

**SENIOR COUNCIL FOR DEVON**

**STRATEGIC PLAN**

**FOR THE PERIOD**

**JAN 2011 TO MARCH 2014**

**DRAFT**

# Senior Council for Devon Strategic Plan

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# DRAFT SENIOR COUNCIL FOR DEVON STRATEGIC PLAN

## 1. Executive Summary

This challenging strategic plan has been developed to ensure that the aims and objective of the SCfD (Senior Council for Devon) in the representation of people over the age of 50 in Devon is met in the most efficient and effective way. It also concentrates on ensuring that funds are used in the most effective way to achieve these aims and objectives.

The SCfD is unique in that it has a countywide network of groups active in identifying problems experienced by older people in the county and taking steps to find solutions to them, both through direct action and more importantly through its wide range of partners who provide specialist help and advice in a wide range of areas.

This three year plan aims to focus actions in the areas in which the Executive through its groups and members, now almost 2000, have identified as key areas where improvements can be made to facilities or conditions that will have a positive impact on the quality of life for older people across the County. Considerable care has been taken when agreeing actions to ensure that the SCfD does not duplicate areas covered by other organisations and to ensure that any problems identified are dealt with in the most cost effective manner.

The organisation seeks to utilise the vast resource of experience and skills developed by older people over a long period of time that are currently not being used. This is both a significant waste of valuable resources, and also results in a lack of opportunity for older people to play an active role in the development and improvement of facilities and services which affect them both on a countywide basis and within their own local community.

The SCfD is the preferred partner for liaison between the older community of Devon and Devon County Council and the NHS, and has built up excellent relations with these organisations and with departments and officials within them.

## 2. Our Mission

The SCfD mission is

**“To reach out to the older population of Devon, especially the disadvantaged, vulnerable and those living in rural and urban isolation, and through effective communication with the appropriate authorities and organisations, at local, county and national levels, seek to identify and resolve their problems and enhance their quality of life”**

### **3. Objectives**

Our agreed objectives are to:

Provide a voice for the older people of Devon and ensure that they are properly represented in the formation of policy and service delivery.

Seek to improve and enhance their quality of life.

Play a positive active role in promoting ideas and solutions.

Continue to build working relationships with partnership organisations and to work together to promote the interests of older people, on a national, county and local level.

Utilise the life experience, skills and expertise of older people.

Promote cooperation and understanding across all generations.

Communicate and promote examples of best practice throughout the organisation.

### **4. Structure**

The SCfD was set up in March 2008 and is a registered company limited by guarantee. Company number 06538562. It is currently applying for charitable status.

Since its inception it has set up 19 groups in market towns across the county, see **Appendix 1**, and has a membership of just under 2000. One of its prime objectives is to ensure that it reaches the difficult to contact people in the rural areas across the county.

It has an Executive board of 10 who seek to develop and promote the organisations strategy and take lead roles in the development of structures to build and take forward key initiatives identified by members. It has regular monthly Board meetings to discuss and progress both operational and development matters.

Through an assembly of representatives from groups, which meets three times a year, it seeks to identify problems that exist in local areas and to promote positive examples of best practice across the County. These meetings also act as a vehicle to provide up to date information on matters of interest to older people throughout the county.

Sub committees reporting to the Executive have been formed to deal with areas of special interest to the older generation and to assist the Executive in ensuring the effective operation of the organisation.

At present sub committees exist covering the following areas:

Health & Social Services  
Ageing Well development group  
Transport  
Funding & sustainability  
Health & Social Care  
Capacity Building Promotion & Marketing  
Search, Communications and standards

Due to the current financial constraints consideration is being given to the development of a Finance sub group to identify and deal with members problems. This would normally be by referral to appropriate authorities and service providers such as the CAB.

**All Executive members, key area budget holders, sub group members, group officers and members providing help and assistance do so on a completely voluntary basis.**

## **5. Administration**

The organisation currently employs 3 members of staff. An Administrator and an Assistant Administrator undertake a significant range of tasks and play an active role in the development of the organisation. They also ensure that a telephone service is available from 09.00 to 5.00pm throughout the week. In addition a Development Officer seeks to raise the profile of the organisation, establish new groups and provide support for existing groups.

