

Senior Council for Devon



# Everyone's Tomorrow

Issue No 12

October 2011

**The Newsletter of the Senior Council for Devon - Nothing to do with the council!  
The Organisation keeping the over 50s involved in having a say about  
services and service delivery in the County**

## Keep writing to us!



Everyone's Tomorrow is the Newsletter of the Senior Council for Devon. Gillie Newcombe and Yvonne Wardrop (Chairman and Vice Chairman) have written an update to keep you all informed of the current situation at SCfD. Please keep those interesting articles and news items coming in for the next Newsletter by the 1st December for the New Year edition. Address, email and telephone details for Sally and Andrea are on the bottom right hand side of this page so please do not hesitate to contact us.

*Sally Lougher, Editor*

## Progress at last - A Message from the Chairman and Vice Chairman



YVONNE WARDROP

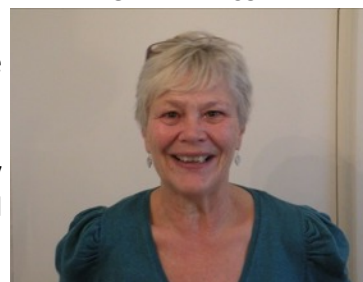
WE are able to report to you that we are beginning to see positive results from becoming members of the Joint engagement consortium. It has been, as you will be well aware, quite a struggle. As the representatives to both DCC and NHS Devon for older persons, we were more than sorry that DCC decided to restrict our activities by their decision to reduce their support of us by 50% and only offering a choice for a part share in their contract for Health and Social Care Engagement. Our three year contract with them came to an end in March and we had to however appreciate the financial position they found themselves in with the severe cut backs that had been enforced on them.

This all means that we have to re-evaluate our role and to set new objectives we are holding a meeting with group officers on the 16<sup>th</sup> September to discuss the future.

**The Funding Group** are doing all they can to look at alternative methods of resourcing the activities that we believe are vital to THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF SENIORS:

- Social and Urban isolation leading to all sorts of related health issues.
- Housing and the increasing costs of rents and mortgages.
- Transport the cutting of services and the proposal to withdraw/cut concessionary fares.
- The ever increasing cost of utilities leading to a choice between eating and heating.
- Pensions in relation to the rising cost of living.
- Activities and withdrawal of support in activity programmes offering both physical and mental stimulation (continued on page 2).

GILLIE NEWCOMBE



**Senior Council  
Office Open  
Monday to  
Friday  
9 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Sally Lougher  
Administrator  
Tel:**

**01803 732678**

**Email:**

**info@scfd.org.uk  
Snail mail (post!)**

**P.O. Box 210**

**Harberton**

**Totnes**

**Devon, TQ9 9DA**

**Andrea Chick**

**Admin Assistant**

**Email:**

**andrea@scfd.org.uk**

## Achievements since July 2011

SINCE July 2011 the Senior Council for Devon groups have:

- Participated in a Devon County Council panel to recruit the new Head of Social Care.
- Held a very successful Mid-Devon Dementia Awareness Day in Tiverton in July.
- Exhibited at the Devon County, Mid Devon, Totnes, Chagford, Okehampton, Holsworthy, and Heavitree Shows.
- Held a 'How to Improve Yourself for Your Future' Information Day in Exmouth.
- Achieved successful outcomes for local Roundswell residents hopefully giving them access to facilities at the new school.
- Participated in reviewing the services of Care Direct.
- Through the Fusion consortium, 3 members are involved in reviewing and improving the standards of care in Devon County Council's Care Homes.



Unfortunately it appears that in the majority of cases funds can only be raised for specific projects and more often than not these must be of a provider nature.

### Working with in the consortium we have so far been involved in the following:

- A part of a panel in the selection of candidates for the three year post of Head of Social Care Provision.
- Participating in an exercise to visit DCC's Residential home to assist in the monitoring of Quality standards.
- We have also been approached by DCC to ask our members if any would be interested in aiding staff working within the DCC homes to provide relevant activity programmes for their service users.

And there are many other projects that are in the pipeline and we will be keeping you informed as well as asking for your support.

### In conclusion

We have ridden through challenges and changes already and more adjustments to current time must be made. However we are on the road to a leaner, fitter organisation.

*Gillie Newcombe - Chair and Yvonne Wardrop - Vice-Chair*

## Barnstaple Branch



**BRIAN CLIFTON**

Barnstaple, to provide information to local residents and the business community, concerning a decision by Devon County Council to construct an Integrated Education Centre for North Devon on the Roundswell Business Park, near to the modern residential housing development of Roundswell (population 1962).

The Centre, which is due to open in January 2012, will consist of a 25 day place, Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD) school for boys and girls aged 10-16 years, managed by Marland Special School, a Personalised Learning Service (PLS) day school for up to 25 pupils ranging from 14-19 years, some of whom may have been excluded from a mainstream school, and an Integrated Children's Services (ICS) unit with about 105 staff. In addition the PLS will provide a gathering point for pupils in work placement and off-site training.

Following the successful meeting in October 2010, we have been working in partnership with Devon County Council, Community Action North Devon and the Roundswell Liaison Group (supported by Devon County Council), to promote a 'good neighbour' policy between local people including, the business community, and the new education centre.

In June 2011, the Partnership organised an inter-generational event for the children, young people and families of Roundswell, to celebrate the achievement of pupils who have been learning new skills while enrolled in a personalised learning programme. This event included cooking displays with the emphasis on 'healthy eating', a music workshop for all ages and an arts and craft display. The advantage of the Centre being established on the Roundswell Business Park and therefore 'embedded' with the local business community, is that the location can help to improve the prospects of work placement for young people enrolled at the Centre. Local firms have already expressed an interest in the scheme.

Our current activities include planning for a 'topping-out' ceremony of the new building at the end of October 2011, to celebrate the work of the people who have been involved in the construction of the Educational Centre, and an opening ceremony in January 2012. We are also considering how local people might be able to make use of the facilities at the Centre, 'out of hours' and 'out of term time', in particular, the use of sports and gym facilities.

The outcomes of our work to date has shown how a successful partnership of Local Authority, Private Industry and the Charitable and Voluntary sectors, can help to encourage the enhancement of community involvement. The initial work and continuing contribution of a small number of enthusiastic and dedicated members of the Senior Council for Devon to this project, has also demonstrated the value of our organisation to the wider Devon community.

*Brian Clifton, Chairman*

## Seaton and Area Branch



We, Seaton and Area are concerned! We believe we have made a positive difference to the local communities we serve. We have a small team who work hard to improve the quality of life for older people. We work with other local organizations, we do not compete. We can name many successes. We do not excel at selling ourselves. We want SCfD to continue in its present guise. We understand that the climate has changed since our inception. We want to remain an independent voice without being "required" to deliver a product or service. We hope that other branches will also wish to defend the independence of Senior Council for Devon. We believe that the particular strength of SCfD is that each branch is free to concentrate its efforts on what it believes is important to the communities they serve without "political" constraint. We applaud each and every branch and all those who give freely of their time.

*Roger and Tina Trapani*

## Honiton Branch



The new Reminiscence Bus the Senior Council helped Age UK to secure

WHEN Honiton SCfD chairman Tony Smith and his wife Shirley, branch treasurer, attended the launching of a Memory Cafe for their town just over a year ago both felt it was something they wanted to support. At the next committee of the branch they explained what the cafe was for - helping people with memory problems hopefully pushing back the day when they were officially suffering with dementia.

No organisation cannot start without money and members agreed to donate £100. The cheque was used to pay for a small hall in the first once-a-month programme.

Tony took a one-day course when volunteers from Honiton and other cafes around Devon met in Exeter. It was very basic, even pointing out "Don't TALK DOWN to someone seeking help. SIT DOWN alongside them. Talk to the wife or husband, carer or friend first and then try to bring the sufferer

into the conversation".

