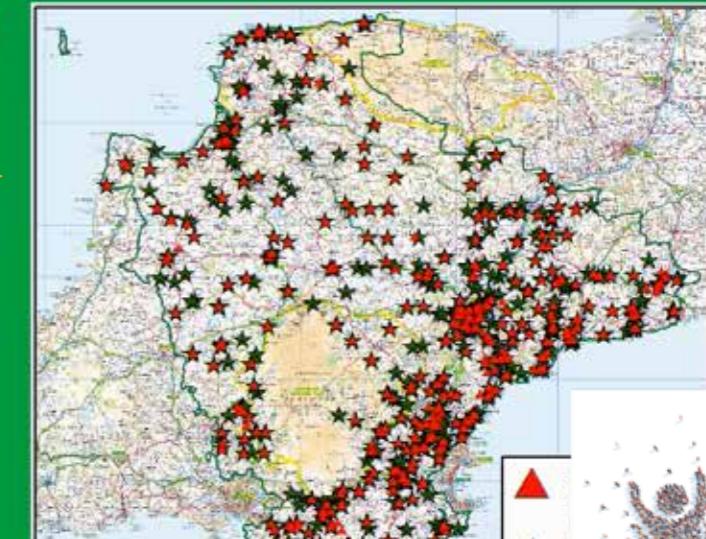
IMPACT

Our communities are coming 'back to life' after the lockdown and village halls will play an important part in combating the loneliness of winter, maintaining health, fitness and wellbeing and helping the local economy prosper.

How we use your information

DCT
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COMMUNITIES
BECOME MORE
RESOURCEFUL
AND RESILIENT

Incident
management
and flood risk
assessments and studies
appropriately



DEVON COMMUNITY RESILIENCE FORUM: GOING DIGITAL

Devon Community Resilience Forum usually holds two forum events each year, which bring communities together to listen to speakers, take part in workshops and engage in peer learning on the topic of community resilience and preparedness.

Due to COVID-19 we were unable to hold our usual face-to-face event, however the pandemic has really highlighted the value of community emergency planning so we undertook to move the event online to ensure that communities could still engage with the learning opportunities at a time when they particularly needed them.

Six talks and workshops were held over two days to avoid 'zoom fatigue', on topics including:



OVER £4,600 IN GRANTS AWARDED!

Six communities successfully applied for grant funding from Devon Community Resilience Forum during Q2. Activities that can now go ahead thanks to this funding include: making up emergency boxes for designated emergency shelter locations in Exmouth; the purchase of signage, walkie-talkies, waterproof shelters and road safety barriers in Uplyme; and printing a copy of the new Community Emergency Plan for every household in East Budleigh and Bicton.

activating a community emergency plan in a pandemic; flood resilience and response; communication methods; and the Local Outbreak Management Plan. Case studies from Broadclyst and Staverton helped to put recent events into local context.

62 people attended the event, from joining one workshop to attending all six.

42 communities were represented, including 9 communities new to the Forum.

As a result, 3 new communities are now engaging with us to develop a community emergency plan.

IMPACT

The sessions strongly reflected how to strengthen community emergency planning within local specificities in the face of the many additional challenges brought about by Covid-19. As a result of the learning and subsequent actions taken by communities (particularly those who have added pandemic sections to existing plans or are creating new ones), overall resilience is increased and the ability to respond in an emergency is developed within the local population.

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COMMUNITIES BECOME
ECONOMICALLY
STRONGER



New Start Devon is receiving funding from the European Regional Development Fund



NEW START DEVON: FORUM COMMUNICATION COACHING

New Start Devon is an enterprise coaching project, providing up to 12 hours' free business coaching to new businesses and start-ups. Claire Hall of Tin Box Traveller began coaching with the aim to map out how she could grow her two travel blogs to become leading sources of income.

To support the development of a plan using the Balanced Horizon Canvas technique (pictured below) our business coach Matthew Porter provided a range of coaching sessions including business coaching and planning support; specialist support for sole traders and micro businesses; person-centred support and holistic

diagnostic; softer skills development including time management and emotional resilience; basic business management and development; aligning/balancing personal and business needs; and challenges, opportunities, and mindset.

12 hours of support were provided consisting of a series of five 1:1 coaching sessions over Zoom, using online collaboration tools including MIRO.

From the very first session, the coaching helped Claire to plot out a three year plan for her business with targets for success across all areas of work and personal life.

It was "eye opening" and gave her clear actions she could implement immediately.

“Lockdown had a huge impact on my freelance business, both in terms of my income and my ability to manage my workload. Matthew helped me work through a really tough time and has enabled me to come out the other side with a plan that will not only help to me to recover lost income, but also find balance in the ongoing difficult circumstances that the pandemic has created. And the initial three year plan is again in my sights - delayed but not abandoned. My coaching sessions with Matthew have been thought-provoking, enlightening and enjoyable. I would happily recommend him to anyone stuck on the question 'how do I take my business to the next level?'”