For staffing structure see **Appendix II**. These employees are spread throughout the county and work from home based offices.

At present approximately 32% of the organisation's income is spent on administration.

## **6. Training**

The need to provide suitable training for the Executive, staff, group chairmen, treasurers, secretaries and project leaders has been recognised as a core requirement in the development of the organisation and an appropriate budget to ensure maximum value is being developed.

## **7. Funding**

The organisation is currently funded by DCC and has a three year service contract with the DCC/PCT which expires on 31 March 2011. Although a wish to continue to support the SCfD has been communicated, in the current financial climate it is unlikely that a new contract will result in funding at a similar level.

To ensure the protection of the substantial work and investment in the setting up of a strong organisation with a network of groups across the county a Funding and Sustainability group has recently been formed to seek the necessary funds to continue to support the operation and to work towards a position of self sustainability.

Discussions are in hand to form a Consortium together with the providers of voluntary services to Devon County Council for which a combined service delivery contract is planned.

## **8. Key Areas**

The organisation has identified a number of key areas of particular interest and often concern, to older people in the county or which play an important role in the operation and development of the organisation, for which leads have been appointed and budgets allocated as follows:

Capacity building, Promotion and Marketing  
Health and Social Care  
Housing  
Intergenerational  
Shows and Events  
Transport

For reporting structure see **Appendix III**.

Detailed plans of the actions and targets set for these areas, together with detailed budgets, are provided under a separate heading. For further details on Key area activities see **Appendix IV**.

## **9. Objectives for year one**

- To improve communication strategies with each other, the groups and others
- To increase membership
- To talk and liaise with other organisations to establish how we might work in partnership
- Preventative Health and Reablement facilities and development to be a prime aim
- To consolidate the good work undertaken on dementia and memory café's
- To push for the recognition of problems faced by the elderly and the vulnerable in rural areas, due to the closure of, shops, post offices, reduction of bus services and the reduction of library services
- To monitor planning applications across the county that put further demands on resources or affect the elderly.
- Monitor the transfer of Health service provision to GP Consortiums

- To contact those living in Residential Care and Nursing Homes
- To continue to develop Intergenerational relationships
- Respond to requests from members, groups, local and County Council, for information relating to senior citizens
- Promote the SCfD at County and local shows
- Hold a Health and Well Being conference.
- To undertake these objectives within the allotted budget.

## **10. The next two years**

Over the following two years the SCfD will:

- Endeavour to achieve sustainable funding
- Seek to raise its profile
- Continue to develop its work in the recognised key areas
- Continue to increase its membership
- Increase the number of local groups to 29
- Continue to Develop working relationships
- Seek income streams for survey and other work of benefit to the older population of Devon.
- Continue to promote the use of Age Resources
- Respond to new challenges and changes affecting elderly people across Devon
- Continue to act as a voice for the older population of Devon
- Continue to promote health and well being
- Continue to monitor the changes in the delivery of health services
- Consolidate the work undertaken in Mental Health and Dementia
- Continue to monitor the sale of county council care homes and its effect on local communities

## 11. Past Achievements

Since its inception in March 2008 the SCfD has behind it an impressive list of achievements including:

- Consultation by Government and contributions to white papers
- Worked for three years with Devon County Council in the development of effective strategies to meet the needs of older people in the County
- Helped to raise the standard of Dementia care
- Worked to bridge the generation gap
- Establishes groups in 19 market towns
- Helped befriending schemes for the elderly and bereaved
- Worked for safer streets and better disabled parking
- Campaigned for improved bus services.
- Developed and supported local memory cafés for dementia sufferers

For more definitive list of achievements see **Appendix V**.

## 12. Age Resources

The skills and experience developed in a wide range of areas by people retiring from full time employment is recognised as a serious loss of substantial resources. The SCfD already utilise these skills across the County with an estimated 200 members contributing on a voluntary basis to its work.