There was no shortage of volunteers - Shirley joined the group to make tea or coffee but soon found herself talking to the carers and the number attending began to grow. It became a joke persuading carers, sufferers and volunteers to wear a stick-on label with their Christian name. Another success as people coming along each month began to know exactly who they were talking to, even looking out for someone in particular.

Journeys via a small coach to Sidmouth's Manor Theatre for sing-a-long shows added to the fun. A Christmas Carols afternoon was organised and later an 'old time' comedian was followed by a folk singer. There were soon enough regulars to attend a Bingo night at the Royal British Legion.

After the Mayor and the local beat copper popped in for cutting of the First Birthday cake in June, members were talking about meeting once-a-fortnight. Again that needed money and the Honiton SCfD committee were set to offer more help.

Imagine the amazement when Tony and Shirley learnt OUR cash wasn't needed. Age UK linked up with Honiton's Memory Cafe to try for Big Lottery money with a trip along Memory Lane.

When ITV sent a local news cameraman and crew to Broadhembury, a village just outside Honiton, there were SCfD members joining in the singing as a double-decker bus rode down country lanes. Lunch in the village hall was filmed too.

The last hurdle was to spread the word about getting people to watch the TV programme and then vote - stressing 10 votes per phone were allowed.

It all needed planning plus enthusiasm but on June 29 it was revealed Age UK and Honiton Memory Cafe had topped the voting and a cheque was £43,000 was handed over.

Now, Cafe treasurer Alf Boom, another SCfD member, is asking regulars how the money should be used. The message from the competition is that local health professionals, albeit retired, are the base for a Memory Cafe but volunteers who want to help the less fortunate are also essential.



*Tony Smith, Chairman*

# Bideford Branch Intergenerational Activities



## ACTION SPEAKS LOUDER THAN WORDS!!

ONCE again, 'Seize the Moment' have taken the initiative and are proposing that we at Westward Ho! nominate our beloved free recreational area with its hard tennis/netball court, crazy golf and children's playground for the Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge. For more information see <http://www.sitatrust.org.uk/qe2-fields>



This would designate this precious place, used by all ages throughout the whole year as a protected site for future generations.

I believe as part of our Intergenerational commitment we should be putting as much effort as we can behind such a project and in so doing give ourselves some positive publicity for action within our local community.

'Seize' as they are now known, for short, have put an enormous effort into this area over the past couple of years. They have painted a wall mural, and mended and repainted the crazy golf. They have completely revamped the old tired pavilion into a welcoming Happy Cafe, run by trainees at Petroc and open for three days a week at present.

They have repainted the exterior and planted up many of the neglected flower bed with flowers and vegetables. Three new raised beds were added with the help of Asda staff this year for growing produce to use in the cafe next year.

I became involved with this group after a being concerned about behaviour of youths in the play area just behind where we live, shortly after moving here.

The local community policeman suggested that after he sorted out the problem with them, I get to know some of these young people that hang out at the youth club that met in the pavilion.

Sadly, now the youth club has had to close. But the 'Seize' group are using the building to create an environment where young people can train in catering, horticulture and hopefully a bicycle workshop will start up soon.

This enthusiastic group will be making a short presentation to our November Intergenerational Conference at Crediton. So come along all those of you who care about the future for all ages and support this venture and all our Intergenerational work at SCfD.



*Maggie Durkin, Secretary*

## Exmouth Branch

THE summer period is one of least activity as far as meetings are concerned. July 9<sup>th</sup> saw us holding workshops and an information fair on the theme "Improving your future for yourself". Our next meeting will be our AGM on September 19<sup>th</sup> when I shall be standing down from the committee. After three years it is time for new faces and new ideas. We are fortunate to have the SW manager of Stagecoach buses as our speaker following the business of the meeting.

Of the three ideas offered for the available funding for sports related suggestions for the town, two have been voted in by the populace; namely the adult exercise machines and the additional skateboard facilities. We have associate membership with the Exmouth Community Association some of whose members have actively pursued the future of Rolle College campus. The good news is that Plymouth University have finally agreed terms with a separate finance company that ECA members set up, so that once again we can have further educational facilities present after a three year gap. It is proposed to be a community hub much in lines with the aims of SCfD – workshops for setting up in business, training and re-training, offices and meeting rooms/halls for leisure pursuits.

The four groups that are in East Devon are due to have one of our half-yearly meetings with EDDC officers under the chair of Jill Elson. We raise issues of local concern in our respective areas and have submitted our combined agenda to the meeting being held on September 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Council Offices at Knowle.

*Yvonne Wardrop, Chairman*

## Crediton and Area Branch



ACTIVITIES continue apace in Crediton and Area. Our very successful Open Meeting in May was followed by another in July when Judith Nicholls gave a talk on the work of the CAB. It was interesting to learn that the office in Crediton was set up in 1939.

In September we have a dual presentation when Alan Quick of the Crediton Country Courier will talk about its influence in the area. Diane Silcock of Living Options will talk about her project as Disability Network Representative.

In an effort to 'spread the word' we mounted an information stand at the Farmers Market on Friday 19th August. This was repeated on Saturday 3rd September and is booked again for Saturday 1st October. It is hoped that for this one we will be joined by members of a local Youth Club with whom we are co-hosting a County wide Intergenerational Event on Saturday 12th November from 9.30 - 4.00 pm. This will take place in the Boniface Centre (our normal meeting venue and Old Haywards School, the location of the Youth Club). This event is to be a prelude to one being planned by the Senior Council for next year following the 2012 Olympics. This will have a 'County of Devon' theme. Efforts are being made to compile a list of Parish Magazines or Community Newsletters published and or distributed in each of our 26 parishes. When this is complete we hope to have available other 'vehicles' to carry forward details of the Senior Council. Watch this space, as the saying goes.



**Pauline Thomas, Ron Cuthbertson  
and Barbara Whiting at the  
Crediton Farmers' Market**  
Photograph: Stephen Wensley, Crediton  
Photography Club

*Ron Cuthbertson, Publicity and Membership Officer*

## Exeter Branch

ON Wednesday the 29th of June 2011 I found myself attending my first ever Open Meeting of the Exeter Branch of the Senior Council for Devon at the Cricket Club in Exeter. I profess to feeling a fraud as I felt neither senior nor adequately prepared to carry out my role as a rather grand-sounding Publicity Officer. The event was well attended and there was no shortage of a friendly welcome. The Guest Speaker was to be Martin Rogers of Age UK, but he unfortunately couldn't attend so was represented by Corin Bayley the Development Officer for Age UK, Exeter.

Corin started by explaining the ethos behind the name change to Age UK which was to give a strong National Profile, supporting members and raising funds to provide a broader range of services. They hoped to benefit from funding and grants available, giving a of image and removing stereotypes, and operating locally and in National campaigns. She went on to explain some of the services available and the problems they were already addressing such as backup when returning from hospital and problems living within the basic pension confines. Age UK also felt that better shared practices were required and a need to pre-empt problems that were having an impact on living standards. A clearer definition was also required between Care and nursing requirements.

The floor was then opened to a lively Question and Answer session, covering nursing care at home to poor interest on savings. Many people agreed that we needed a closer working relationship with Age UK and other organisations representing the over 50's, enabling us to work together to find solutions to the problems affecting so many members of our population. I then spent some time with a group of amateur actors called "Pastime Players" who live in and around Exeter. They perform 'Rationing to Rock and Roll', recounting memories for men and women in the 1950s. It is designed to appeal to everyone but in particular the play helps to stimulate memories and after the

show the audience are then invited to share their own memories. For further information on "Pastime Players" call Jan on 01392 206429 or e-mail us on [info@pastimeplayers.co.uk](mailto:info@pastimeplayers.co.uk). We were then treated to an hour's entertainment from "The Heavenly Choir" who are a group of eight singers led by Cynthia Keats. The meeting was followed by a buffet.