IMPACT

This work in supporting a range of creative and entrepreneurial activities for Claire succeeded in upskilling, training, supporting and advising her to create something new for her own life and business that will directly support her and her family.

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COMMUNITIES BECOME
ECONOMICALLY
STRONGER



ENHANCE
SOCIAL ENTERPRISE NETWORK
DEVON & SOMERSET

Heart of the South West
Enhance Social Enterprise
European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

ENHANCE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE NETWORK: A LOOK BACK

DCT completed our delivery management role on the Enhance Social Enterprise Network Devon & Somerset project in August 2020. The purpose of the network is to meet the identified need to further develop and consolidate the Heart of the South West (HotSW) social enterprise sector by bringing members together in a group tailor-made to the sector's needs, structure and social purposes.

What did we achieve over the course of the project?

Together with other project partners: Plymouth Social Enterprise Network; Smart Communities/Somerset Social Enterprise Network; Essence of Exeter; and Local Spark/Torbay Social Enterprise Network (TSEN), DCT planned and delivered a programme of activities geared towards growth of social enterprises across the South West...

2 New networks created in Torbay and Somerset, to join those in Devon, Exeter and Plymouth.

18 Events and networking opportunities to facilitate connection and peer to peer support.

481 Social enterprises and entrepreneurs engaged with at least one of the membership schemes.

2,363 Social enterprises uploaded onto the asset map and online database.

290 Businesses signposted to business support services, training courses and opportunities.

IMPACT

The partnership of ESEN as a collaborative network has been strengthened to provide greater business support to an important area of the economy, and as a stronger voice for social enterprises in the region.

“Overall, the Enhance Social Enterprise Programme has been crucial for Local Spark, especially at this stage of our development. It has enabled us to learn from the partner organisations when setting up the Torbay Social Enterprise Network.”

“It was a good opportunity to learn from other social entrepreneurs and learn from their great insight and experience.”

“It will be great to have more of these sessions to exchange our experiences and network.”

**DCT
OBJECTIVE**
COMMUNITIES BECOME
HEALTHIER, MORE
VIBRANT AND INCLUSIVE
WITH IMPROVED
WELLBEING



DEVON HIGHLIGHTS: TACKLING LONELINESS AND ISOLATION WITH NEW DIGITAL SKILLS



Our Devon Highlights project supports people in later life who are at risk of loneliness and social isolation.

DCT has built relationships with social prescribers and other services across the county to encourage referrals of individuals feeling isolated and lonely but there can sometimes be technological and skills barriers to them being able to join in, now that all our services are remote.

During Q2 we have spent time supporting people with their digital skills to create an inclusive

environment. New referrals are phoned up by our staff to establish a friendly relationship as well as to understand the individual's circumstances and digital literacy.

We take the time to have a practice 1-2-1 Zoom call and encourage them to join the weekly Zoom social group calls that form part of the project. The groups are friendly places where we chat about each other's weeks and also have guest speakers, or volunteers from within the group lead an activity such as yoga, art or a quiz.

If individuals don't wish to join the Zoom groups, they are telephoned to give weekly support.

IMPACT

People in later life are supported to learn new digital skills that enable them to socialise with others during a time when in-person social interaction is greatly reduced. These skills are transferrable to other areas of life (for example keeping in touch with distant family). Feedback* from the participants emphasises how regular socialisation is hugely important for their mental health and feelings of wellbeing. *See opposite for some of the feedback we've received from our wonderful Highlights participants

Marg and Sue

We were delighted to share twins Marg and Sue's Devon Highlights experience in our most recent LOVE Devon e-newsletter, which you can read here: <https://tinyurl.com/y277c5v8>



The Highlights project is supported by the National Lottery's Community Fund and HM Government - together forming the Building Connections Fund.

“The phonecalls break the day up and it’s a surprise. It’s just a nice thing to think that someone is thinking of you and I like hearing about Harry and what he’s been up to. It gives me something else to think about.”

“It’s helped with my loneliness a lot! I mean I’ve been feeling lonely sometimes anyway, but the group is so friendly, nice and supportive. Aggie helps a lot, she is always positive, open minded, ask great questions, and she listens, and I appreciate it!”

“I love chatting and the encouragement we get from one another. (I) also enjoy the different things we do. Some I’d never think of trying.”

Please note: the quotes are not directly attributed to the people in the image shown, although they are all direct quotes from Highlights participants.

“I am not lonely as I’m blessed to not live on my own. But ... I’m disabled and don’t get out much. It’s lovely meeting and chatting with folks on Zoom.”

“I like interaction with people, I like listening them and the ability to share our own stories/ highlights.”

“I had calls with Aggie, it helps me especially when I feel down sometimes, she is very positive...I can just be me and just chat - it’s not like you’re a threat, you’re not the person down the road or anything. I love talking and it’s just a chance for me to talk and it does help. Yes, just chatting whatever and I’m just in a different world, not thinking of anything else.”