The SCfD is dedicated to become more proactive in its recruitment of retiring staff, by actively promoting the work and opportunities that exists, within the SCfD, in the drive for the improvement of conditions and facilities for the elderly. Presentations will be made and literature given to people about to retire from large companies, schools, health services and GP surgeries as well as County and local councils and via smaller business organisations etc. Plans will be drawn up for a coordinated, targeted distribution of literature followed by visits to arrange an ongoing series of presentations.

The productive use of this Age Resource will play an important role in the SCfD development and success in future years.

**SENIOR COUNCIL FOR DEVON**

**Established Groups**

**Axminster**

**Barnstaple**

**Bideford/Northam**

**Crediton**

**Culm Valley (Cullompton)**

**Dawlish**

**Exeter (County town)**

**Exmouth**

**Great Torrington**

**Holsworthy**

**Honiton**

**Ivybridge**

**Kingsbridge**

**Newton Abbot & Kingsteignton**

**Okehampton**

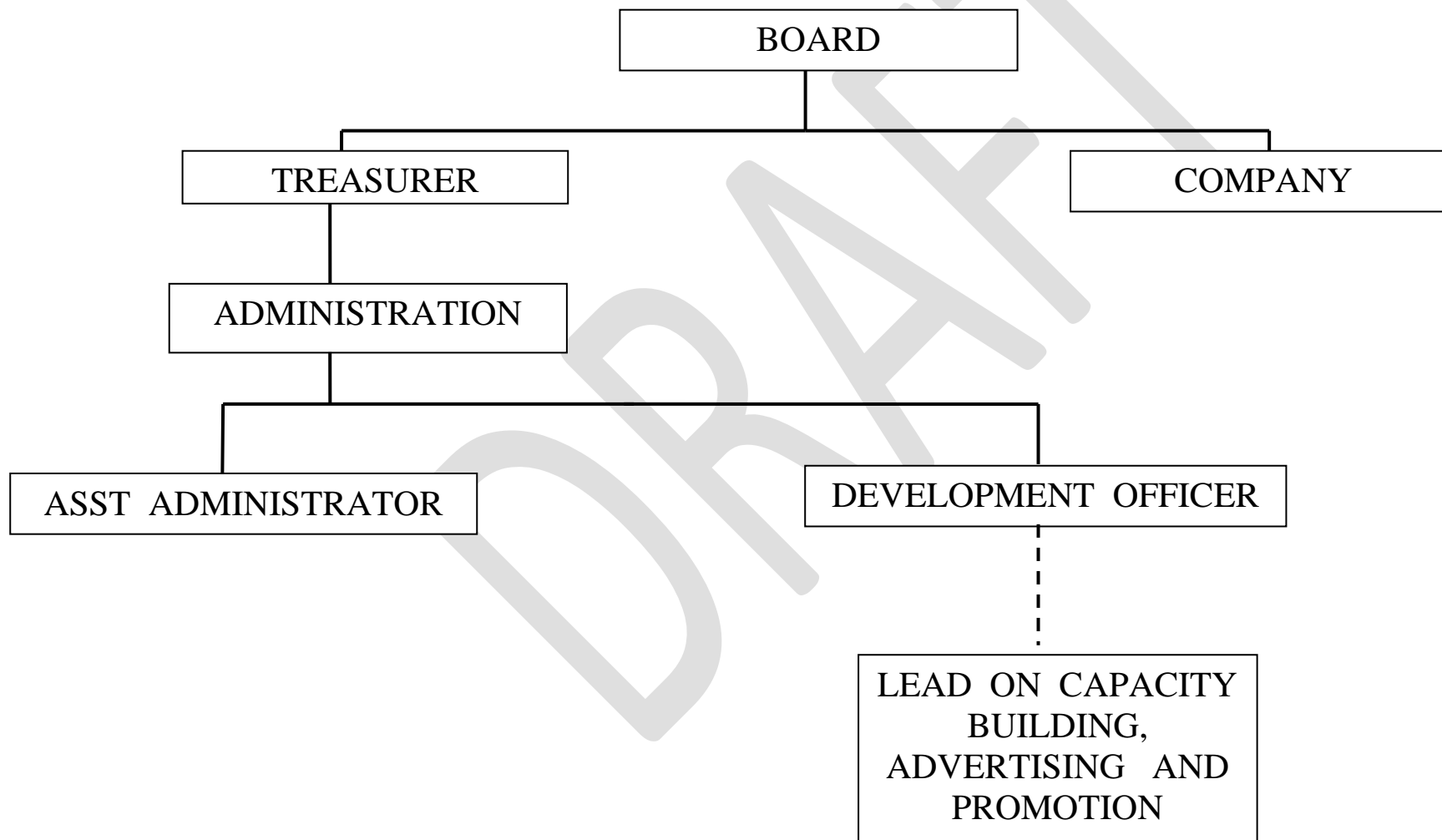
**Seaton**

**Tavistock**

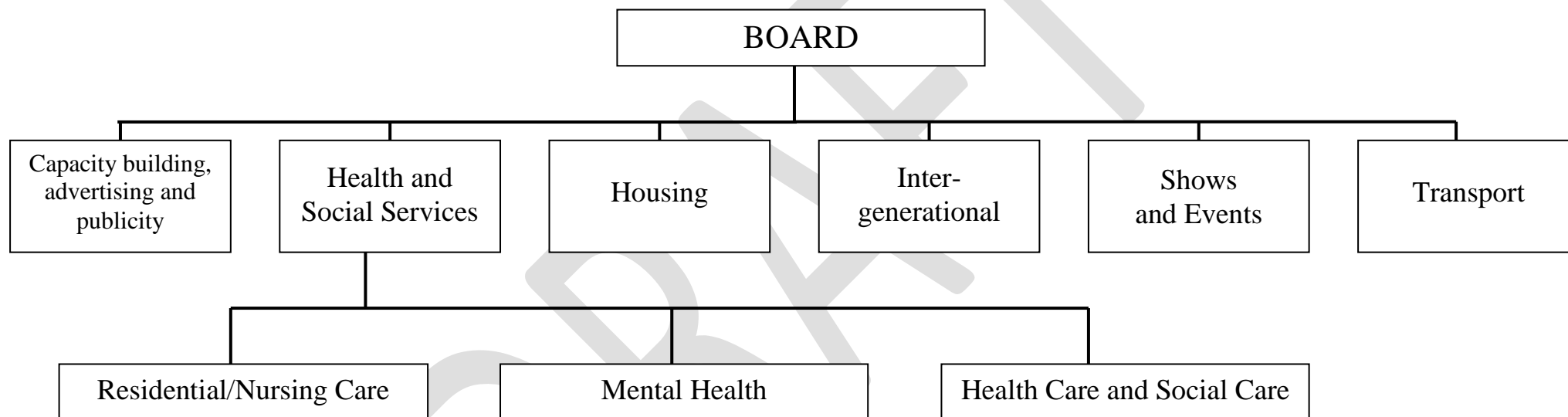
**Teignmouth**

**Tiverton**

## ORGANISATION CHART - OPERATIONAL



# LEADS/KEY AREAS BUDGET HOLDERS



### KEY AREA INFORMATION

#### Health & Social Care

This is an area of special significance to the older inhabitants of Devon with a widely spread rural population and covers diverse areas of medical and health requirements. To facilitate appropriate cover this will be broken down into three separate areas, health and social care, residential and nursing care and mental health. The leads from these areas will report to one overall lead.

Although the provision of services will be closely monitored, in particular the new GP consortiums performance, special emphasis will be placed on encouraging the development of preventative measures and initiatives.

The main group will meet every other month to review the progress of the development of the most appropriate frameworks to deal with their areas of responsibility, and to share information provided by service users and providers. Group objectives will develop from initial research but will include the identification of gaps in service provision, poor delivery of services and effective utilisation of resources.

Area groups will play an important role in identifying these elements in their localities and in feeding them back to the appropriate leads to enable the relevant authorities to be alerted.