*Sue Stokes, Publicity Officer*

**Chairman of the Exeter branch Norman Shiel and Corin Bayley**

## Culm Valley Branch



### Looking forward to Autumn in the Culm Valley

NOW that "Summer" is drawing to a close it's time to think of activities for the Autumn. But first we might reflect on the extremely useful and successful conference on Alzheimer's Awareness in July (report available from SCfD main office), and also think about our "Regain Your Youth" sessions during the summer. Despite the low attendance at some of these, the committee still thinks that they are potentially valuable, so there will be monthly sessions as before on Tuesday afternoons (2pm). Just in case you don't know, they are social afternoons with games, chat and tea, the dates.....(still at the J Tallack Centre, Cullompton)

Our next big event will be the "Finance Fair" . Speakers have been invited, to cover managing your money, benefits and allowances and equity release, so there is sure to be something of relevance to all whether you are in the red or the black. The date Thursday 27 October, **The place** - somewhere in Cullompton (to be finalized) - more details later.

Our AGM is to be held in The Bell Inn Cullompton on the 18th November 2011.

*Tim Butters, Secretary for Culm Valley Senior Council*

## Dawlish Branch

THE government envisages that there will be groups set up throughout the country to think about future planning for each locality but 17 places have been selected to be Neighbourhood Planning Front-Runners and one of them is DAWLISH.

A steering group has been set up to lead the way forward with representatives from different organizations in the town. Dawlish Senior Council is represented by Dr Geraldine Leach. This group has already organized two seminars and a whole-day workshop so that interested residents could be involved as well as Teignbridge Council planners. Further steering group meetings and seminars are already arranged.

Dawlish already has a regeneration plan for the town centre and the Lawn under consideration, but the Neighbourhood Planning will be much more far-reaching dealing with such matters as Housing-Land Availability, Housing Needs and Affordability, Traffic concerns, the Tourist industry and Nature Conservation. It even intends to look up to 20 years into the future, dealing with pressures on services for an older generation, flood risk, any necessary adaptation due to climate change and the reduction in natural resources.

*Peter Spackman, Chairman*

## Axminster & District Seniors' Forum

AXMINSTER Seniors' Forum had found that their meetings were being attended less frequently by members and we did not know if this was due to lack of interest or just that people had other commitments and decided to review our membership. The committee decided to do a survey to see who was still interested in being part of the Forum and those who no longer wanted to stay. At present we are still awaiting replies from several of the members but on the bright side there are more people interested than we had thought. All though members can still remain and only receive the Everyone's Tomorrow it is not helpful when you do not know the reason why they are staying away. We are a small group and like to have a speaker who is of interest to the members but it can be a little embarrassing if only a handful of people turn up to hear what they have to say. But it is looking positive for the future membership, but confusing with all the changes that are likely to take place with the new funding. Hopefully we will hear shortly just what is going to take place.

The Seniors' Forum felt that after last winter we should try to get a handrail for a particularly nasty slope that goes up and down to the local Surgery from an EDDC car park and also a Co-operative store. Many people attending the surgery have to take this route as a great many come in from out of town and last winter this became extremely dangerous. After getting in touch with our Town and EDDC Councillor Andrew Moulding, we are delighted that this has been taken up with the Town Council who are entering into talks with the local surgery who own the wall that the handrail will go along. We hope that something can be achieved before the forthcoming winter.

*Margaret Spencer-Brown, Secretary*

## Tavistock Branch



MEMBERS of Tavistock Senior Council attended a WDB Community Day and shared a stand with Tavistock Network and Tavistock Transition Group. It was a good opportunity for networking.



## Great Torrington Branch

OUR AGM was held on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> August in the Methodist Church meeting room. The main business for the day was the election of officers for the Great Torrington branch, however there were no nominations received. The existing officers that had agreed to continue were then voted en-bloc to continue. But because of the lack of interest shown by the members, only eight attended the meeting, it was proposed that the Great Torrington branch be dissolved. This was carried unanimously by the meeting. The Chairman pointed out that Bideford had a strong attendance record for their meetings and that all members of the Great Torrington area would be welcome at the Bideford branch meetings. This would be discussed by the Bideford branch and in due course all members in the area would be notified of any amalgamation that came about following the SCfD main board approval, which will be verified at the final meeting of the Great Torrington branch on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2011 at the Methodist Church meeting room.

Our speaker at this meeting was Nikki Kennelly Heath and Social Care Cluster Manager for Torridge. Nikki explained about the development of the complex care teams and their work in helping people to be looked after in their own homes and preventing unnecessary trips to the hospital.

### The Great Torrington Memory Café

The attendance at our monthly get together continues to grow. Last month we had ten new carers and patients. Please let everyone know that they will be welcome on the second Thursday of each month (except December when there is no meeting) from 10.00am until 12.00 midday. The next Memory Cafe is 13<sup>th</sup> October 2011 at the Plough Art centre.

**At 2.00pm on October 27<sup>th</sup> 2011 the Friendship Club and the Memory Café are having a Musical Reminiscence afternoon at the Methodist Church Meeting room. Admission will be £1.00 per person which include refreshments. Come along and enjoy a good old sing-along.**

Graham Bowen

## Intergenerational Conference - CREDITON November '11



*“From Little Acorns Grow...”*

An

*Intergeneration Event*



TIME is fast approaching for our second Intergenerational Event on **Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2011** and this year it is being held in Crediton which helps bring the costs down. The above well known saying encompasses an environmental theme and how it affects us all and how our own actions affect each other.

To secure a place contact Ron Cuthbertson, 12 Clifford Gardens, Crediton EX17 2AN. Tel: 01363 775502 E-mail [ron@blissout.demon.co.uk](mailto:ron@blissout.demon.co.uk)

Ann R. Crawford, Intergenerational Lead

## Learning Curves Courses for the autumn

**Learning Curves** in association with Dartington's Abundant Life Project will be starting its new series of autumn courses at Foxhole from the end of September 2011.

Local poets Candy Neubert and Julie-Ann Rowell will be running a series of Poetry workshops from September 27<sup>th</sup> called 'Taking the Next Step' which will introduce budding poets to form and rhyme, eco-poetry, the challenge of reading aloud and preparing a poem for submission. The workshops run over six sessions and cost £70.

**Further information on the Learning Curves programme can be found at [www.learning-curves-uk.co.uk](http://www.learning-curves-uk.co.uk) or phone 01822 852777.**

## Funding Update September 2011



THE funding group is continuing to move forward with confidence even though the effect of the current funding cuts has been for most of the funding opportunities to be oversubscribed. It's a steep learning curve, but we are beginning to understand what is required. The Awards for All bid is still promising and we are looking at bids enhancing the "Deep Outreach" principles established when we were founded and to replace and enhance our existing IT. The group simply could not function without the dedication of two of its members Jim Corben and Ron Cuthbertson, I do wonder when they sleep, Jim's experience in funding and critical analysis is of particular value.

All Groups should be looking at what is available in their own areas, preferably working with neighbouring groups, your local District Council is a good bet as they are in the front line of Localism, let them know how you have helped your area.

*Ken Crawford, Chair of Funding Group*

## Partnership with FirstStop

**FirstStop Advice is an independent, free service offering advice and information for older people, their families and carers about housing and care options in later life. It is led by the charity Elderly Accommodation Counsel (EAC) working in partnership with other national and local organisations.**

They have asked us to consider being their Partner in Devon, this will give us an additional string to our bow. We would get training on each of their areas and then be able to point to their fulltime advisers. I have arranged a "sample" training day at Copplestone Methodist Hall on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> November from 11am – 3pm.