DEVON RURAL HOUSING PARTNERSHIP: HOUSING NEEDS SURVEYS



The work Devon Rural Housing Partnership does on supporting communities establish the need for new affordable housing for local people has picked up pace during Q2, since communities have emerged from lockdown. Recent Housing Needs Surveys (which are distributed to the community to establish how many people are in need of affordable housing), have included North Molton, Instow, Loddiswell and Dunsford. The results of these surveys will be used to assist delivery of new affordable housing in rural parishes, which will provide homes for people unable to meet their housing needs on the open market.

During Q2, Action Hampshire was commissioned to undertake an three-month independent full service review of Devon Rural Housing Partnership in order to evaluate how to maintain and strengthen its work going forward. We look forward to sharing the outcomes of this review in our next report.

IMPACT

Young people, growing families and the elderly can remain in the community where they grew up or have lived for many years, leading to improved wellbeing and security. The extra homes will help to keep communities vibrant by keeping key assets such as schools, shops and pubs.





DCT OBJECTIVE

COMMUNITIES HAVE INCREASED CAPABILITY, SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE IN ADDRESSING LOCAL ISSUES



DEVON COMMUNITY LEARNING ACADEMY: NEW LOOK, NEW ONLINE COURSES

September saw the re-launch of Devon Community Learning Academy (DCLA), with a new logo designed to represent the breadth of opportunities available from DCLA, from training, to network and peer support.

Over the summer and into the first part of Q2 we built on our online learning opportunities, hosting 20 online sessions with 400 participants.

Communities from all over Devon joined us to get support on a wide range of topics, many of which had a Covid-19 focus as we supported businesses, councils, community buildings and local councils to emerge from lockdown (see pg. 3).



IMPACT

Actions taken as a result of these learning and peer support opportunities will directly support communities and businesses to prepare for and act on different scenarios as the pandemic evolves.



LOOKING TO THE FUTURE ...

From October onwards, DCLA is facilitating a brand new range of live webinars, working with both our in-house trainers and partners including Citizens Advice Devon.

Moving away from purely Covid-response content, these webinars will get to the heart of what communities need support with to continue to rebuild, from Asset Based Community Development to Digital Transformation and much more.

We also welcome back Citizens Advice Devon to Devon Community Learning Academy, with a comprehensive series of online benefits system courses, which begin in October 2020.

AND FINALLY! SOME BRIEF UPDATES ON A FEW MORE OF OUR PROJECTS ...

CONSTRUCTING FUTURES DEVON LTD: GETTING BACK ON-SITE

Constructing Futures Devon is a social purpose construction company designed to provide real-site learning experiences to local construction apprentices by purchasing dilapidated properties to renovate and sell on the open market. After having shut down all sites during the lockdown period, we're pleased to report that work on our third, and most ambitious, renovation is back underway.

The Constructing Futures team has worked carefully with the team at South Devon College to create a Covid secure workplace and a new cohort of learners are being matched to jobs at the site. We look forward to sharing more about their achievements in the next report.



Constructing Futures is partly funded by £574,320 from the Heart of the South West LEP's Growth Deal funding.

NET ZERO TASK FORCE: MANAGING COVID-19 SETBACKS

DCT OBJECTIVE

COMMUNITIES ARE SUPPORTED TO DEVELOP STRATEGIES TO PROTECT AND REGENERATE THEIR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

DCT has continued to participate in Devon's Net Zero Task Force, which is creating and driving forward Devon's plans to be carbon neutral by 2050. During Q2 we attended one meeting of the Task Force.

Unfortunately, Covid-19 and the associated regulations has meant a delay in arranging a Citizen's Assembly at which we planned to consult on our findings so far (from extensive evidence-gathering work undertaken with expert witnesses pre-lockdown) and plans going forward. However, DCT has continued to play an active part in the group by providing feedback on the interim report content and we look forward to assisting with future community consultation webinars.



EMPOWERING ENTERPRISE: MEASURING THE IMPACT

Delivery has now ended on Empowering Enterprise, a large Devon-wide partnership project that exists to support 18-24 year-olds who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) towards a positive outcome. As the external evaluation partner, we have been focusing on facilitating Impact Review meetings with the other delivery partners as well as producing the final report for the programme, which will highlight the amazing achievements of the young people and their mentors.

We look forward to sharing the report as part of our Q3 Impact Report. In the meantime, we'd encourage you to take a look at the project's wonderful YouTube channel, which has some inspiring stories to share. www.youtube.com/channel/UCdEhJapqQnjrZaQNudwiGxQ



DCT OBJECTIVE

COMMUNITIES BECOME ECONOMICALLY STRONGER



DCT has adopted five social objectives.

All of our key activities are measured against one or more of the objectives to enable us to assess impact and to share the evidence with funders, stakeholders, policy makers and commissioners.