Objective for the first 15 months will include:

- Prevention and enablement
- Development of communication and co-operation strategies
- Consolidation of work undertaken on dementia and review general mental health service provision
- Promotion of recognition of health service requirement of the elderly and vulnerable, in particular in rural areas
- Monitoring the effects of the changes in the NHS services in respect of patient choice, GP purchasing etc
- Contact those living in Residential and Nursing homes
- Monitor the effects to the local community and residents of the sale of council homes
- Two dementia events to be held per annum

#### Capacity Building, Advertising and Promotion.

The development of full coverage across the County is a prime objective with particular emphasis on reaching small and isolated rural communities.

To promote the work being undertaken by the SCfD it will be necessary to raise the profile of the organisation, and in addition to local initiatives plans are in hand to take advantage of TV, radio, electronic and press media.

The SCfD has an active web site [www.seniorcouncildevon.org.uk](http://www.seniorcouncildevon.org.uk) providing information on the topics of importance and interest to the elderly population of Devon together with useful links. Details are also provided of local group's activities together with contact information.

It is planned to develop more links in each direction to and from service providers throughout the county as well as sites providing useful information on a wide range of topics including, health, leisure, education etc.

Special emphasis will be placed on the development of routes available to develop computer skills to enable the elderly to take advantage of information on the web. This will include how to place orders for essential supplies.

To enable the SCfD to act as a prime conduit in the establishment of the needs of the elderly across Devon it is dedicated to increasing its membership across the county. A multi media approach will be adopted to further this objective as well as the attendance at county and area country shows and fairs.

The improvement of communication both internal and external will be subject to ongoing review and development, as will the identification and liaison with other partnership organisations.

Support will be given to local groups to assist in their development together with guidance on how to improve functionality.

Objectives for the first 15 months will include.

- The increase in the number of groups from 19 to 24
- Development of the web site
- The updating and issue of the resources pack
- The increase in membership to 3000
- The promotion of closer working relationships with local and parish councils
- Development of attractive promotional leaflets, folders and displays

To achieve these objectives the Development Officer works in close liaison with the key area lead.

A full month by month working plan is available on request.

## **Housing.**

This is likely to become an area of increasing importance as the measures to repay the national debt begin to take effect. Coupled with the increase in the cost of basic services, petrol, food and clothing it will bring considerable hardship in meeting the repayment of mortgages and rent. Many elderly people throughout the County survive on a very low income with little or very low disposal income. It is important to have a network in place that will identify elderly people in severe financial difficulty and to provide signposts to appropriate assistance.

As the elderly population in the County continues to increase, the development of housing plans to enable them to continue to live in their local community is of utmost importance, and the SCfD plans to monitor this on a countywide basis and to liaise with the appropriate authorities to ensure that development keeps in step with demand.

The financial savings made by enabling individuals to remain in their own homes with supporting services available as long as is necessary, and the beneficial effect of this on their health have long been recognised, and care needs to be taken to ensure that this option is available to all.

It is recognised that the SCfD will need to do some extensive research to establish the needs, and put plans in place to provide the necessary assistance as the elderly population of the County continues to grow.

Objectives for the first 15 months:

- Develop a team to review the position throughout the County
- Identify potential problem areas
- Ensure that proposed supply will meet anticipated demand
- Develop an ongoing review program
- Become an established organisation as a signpost to assistance

### **Intergenerational.**

The importance of bridging the age gap between the older population and the youth of the County is recognised as an important objective. Over the past year the SCfD has worked with the Devon Youth Service to generate a better understanding of the problems experienced by these age groups.

In November the SCfD held a most successful event in conjunction with the Devon Youth Service and Young Devon which was well attended and much appreciated by both the young and elderly from across the County and did much to dispel the myths and negative opinions often attributed to these age groups.

An Annual Review meeting in October raised the following points:

- The need to lobby for matters of mutual interest
- How to get young people involved
- Spending more time on community activities and less time on computers
- How SCfD can learn from, and better understand, the youth of today
- How contacts can be made on a regular basis with schools and Youth Services to arrange activities such as computer training for the elderly by the young, and citizen days for both the young and elderly.

These points will be addressed by the group in the year ahead.