Their service spans housing, care, finance and rights and is delivered through their website, their telephone Advice Line and their network of local and specialist partner organisations.

- **Care and support** - in your own home, in specialist housing or in a care home.
- **Housing** - services to help you manage well at home and maintain independence; information about moving somewhere more suitable.
- **Finance** - paying for care including benefits and allowances, Council and NHS funding, insurances, financial planning and financial products.
- **Your rights** - the law; standards you should expect; how to get what you are entitled to; advocacy services that can support you.

*Ken Crawford*

## Mental Health

### NETWORK ACTION GROUPS

These continue to provide a good interface for those interested in Mental Health with discussions on Foundation Trust Status, Day Services, updates on Nursing, the Mental Health Act. The next meetings are:

#### **Exeter, East & Mid Devon**

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December at 2pm in Charter Hall, Town Hall, Fore Street, Okehampton EX20 1AA.

#### **North Devon**

Wednesday 10 November 2010 at the Alexandra Road Resource Centre, Alexandra Road, Barnstaple, EX32 8BA.

#### **Torbay, South and West Devon**

Monday 29 November 2010 in The Mansion, 36 Fore Street, Totnes, TQ9 5RP.

## Devon Libraries/WRVS Computer Project Volunteers needed ...

DEVON libraries are working with the WRVS to deliver a pilot project that gives laptops, broadband access and computer support in the home to housebound people. The main need at the moment is for new volunteers to assist people in their computer use where WRVS volunteers are not available. There are also a few laptops left for housebound people who would like receive one.

There is currently a need for volunteers in **Dawlish, Newton Abbot, Barnstaple and Stoke Gabriel**.

If you are interested in volunteering, receiving a laptop or simply wish to know more about the project please get in touch with Colin Bray on 01392 384302 or [colin.bray@devon.gov.uk](mailto:colin.bray@devon.gov.uk)

## Growing old and driving gracefully



IF the prospect of staying behind the wheel while growing old gracefully is something that's been occupying your mind for a while, you are hardly alone. In 2008, around 36% of Devon's population was over 55, and in the south west older-driver numbers are ever-growing. Sixty years on, the legacy of the post war baby-boom years is clear - in Britain's rapidly ageing population. Office for National statistics figures show almost 19% of people in the south west were over 65 in 2007, and projections suggest 15 years hence the figure will have reached almost 25%. Meanwhile, Devon's archives reveal that between 1992 and 2009, car drivers over 55 have collectively accounted for around 20% of collisions in the county.

Research-backed figures like these are occupying minds amongst regional road safety professionals, bringing a new focus on the over 55's within authorities like Devon County Council's road safety unit, the Devon and Cornwall police, their various regional partners - even the Highways Agency. All accept that road safety attitudes change inexorably as

drivers grow older, a fact reinforced recently by an Institute of Advanced Motorists report. Recognising that a car is increasingly seen as vital in later life to maintain mobility in rural counties like Devon and Cornwall, the report notes that older drivers' experience and maturity pays dividends in some situations, with lower crash involvement through a more careful driving style. However, whilst the report found drivers over 70 were likely to be safer on bends and when overtaking than 50 year olds, they proved more at risk in other practical situations - such as roundabouts and junctions.

The passing years bring other problems, eventually affect safe driving ability - reflected in growing numbers of incidents involving elderly drivers, especially those over 80. Worrying factors here tend to be more personal than practical: physical limitations, the effects of increased medication, declining eyesight, and failing cognitive skills - involving memory, reaction times and decision making. It was recognition of the potential effect on safety of any combination of these and more practical driver issues that prompted Devon and Cornwall Police and the County's road safety professionals to launch their joint, county-wide, 'Driving Safer for Longer' programme.

With 'senior driver' contact established through groups such as Probus, the WI, and Age Concern, a quite informal programme is readily available, and has been well received. Friendly workshops cover highly relevant topics, a principal element of which is a short drive accompanied by a specialist instructor, who will provide an honest critique afterwards, offering guidance as necessary. The overall theme is encouraging older drivers to stay safe - but equally, referrals are welcomed, perhaps where relatives feel a loved one's driving needs a check-up. Timely yet impartial advice is also available when the moment approaches to make one of life's most difficult decisions: when to give up driving - for safety's sake.

*Dave Moss - Driving Safer for Longer - Tel: 01404 850247.*

## AGEING WELL IN DEVON

MANY of you will remember the launch of the document AGEING WELL IN DEVON which was a collaborative effort between the Senior Council, Devon County Council and the National Health Service. It marked the beginning of our partnership and promised that we would review the contents on a yearly basis from October 2008. Following a consultation with all the groups in 2008 a small number of Senior Council members met with Sue Younger Ross and Paul Collinge (Joint Strategic Commissioning Manager – Older People) during 2009/10 to review the document and rewrite it. In early 2010 the Older Persons Strategic Partnership was reconstituted with ten members from the senior council, and representatives from the NHS and DCC and voluntary organisations. The main focus of this body was "Ageing Well in Devon". During 2010 we did indeed focus on the rewriting of the document and a great deal of research by Sue Younger Ross examined how various targets had been met and where there was a need for improvement of service, and what we needed to address in the future. The draft of the new Ageing Well in Devon was brought to the O.P.S.P in March of 2011 at least six months later than the original dates for review.

Sadly, it came at a time of turmoil both for the NHS and the DCC. The OPSP has been temporarily suspended pending changes in the organisation of the NHS. However there was an understanding that the officer from the DCC would continue to meet with the sub group of the Senior Council responsible for progressing the revised document, and that we would see a reprint by the Autumn.

That time scale has now arrived and we still have not been able to meet with the relevant officer. The Ageing Well Group are still working on your behalf. All groups have been asked to continue to review AIMS and we have circulated parts of the Draft Document to help you do this. There is also a questionnaire in circulation and we have had a good response from this. This is an important part of the work of the Senior Council and we are continuing to raise it as a "live issue" in our discussions with the NHS and the DCC.

*Ann McClements, Chair*



## WORRIED ABOUT PAYING CARE FEES? PROTECTING CAPITAL?

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**Ray Hanratty** Cert PFS, R.Inst.Pa  
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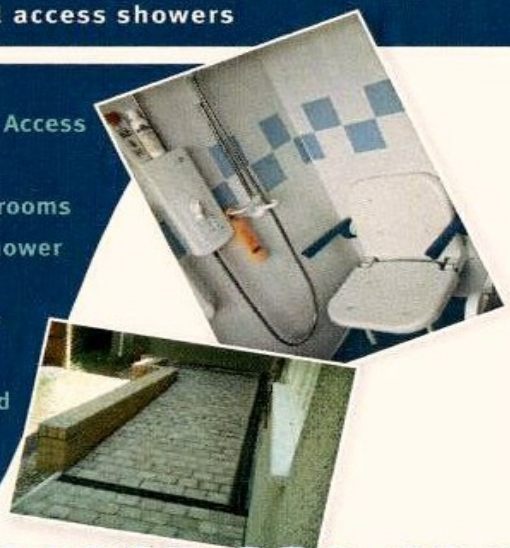
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# Call24

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OUR ageing society poses one of the UK's greatest challenges. Some commentators are forecasting that by 2026 the over 65s will account for almost 48% of the total number of households in the country - some say this figure could be substantially higher in Devon. An increasing number of older people want to stay in their own homes and that is where Telecare services can play a vital role.

Call24 is a Plymouth based Telecare Monitoring Centre who have been providing a much needed lifeline to its customers, primarily throughout the South West of England, for the past 25 years. Records show that the company's monitoring centre staff took 217,963 calls in 2010, of which 168,362 were considered emergency based.