Following on from this success the intergeneration group will meet quarterly to develop and monitor a strategy to continue to improve understanding and cooperation between these two age groups. It will liaise with SCfD groups throughout the County as well as County Councillors, Social Services, Devon Youth Service, Young Devon, the Beth Johnson Foundation and other Youth and Elderly groups and organisations.

A further two conferences are planned as joint ventures with the Devon Youth Service in November 2011 and March 2012.

### **Shows, Events and Meetings.**

In Devon the local country show is recognised as one of the prime events on the country calendar. It attracts many visitors often from remote rural locations for whom this event is one of the few social gatherings during the year. They are therefore seen as an excellent opportunity of communicating with the County's hard to reach rural community.

The show season commences with the prestigious Devon County Show, a four day show which is held at Westpoint close to Exeter in May each year. This is by far the largest show in the county and attended by many thousands of people from all walks of life from across the County. Although it is primarily an agricultural show it attracts a diverse mix of

visitors. This, together with the other local shows, affords an ideal shop window for the SCfD to promote its activities, as well as establishing problem areas by inviting visitors to comment on matters adversely affecting the quality of their lives. They also present an ideal opportunity to increase the membership and find additional help in strengthening local groups to play a more active part in seeking to improve local conditions. During the year it is planned to attend the following shows:

- Axe Vale ( East Devon)
- Mid Devon (Tiverton)
- North Devon (Barnstaple area)
- Honiton (East Devon)
- Okehampton ( West Devon)
- Chagford (Dartmoor)
- Holsworthy ( West Devon)

In addition to the local shows it is planned to hold mini conferences on either a regional or local authority basis. These events will be organised by the participating groups together with assistance from the shows and events team.

Internal meetings include Quarterly Assembly meetings to which all groups are invited. These provide an excellent opportunity for group members to receive updates on matters of interest to the older community and on the progress of SCfD initiatives. They also provide an ideal opportunity for members across the County to share good practice and information. These meetings are well attended and productive.

An AGM is held early each year which in addition to formal Company business provides an excellent forum for members to put forward and vote on resolutions of importance to the SCfD in a democratic manner.

The professional manner in which both local shows and internal meetings are held is seen as a strong incentive to encourage action at local level and to attract new members.

### **Transport.**

Transport is of vital importance to the elderly population of the County and in particular those in remote rural areas, who might still only have access to public transport on one day a week. The problem of the profitability of rural services is appreciated but with the demise of local shops, post offices and other services needs to be addressed and monitored on a regular basis in conjunction with the availability of transport services.

The importance of the protection of concessionary travel needs to be carefully protected as any inroads into its availability could have a significant effect on the quality of life for the elderly, and in particular those with no transport of their own on low pension incomes.

The development over recent years of local transport and Ring and Ride schemes has proved to be a considerable benefit to the older age group and further development should be encouraged.

The Transport Group meet on a quarterly basis to identify the outcomes of any planned actions, to exchange information on actions around the County and to deal with any problems referred to them by Groups.

Plans for the year ahead include:

- Keeping an eye on national policy and evaluating its effect on the local community
- Reviewing and taking action on local changes
- Dealing with matters of concern on services throughout the County.

### **Funding and sustainability.**

The funding group meet on a monthly basis to identify potential funding streams and to make applications for funds. Although Devon County Council wish to continue to support the SCfD reliance on a single source of funding is recognised as a weakness.

The SCfD recent application for charitable status is seen as vital for the raising of future funds. See item 7 for further comments.

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## PAST ACHIEVEMENTS

### Nationally, we have:

- ✓ Been consulted by the Government on a number of health and transport issues
- ✓ Joined the South West Regional Forum on Ageing in Devon