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For more information on any of the services available please contact the office on 0800 085 0407 or visit the company's website at [www.call24hour.com](http://www.call24hour.com).

**If you are interested in advertising in the Senior Council magazine, please contact Sally on 01803 732678**



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### Delicious home delivered meals

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**Oakhouse FOODS**  
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THE shopping, preparation and cooking of a tasty and nutritious meal, day-in day-out, is for some a little tedious and for those with mobility difficulties, almost impossible.

Imagine the luxury of selecting your weeks meal requirements from a 100 page full colour menu, placing your order by a simple local phone call and then having it delivered direct to your door by a friendly driver who will even pack it away for you every week.

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A number of specialist diets are catered for including diabetic, low fat and gluten free. There is a delivery charge of £1 for orders under £30. This charge is only applicable to the frozen food and grocery orders. The service also now includes a huge range of essential everyday groceries, delivering everything from Corn Flakes to Pet Food along with the frozen meals.

As a family run business, Oakhouse Foods strive to offer the very best in quality food, old-fashioned reliable service and value for money. Oakhouse Foods are constantly striving to make life a little easier for their customers and have just launched the 'Liberty Range'. A huge selection of helpful aids for around the home, from easy grip scissors, long handled bathroom sponges to openers for every kind of bottle jar or carton.

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Are you looking at moving into a care home?

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My name is Maureen and I run the Infoline. When you call I will be the one answering your call and dealing with your enquiry. If I'm busy on the line, please leave a message and I will return your call. You can contact the Infoline by:



- Calling 0300 123 0705
- Emailing [gcs.infoline@guinness.org.uk](mailto:gcs.infoline@guinness.org.uk)
- Texting "GCS" to 78070 (texts will be charged at your standard rate)

I am happy to come and talk to any groups about the Infoline. I shall look forward to hearing from you.

*Maureen Jackman*

Maureen Jackman

**When needed, we're here to help.**

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## Response from Nick and 'Our Local Expert'

I wanted to thank you all for your help and involvement with Our local Expert, and to let you know the ways you have helped me (to help you). You have linked to my website from your main SCFD website – so that SCFD members who use the internet can find contact details of trustworthy local trades people online when they need them. Featuring in your magazine brought 4 or 5 responses from people providing genuine recommendations of trades people for us to feature – this sort of feedback is essential to ensure the integrity and quality of the listings in our guide.

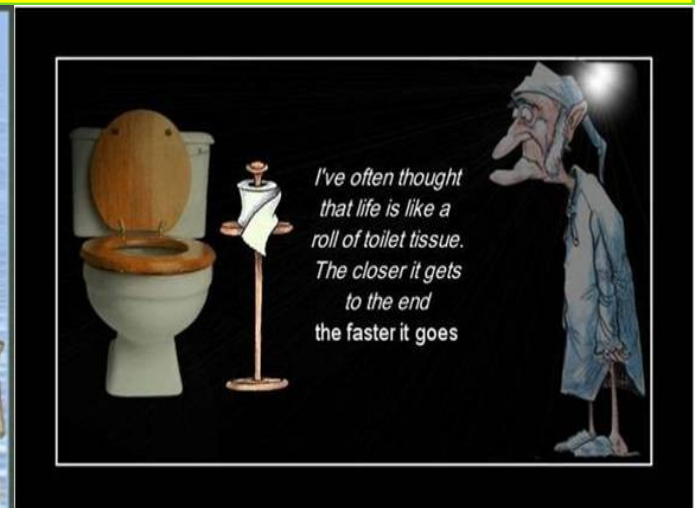
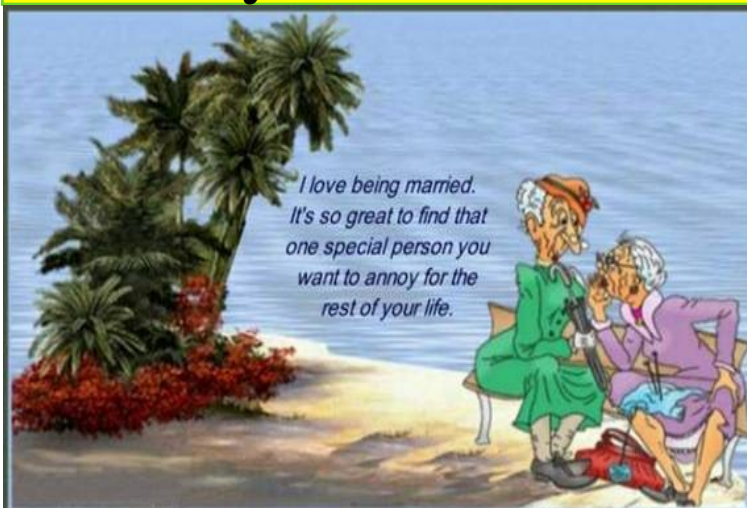
Unfortunately my ad in the latest edition of your magazine contained an incorrect phone number (my own mistake). The correct number is **01392 340304** or **01395 513869**.

I hope that my guide has succeeded in taking away some of the fear involved with inviting unknown and untested trades people to perform work at your home.

## A successful outcome regarding the future of cheques

Well done to Yvonne Wardrop who tirelessly continued raising the issue of the future of cheques both to the Payments Council and having her letters published in the press throughout Devon and nationally. She received a personal response from the Payments Council "We owe a great deal to organizations like yours, which have played an important role in helping us reach the correct decision on cheques". Yvonne has since received letters of thanks from members and also from outside the organization.

## To make you smile...



## Tips on Becoming a Carer



**Care Direct**  
Health & Social Care for Adults  
0845 1551 007

ALTHOUGH I had been a professional carer for all my working life, becoming a carer for a close relative has been quite a different experience. It has definitely increased my admiration for those of you who have uncomplainingly and selflessly taken on the role for years. Both Social Services and the Health Authority would crumble without you. Planning your life becomes very different!!! The

editor has asked me to put pen to paper and inform you of some of the things I have found out which may be of interest.

**Choosing a wheelchair.** I obtained a helpful leaflet from the Independent Living Centre. Tel: 01392 687276 plus a list of local suppliers. We contacted several of these, the interesting thing every one of them quoted a different price for the same chair? One of them offered to visit us in order to ensure we got the most suitable. Several of them offered a maintenance contract so research is imperative before you make a final decision. Of course you may also consider hiring.

**Alarm Pendants.** We used Care Direct (see below) to obtain numbers for this. The service they offered was good but you certainly had to wait for a considerable time prior to receiving a response. (SCfD are aware that there is a cost saving exercise in progress within this service.)

We were given three numbers to contact eventually we decided to use "Home Safe Guard" East Devon District Councils service. I am thrilled that we did. We had a pendant within four hours although we were informed this was not always the case - 24 hours is more the norm. The service was professional and discreet the annual rent £ 207.72 inclusive of VAT.

**Domiciliary care.** The next job has been to organise a pop in service so that we can attend meetings and have a social life. For this I used the telephone directory in order to choose a local agency. I selected Helping Hands, Exmouth as I knew of their good reputation and they have supported the Senior Council. They were really helpful and one of their managers will be with us next week to undertake an assessment and draw up a care plan. The cost of the service £ 14.75 per hour. However they did inform us that we could become members of **Carers Link** (08456 431341) thereby entitling us to vouchers from the **Take a Break Service Westbank (08456 431341)**. This allows for vouchers up to 2.5 hours per week that can be used in a flexible manner to suit your requirements.

We are delighted to be able to say that in our case the experience has been a positive one. The service we have received from Health Care Professionals has been of a really high quality. Of course everything was not perfect and I have sent a critical friend report to the RD and E Chief Executive and the Chief Nursing Officer. In the main this was to thank them for the services we received but it also pointed out some of the defects.