### At county level, we have:

- ✓ Ten representatives working in the Older People's Strategic Partnership with policy makers at Devon County Council and NHS Devon on identifying priorities for older people, and developing effective strategies to improve services to meet their needs
- ✓ Held two successful and informative Dementia-awareness Days
- ✓ Held consultations and information fairs on the Ageing Well in Devon Strategy
- ✓ Responded to consultations on the National Dementia Strategy and became a member of the Devon Dementia Partnership Group
- ✓ Printed and distributed 6,000 copies of the *Dementia Carer's Pathway*
- ✓ Lobbied against the closure of post offices and pharmacies in GP surgeries
- ✓ Participated in a Putting People First focus group, improving the quality of Devon County Council's public information
- ✓ Become part of a proof-reading group to make DCC's information more user-friendly
- ✓ Held a successful conference to consider how we have moved on since 2007, broadcast live on BBC Radio Devon
- ✓ Been involved in a new affordable Village Housing Initiative in South Devon
- ✓ Worked to bridge the generation gap. A very successful intergenerational event in partnership with Devon Youth Service and Young Devon was held in November 2010. It was opened by John Hart, Leader of Devon County Council, and attended by 150 older and younger people. We are hopeful that this is the beginning of joint working with young people across the county

### Locally, we have:

- ✓ Established groups in the following 19 towns and districts: Axminster, Barnstaple, Bideford/Northam, CREDITON, Cullompton/Culm Valley, Dawlish, Exeter, Exmouth, Great Torrington, Holsworthy, Honiton, Ivybridge, Kingsbridge, Newton Abbot/Kingsteignton, Okehampton, Seaton, Tavistock, Teignmouth and Tiverton
- ✓ Held 12 Information Fairs
- ✓ Held two Hobbies, Skills and Pastimes Fairs in Ivybridge
- ✓ Held an Alternative Therapies Fair in Exmouth
- ✓ Established a foot-care service in Ilfracombe
- ✓ Campaigned for the improvement of the toilet facilities on Seaton seafront
- ✓ Arranged access to the local park for a disabled resident in Ivybridge
- ✓ Arranged drain clearance in Bideford
- ✓ Set up computer classes for Senior Council members with the local college in Axminster
- ✓ Achieved later Royal Devon & Exeter hospital appointment times for those travelling from Seaton
- ✓ Intervened and succeeded in the erection of new road signs in Modbury
- ✓ Held two Silver Surfers computer-training days in Ivybridge
- ✓ Carried out a survey on the bus services in Exmouth
- ✓ Arranged a poetry competition about grandparents and older relatives for school children in Holsworthy and Okehampton
- ✓ Set up a Safer Streets group in Seaton

- ✓ Held two Celebrating Seniors events in Honiton
- ✓ Initiated the increase of the number of disabled parking spaces in Kingsbridge
- ✓ Initiated the installation of seats at town-centre bus-stops in Teignmouth
- ✓ Achieved the installation of a handrail on a steep slope in Axminster
- ✓ Supported a group of Honiton pensioners fighting to keep their homes
- ✓ Produced a Disability Guide to Dawlish
- ✓ Instigated a Community Development Project in Bideford
- ✓ Held two pre-election hustings meetings in Cullompton and Tiverton in April 2010
- ✓ Seaton Safer Streets group has had a barrier installed at edge of a car park to deter anti- social driving
- ✓ Worked with Seaton's Voice community group to promote and support an Older and Bolder initiative
- ✓ Two groups have responded to the Rural Health and Wellbeing strategy
- ✓ The Ivybridge group has been consulted on the charges for non-residential care
- ✓ Initiated the installation of a crossing at the entrance to the Co-op car park after consultation/liaison with Co-op departments in Seaton
- ✓ Been involved with setting up the memory cafe and befriending group in conjunction with Torrage in Holsworthy
- ✓ Have mobilised support to keep Brunel Lodge, Newton Abbot, or an alternative, open for local dementia sufferers
- ✓ Held a successful community consultation around plans for a new school in Barnstaple
- ✓ Persuaded a council not to charge people with disabled badges showing when they introduce parking meters to the town (Honiton)

**And in partnership with other organisations, we have:**

- ✓ Set up memory cafes in Great Torrington, Hatherleigh, Seaton and Axminster and assisted in the development of cafes in many other areas
- ✓ Re-established the two-hourly Combe Martin to Barnstaple bus service
- ✓ Established a Citizens Advice Bureau presence in Seaton
- ✓ Have set up a volunteer befriending service in Holsworthy