I do believe that by collecting and collating information of this nature the SCfD can truly make a difference to the services received by our members and others. Would you please let us know of your/your friends and relatives experiences in order for us to produce a document that would be helpful to all concerned.

Thank you.

*Gillie Newcombe*

## Top 3 tips for back pain relief

Leading expert reveals the secrets to taking care of your back without spending money on a specialist. As a country, we spend over 1 billion pounds a year treating our backs. Surprisingly less than 15% of back pain cases can be related to any serious injury or disease. This means that most of the time, dealing with back pain doesn't have to be an expensive problem. Here are 3 unconventional ways you can eliminate back pain in one month, without spending a penny on a specialist:

### 1. Stay active.

Although rest can be helpful, too much of it won't do you any good. The lack of movement slows down the flow of nutrients to the muscles and the tissues around the spine. This leaves your back weaker and less stable. Your back needs nutrients to get better, and the only way to get them is by staying active. As long as there is no heavy lifting in your daily routine, sticking to a routine will help you recover faster.

### 2. Breathe.

Breathing is the cheapest, most effective way to condition the muscles around your spine. If you exhale forcefully you can feel your stomach muscles clench. Being able to clench these muscles effectively is essential for a healthy back. You can work your way up from clenching for a few seconds as you exhale, to breathing normally as you clench for a whole 2 minutes.

### 3. Go Barefoot.

Elevating the heel off the floor forces our body to compensate for its change in posture. In most cases this leads to overarching the back. Wearing flat-soled shoes restores the body's natural alignment. If you already wear flat-sole shoes and still suffer from back pain then you might want to consider "barefoot" shoes. These special shoes allow your weight to be distributed through the sole of your foot just as nature intended.

For more information about managing back pain you can contact the Exeter Back Pain Clinic on **01392 246 818**. Their specialists offer free advice for people suffering from acute and chronic back pain. Alternatively, you can visit their website at **[www.exeterbackpainclinic.com](http://www.exeterbackpainclinic.com)**

## Don't Be Taken For A Ride! (When buying equipment for independence)



### Advice from Exeter's Independent Living Centre

WE'VE all been tempted by adverts in the papers, or leaflets pushed through our letter boxes, selling us a fantastic gadget that is going to change our lives. Sadly none of us are immune to the 'hard sell' which often results in an expensive mistake. When considering purchasing a piece of equipment designed to enhance your mobility, independence or safety in the home, a second opinion is important before any decisions are made and, more importantly, before any money changes hands or contracts signed.

Help is at hand at Devon's **Independent Living Centre** where the Occupational Therapists, employed by Northern Devon Healthcare Trust, offer a free service to help you find the right equipment to maintain independence and safety in all aspects of everyday living. **We don't sell equipment** so our advice is always impartial and given with your individual needs in mind. New equipment isn't always the answer, and a chat with an Occupational Therapist often helps to identify techniques to overcome the obstacles to independence thrown in your way by pain, reduced mobility or lack of energy so that you can get on with those essential tasks with renewed safety and independence.

The Centre is based in Exeter and if you make an appointment to visit you can talk to an Occupational Therapist and try out the many gadgets that we have on display; whether you need help to get out and about, keep clean, eat, drink, open a tin of beans, a bottle of beer, the front door or your bedroom curtains!

You can phone, write or send an email for information or to make an appointment to visit the centre to try out the equipment we have on display and to discuss your needs with the staff.

**The Independent Living Centre, Isca House, Haven Road, Exeter EX2 8DS, Tel: 01392 687276,**

Website [www.devon.gov.uk/ilc](http://www.devon.gov.uk/ilc) Email [ilc-exeter@devon.gov.uk](mailto:ilc-exeter@devon.gov.uk)

## Free Will-Writing Service

Are you worried about leaving a will, or concerned about the costs involved. At the moment you can make or update your Will for free and help save lives. The offer is open to all aged 50 or over. The Institute of Cancer Research has teamed up with local Solicitors to create a Will for Free scheme. You can get independent professional advice enabling you to make a basic will or update an existing one and it won't cost you a penny, the Institute of Cancer Research will bear the cost. All they ask is that you leave a donation to them to help fund future research although you are under no obligation to do so. There are a list of local solicitors to choose from including solicitors in Exeter, Axminster, Barnstaple and Exmouth. So long as you or your partner are aged 50 or over you qualify for the Will for Free offer. For further information and a list of solicitors taking part in your area, please send your name and postal address to [legacy@icr.ac.uk](mailto:legacy@icr.ac.uk)

## Free Nordic Walking Taster Sessions

### An effective way to maintain health and fitness

Fiona Swan, fully qualified instructor, is working with Age UK to offer a number of FREE Nordic Walking taster sessions for anyone over the age of 60. Nordic Walking poles provided. Just wear general sports kit and flexible soled shoes such as trainers. Dates and times of free taster sessions. Held at Haldon Forest Park - Exeter on Saturday 15th October - 11.30 - 12.15 am and Wed 12th October - 11.30 - 12.15 am.

To find out more and to reserve your place call Fiona on 01626 890120 or 07531 729383. Web [www.nordicwalkingdevon.co.uk](http://www.nordicwalkingdevon.co.uk)

## To make you smile...



### SEX AT 73!

**I just took a leaflet out of my mailbox, informing me that I can have sex at 73!**

**I'm so happy, because I live at number 67... so it's not far to walk home afterwards!**

## Co-Housing



IN the July 2011 edition of *Mature Times*, Terry Waite's column is entitled 'Let's put care before profit' and, commenting on the recent crisis of the ill-fated Southern Cross, he says, "The whole question of responsible care for the elderly in society is an issue of grave concern." There can be few members of Senior Councils across the UK who do not agree with him. Alarms bells have been set ringing. One of the aims of Senior Council for Devon is to monitor the 'externalisation' (sale) of Devon County Council's care homes. This asset stripping of public services by financiers, at the expense of vulnerable elderly residents, is deeply distasteful - shocking even. Moreover, whilst many homes are run well, by caring staff, there emerges, periodically, horror stories about

neglect in residential care homes. This begs the question 'Is there a better way? Should SCfD be researching alternative living situations for the over 50s? It's an ideal organisation for this kind of enquiry, made up of people who are wise with age, experience and hindsight.

The good news is that another way is possible. It's called Co-Housing - a type of housing that's growing increasingly popular in Europe (especially Denmark and Holland) and the USA. It's not communal living - everyone has their own front door and private living space - but there are shared facilities, guest rooms and a friendly, supportive community ethos whilst at the same time, preserving one's independence and privacy. It's eco-friendly too, sharing resources, transport, equipment etc. Here one need never be lonely or isolated, as one grows old.

The Threshold Centre, a successful mixed tenure cohousing development in Gillingham, Dorset, holds regular information weekends and shared meals on the first Sunday, plus open afternoons ([www.thethresholdcentre.org.uk](http://www.thethresholdcentre.org.uk)). The time is ripe for this kind of 'intentional neighbourhood' living. Maybe the Government's Localism Bill could assist cohousing projects to develop. It is proposing new powers for local communities to get involved with neighbourhood planning and the Right to Buy community assets. Currently the SCfD funding group is asking for innovative ideas for new projects. Maybe one could be a 'Housing Options in Later Life' conference which could include one or two speakers from existing projects? Cohousing offers so much that is essential for a safe, happy and productive older age.

**To register your interest in exploring cohousing further**, please email SCfD administrator Sally Lougher on [info@scfd.org.uk](mailto:info@scfd.org.uk) or phone her on 01803 732678. For more information visit [www.cohousing.org.uk](http://www.cohousing.org.uk) or read '**The Senior Co-Housing Handbook**' by Charles Durrett (New Society Publishers 2009) ISBN 978-086571-661-7 (available on Amazon).

*Rita Hills & Paula Kovacs, SCfD members, Crediton & District area*

## The Future for Housing Support in Devon

TRADITIONALLY, Sheltered Housing schemes have been supported by resident wardens. However this practice is no longer financially viable unless the residents are willing to pay considerable sums for a warden service. Those willing to pay such sums are looking for a more holistic service - such as is now termed "Extra Care".

Devon County Council have recognised this and adopted a strategy to provide nineteen Extra Care facilities across the county by 2020. Each location would have around fifty flats (mainly two-bed) with kitchenettes but also a communal dining hall. All this would be in close proximity to medical facilities and an on-site on-call service. These are NOT Care Homes.

This still leaves the question of how best to support/enable others in the community to live "independently". DCC are considering three main options and, in consultation with the District Councils and Housing Associations (now Residential Social Landlords - RSLs), expect to make some definite recommendations early in 2012 to be implemented over the year to April 2013. The three options are:

- a) "As is" - meaning that support services are tied to tenure, available as an option for those in Sheltered Housing but (in practice) denied to those not so housed. Only 4% of the resource addresses the latter.
- b) A "Support Contract" whereby people could be assessed for Housing support needs irrespective of tenure. A "trusted assessor" would then make a referral to an appropriate service deliverer.
- c) The assessment for Housing-related support could be extended to a wider set of potential needs - forming a "one stop shop" for Older People to access housing support, information and advice. This widens the assessment beyond purely Housing matters and presents the challenge of "joined up" delivery of services to the individual.

Continued...

Continued ...

Clearly the holistic approach (c) is more attractive to the individual BUT only if it works! An effective option (b) may be preferable to a chaotic (c)! Some residents of Sheltered Housing currently get support that they do not need (or want in some cases) and so a move to option (b) or (c) would, in theory, allow the overall resources to be more fairly allocated.



This is still "work-in-progress". Please get in touch with me via SCfD if you would like more detail or wish to get your views heard. Contact should preferably be in writing so that your views (anonymously!) can be fed into the review of the options and identification of problems needing solutions.

My direct e-mail address is: alanr555@waitrose.com

*Alan Rayner, Vice Chairman, Bideford*

## Readers' Contributions

### BY ROYAL APPOINTMENT

AS Chair of the Culm Valley Senior Council I have found it very difficult to have meetings that are truly representative of the large number of villages that make up the Culm Valley in the area. This is partly for geographical reasons and partly because many of them traditionally don't communicate with one another. We also have connections with Tiverton and Crediton because we all come under Mid Devon Council, but whereas our cluster manager for the Complex Care Team is shared with Crediton, our Age UK and UNITE (carers) offices are in Tiverton. The answer I have found has been to invest a lot of time into networking with the voluntary agencies that deal with the over 50s, the local health services, Age UK and to build a collaborative relationship with Crediton and Tiverton Senior Councils so that we can put on bigger events jointly.

The one place that we can be really proud of in Cullompton is the Integrated Health Centre. The Doctors have had a vision for a GP practice that supports the Health and Well being of its patients, and looks to alternative medicine and the development of community groups to enhance the well being of people in the area. There is a Cafe on the site and for the last three years the practice have supported a project that employs a Health and Wellbeing Facilitator, using the Cafe as the hub. She has been a wonderful resource to the Senior Council and has enabled me to tap into a number of other organisations for ideas and ways of contacting vulnerable older citizens.

Never underestimate the power of net-working! A month ago I was invited to meet Prince Charles and Camilla at the Health Centre where a number of us were able to tell the Prince about the work that we do in the community. I had a good chance to explain to him what the Senior Council was about ( in five sentences – you try it ! ) As he left our group, he turned back and said "Jolly well done – carry on the good work". "Well, we are trying your highness"!

*Ann McClements*

## A New Reformation

ALTHOUGH the inequities of phone hacking by the News of the World and its parent companies should take high priority I hope there will be a wider investigation into the conduct of the British press generally.

The disclosures of the police misdemeanours vis-à-vis the press is another issue that will not go away. Addressing this we are told will be part and parcel of a comprehensive interrogation of current practices. Let's hope so. The ineffective procedures related to lodging complaints against the press is another important item for proper consideration but the functioning of a mature democracy is more than having a press observing professional and ethical standards. If the country has been shocked and shamed by the revelations relating to the press let us also hope that the experience will begin to trigger a wider awareness of what should constitute a fair power-sharing democratic society.



As the SCfD let us play our full designated part in improving the all-round standards of services and legislative procedures.

*Bill Jordan, President*

## Interesting Snippet - Dorothy Tyler

DOROTHY Tyler isn't sure whether she will be going to the London Olympics. If she does someone will have to send a car. At 91 Dorothy finds buses tricky. She might be hearing from Lord Coe, after all she won the silver medal for the High Jump in the Berlin Olympics in 1936. In Dorothy's day the landing area for the High Jump was a strip of sand. There was a special technique for landing on a solid surface, but broken ankles were common. The Berlin Olympics were significant for Jessie Owen winning four gold medals and for Hitler refusing to present them to Owens because he was a black man.

Dorothy is still a national hero and should be taken to the stadium in style.

*Alan Saddler, Totnes*

## Do anything interesting in your summer holidays?



HONITON member Tony Simpson was nearly enrolled in the French Foreign Legion when his Rhine Cruise got stuck at Strasbourg, near the Legion's recruiting office. Like all little boys Tony read Beau Geste and saw Abbot and Costello in the Desert Song and fancied wearing the Kepi. Unfortunately things did not go to plan as the following ditty, performed to 100 passengers, describes:

### Esprit de Corp

*'There was a ('young') man from Blaina  
Who decided to cruise down the Rhine - ah (audience sighs)  
Got stuck at Strasbourg  
Was hit by a berg  
And began to think of things finer.*

*Our friend from Wales had a plan  
Had once been acquainted with a man  
When encountering drift  
Take action, and shift  
Join comrades, get 'corps esprit' said Stan*

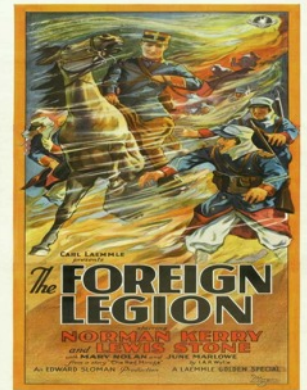
*'The Legion is for you'  
said the man he once knew  
The answer to many vexations  
Whenever your stuck  
or down on your luck  
the Legion will welcome all stations*

*Our man left his cruise  
his wife, even his booze  
And offered himself to the cause  
'Merci... non M'sieur' said the Capitan of gate  
'Mon Ami for you it is too late'*

*The boyo stood on the burning deck  
reflecting on his fate  
He text his mate 'to late to late'  
to join the Foreign Legion  
'I'm not surprised, his buttly replied  
I meant the BRITISH LEGION'!*

Tony says 'This actually happened; I was given the forms at the recruiting HQ by a very confused young officer in fatigues. He consulted his Commander who fortunately had a sense of humour. He said I was too young and needed parents permission under18! I

said I decided not to join as no-one was wearing the kepi and epaulettes, which was after all the only reason I wanted to join. I learned a lot - including it takes only 12 days to be selected (the length of my holiday), cut off age has been reduced to 40 years of age (my grandad died at 43 in Flanders). Selection is very strict - they are very fussy considering FFL has been described as 'France's mercenary army'.



*Tony Simpson, Secretary Honiton Group*

## Obituary printed in the London Times - Interesting and sad

TODAY we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, **Common Sense**, who has been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was, since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape. He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as:

- Knowing when to come in out of the rain;
- Why the early bird gets the worm;
- Life isn't always fair;
- and maybe it was my fault.

**Common Sense** lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you can earn) and reliable strategies (adults, not children, are in charge). His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well-intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a 6-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate; teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch; and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student, only worsened his condition. **Common Sense** lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job that they themselves had failed to do in disciplining their unruly children.

It declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer sun lotion or an aspirin to a student; but could not inform parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion. **Common Sense** lost the will to live as the churches became businesses; and criminals received better treatment than their victims. **Common Sense** took a beating when you couldn't defend yourself from a burglar in your own home and the burglar could sue you for assault.

**Common Sense** finally gave up the will to live, after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little in her lap and was promptly awarded a huge settlement.

**Common Sense** was preceded in death, by his parents, Truth and Trust, by his wife, Discretion, by his daughter, Responsibility, and by his son, Reason.

He is survived by his 4 stepbrothers: **I Know My Rights, I Want It Now, Someone Else Is To Blame and I'm A Victim**

**Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone. If you still remember him, show this to someone else. If not, join the majority and do nothing.**

## House of Lords' Reform



Given the possible impasse regarding the Government's Bill to reform the House of Lords and, knowing the history of past attempts to modernise the Second Chamber, has the time not come to drop bicameral legislating altogether?

Of course, in a meaningful democracy, there must be an appropriate way for governments to be held to account and for legislation to be fully researched and validated. So is it really the case that a Second Chamber is necessary in order to ensure that a government may function in the best interests of its people? Has the case for a single Chamber been fully investigated?

There are, I believe, enough well-established examples around the world of uni-cameral systems for a balanced judgment to be made of their all-round effectiveness. At the moment - and after 100 years of cogitation - the proposal is for the reformed House of Lords to comprise 300 members - 80% elected and 20% appointed, with the Church of England bishops retaining 12 places.

It is proposed that the transition from the present system will be in three stages starting in 2015. The intention is for the majority of Life Peers to be appointed for their expertise.

If the proposed House of Lords' Reform Bill does 'run into deep grass', is it being too impetuous to suggest that a serious attempt is made to lay out the ground rules for a single Chamber? Such an exercise would, in any case, be of value in that it would be necessary to show how expert advice, research and public opinion would inform the business of Parliament. Select Committees would perhaps play a central role but crucially there would be no doubt as to primacy.

*Bill Jordan, President*

## The Long Arm Of Coincidence

When I started writing books for children I knew I would need an illustrator. I need not have worried. I was soon made to understand that publishers had teams of illustrators and would be doing the matching themselves. When I got to the publishers they said "We know who we want to illustrate your books. His name is Adolphe Borne and he lives in Czech-Slovakia." That was all they knew. They hadn't got an address for Adolphe Borne and no way of communicating with him. As time went on it became clear that the publishers had given up on the elusive Borne and found a British artist to do the job. Hang on to this as it is only one part of the story.



The second piece of the tale takes place two years on when I received a letter from Stephane Furtonov at the House of Humour and Satire. In case you think I am making this up I will direct you to a small town in Bulgaria called Gabrovo. It has a river but otherwise normal except that it prides itself on being mean. The town's coat of arms is an egg with a tap, so you don't have to use the thing in one go. Gabrovo wanted to twin with Aberdeen, but the Scots were not keen. The House of Humour and Satire is a three storey museum of jokes in the form of cartoons, sculptures, comic books, songs, films and religious icons. As most of the captions are in Cyrillic you might find the jokes obscure, I had been invited to the annual festival. Guarding the door was a sheet metal version of Artful Peta, a folk hero from the past sitting backwards on his horse. Artful eh? Stephan Furtonov, a jolly balding man who can laugh in Cyrillic and is proud of his town's reputation of meanness, and points out that statues of prominent citizens are sited in the river to save using up land space. I told him Jack Benny's highwayman joke. Highwayman "Your money of your life?". Pause "Come. On your money Benny. "Wait a minute, I'm thinking". I thought this was appropriate, but it may have lost something in the translation. After arriving three hours late for the annual dinner because of a fractious LADA I was introduced to the Press Secretary, a Mr Popov. He said "Mr Saddler, we will stay together until the end of this festival." I never saw him again. Enquiries brought the knowledge that Popov was like Smith at home.



Now I am getting to the point of this rambling discourse. For the annual festival funny men were invited from all over the world. They all looked very serious, mostly gloomy. That night I went to bed with huge piles of obscure cartoons. In the morning I went down to breakfast and sat down next to Adolphe Borne, who had been given a prize for his illustrations of children's books.

*Allen Saddler, Totnes*

***Editor's note: The views expressed in these articles, letters are the opinions of the writers and should in no way be attributed to the Senior Council for Devon Board or staff members.***

# Fun/Useful Websites

# Senior Council for Devon Diary Dates



## Websites for 50s+

[www.life-over-50.com](http://www.life-over-50.com)  
[www.sagazone.co.uk](http://www.sagazone.co.uk)  
[www.silversurfers.net](http://www.silversurfers.net)  
[www.saga.co.uk](http://www.saga.co.uk)  
[www.moneysavingexpert.com](http://www.moneysavingexpert.com)  
[www.tasstavistock.org.uk](http://www.tasstavistock.org.uk)  
[www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)  
[www.u3a.org.uk](http://www.u3a.org.uk)  
 The Devonshire Association (notably Folklore & Dialect) - [www.devonassoc.org.uk](http://www.devonassoc.org.uk)  
 The Association of Retired Professional and Business Personnel [www.ukprobus.org](http://www.ukprobus.org)  
 Care Direct [www.devon.gov.uk/caredirect.html](http://www.devon.gov.uk/caredirect.html)  
 Devon County Council Leaflets and Factsheets: [www.devon.gov.uk/index/socialcarehealth/factsheets.htm](http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/socialcarehealth/factsheets.htm)

**Board Meetings 2011 Fridays**  
 30th September, 28th October, 25th November, 16th December

**Crediton Intergenerational Conference**  
 12th November, Boniface Centre, Crediton EX17 2AH

**AGM - 25th October Isca Centre (see below)**

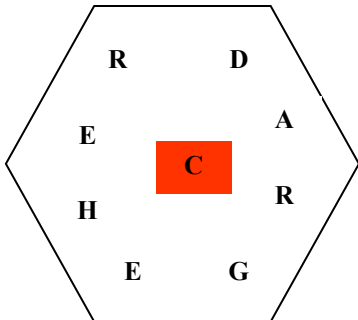
**Assembly Meetings - February 2012 the Isca Centre, Summer Lane, Exeter EX4 8NT**

**Don't forget to have a look at our website at home or in the library:**  
[www.seniorcouncildevon.org.uk](http://www.seniorcouncildevon.org.uk)

## And finally - Use it or lose it!!



A) Using the letters in the boxes below only once make as many 4 or more letter words always using the central letter



		1		



B) Numbers Game  
 What comes next?

15	9	24	17	41	33	74	65	?
3	6	4	12	9	36	32	160	?

C) Using all the numbers 1-25 complete the grid so that all the rows, columns and diagonals add up to 65. Number 1 has been placed for you.

## The Last Laugh ...



Answers: A) char, crag, card, care, cheer, cage, race, dace, cede, charred, charged, creed, reach, cedar, grace, arch, arched, ache, ached, reached, racer, recharge, char, acer, each, raced, charger, carter, acre, carter, cree, B) 139, 155 C) 9, 11, 18, 5, 22 - 3, 25, 7, 14, 16 - 12, 19, 1, 23, 10 - 21, 8, 15, 17, 4 - 20, 2, 24, 6, 13