

2018-2019
ANNUAL REVIEW

LOOKING AT OUR IMPACT

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

103
EMPLOYERS/
VOLUNTARY
GROUPS
WILLING
TO OFFER
PLACEMENTS



354
LOCAL COUNCILS
SUPPORTED



SUPPORTED THE
COMMUNITY OF
WIDECOMBE TO RAISE
£5,100
TOWARDS THEIR
NEW VILLAGE
HALL

10,378
HOUSEHOLD
HOUSING NEEDS
SURVEYS





135
COMMUNITY
BUILDINGS
SUPPORTED



2,500
READERS
OF
**LOVE
DEVON**




121
261
MEMBERS OF DCT

14
SOCIAL
ENTREPRENEURS
RECEIVED INSPIRE
GRANTS



170
RURAL
HOUSEHOLDS SAVED
£5,500
THROUGH
DEVON OIL
COLLECTIVE



59
YOUNG PEOPLE
PROVIDED
WITH ACCESS
TO WORK/
VOLUNTEERING
EXPERIENCE




24
COMMUNITY
BUILDINGS
RECEIVED
FUNDING
ADVICE



**NEW
AFFORDABLE
HOMES**

706
COUNCILLORS/
CLERKS
ATTENDED
40
DALC TRAINING/
NETWORKING
EVENTS



38
RURAL
BUSINESSES
SUPPORTED TO
START UP/GROW



74
COMMUNITIES
ATTENDED
RESILIENCE
EVENTS



1,166
PARTICIPANTS AT
78 TRAINING &
NETWORKING
EVENTS



21
NEIGHBOURHOOD
PLANS SUPPORTED



91
VULNERABLE
HOUSEHOLDS
ADVISED ON
SMART METERS



8
SPORT & PLAY
FACILITIES ADVISED



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MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Welcome to our second Impact Report, which demonstrates the work of DCT over the preceding year, and more importantly, the positive impact our work is having on Devon's communities. This year we have gone back and spoken to some of the individuals and communities that we worked with during 2017/18 to see how their projects have continued to develop. It is heartening to see how communities are continuing to build on DCT's support and the positive changes that are occurring as a result.

DCT is continuing to invest in its 'Theory of Change' model and in measuring its impact across the whole of its work programme. It was therefore encouraging that our first Impact Report received such a favourable and positive response. This in turn has led to an interest in our impact model and as you will read in the report, we are now supporting another organisation to measure its impact. I am pleased that we can use our learning to support other organisations demonstrate their effectiveness.

As with any report, we can only highlight a small selection of our work. During the year, DCT receives hundreds of enquiries from communities seeking information, advice and support. Some of these can be quickly resolved with some advice or information; for example DCT has many toolkits, information sheets and other resources that we are pleased to make available to communities. Other enquiries may

lead to a meeting and ongoing support and some may develop into major programmes of work involving external funders and a range of partners. For this report we have chosen from a selection of our work including some of our core activity supporting local community initiatives such as affordable housing and community buildings, and major European Social Fund programmes such as the Building Better Opportunities programme. Our aim is to provide an insight into what is a comprehensive portfolio of services and projects which support our business objective of Supporting People and Communities.

DCT is rapidly approaching its 60th anniversary. Whilst projects may come and go, DCT has maintained throughout a core programme of services that sit at the heart of the organisation and are some of the most requested. These include our Village Halls service, which dates back to the beginning of DCT in 1961, our support for Sport and Play, which has grown out of the former Devon Playing Fields Association, and our roles in supporting Community Plans, Rural Affordable Housing and Community Enterprise. I would particularly like to thank Devon County Council and Defra whose investment in DCT has enabled us to maintain these services, which are so highly valued by Devon's communities.

If you would like more information about any items in this report or how we measure our impact, please do get in touch.



Elaine Cook, Chief Executive, Devon Communities Together



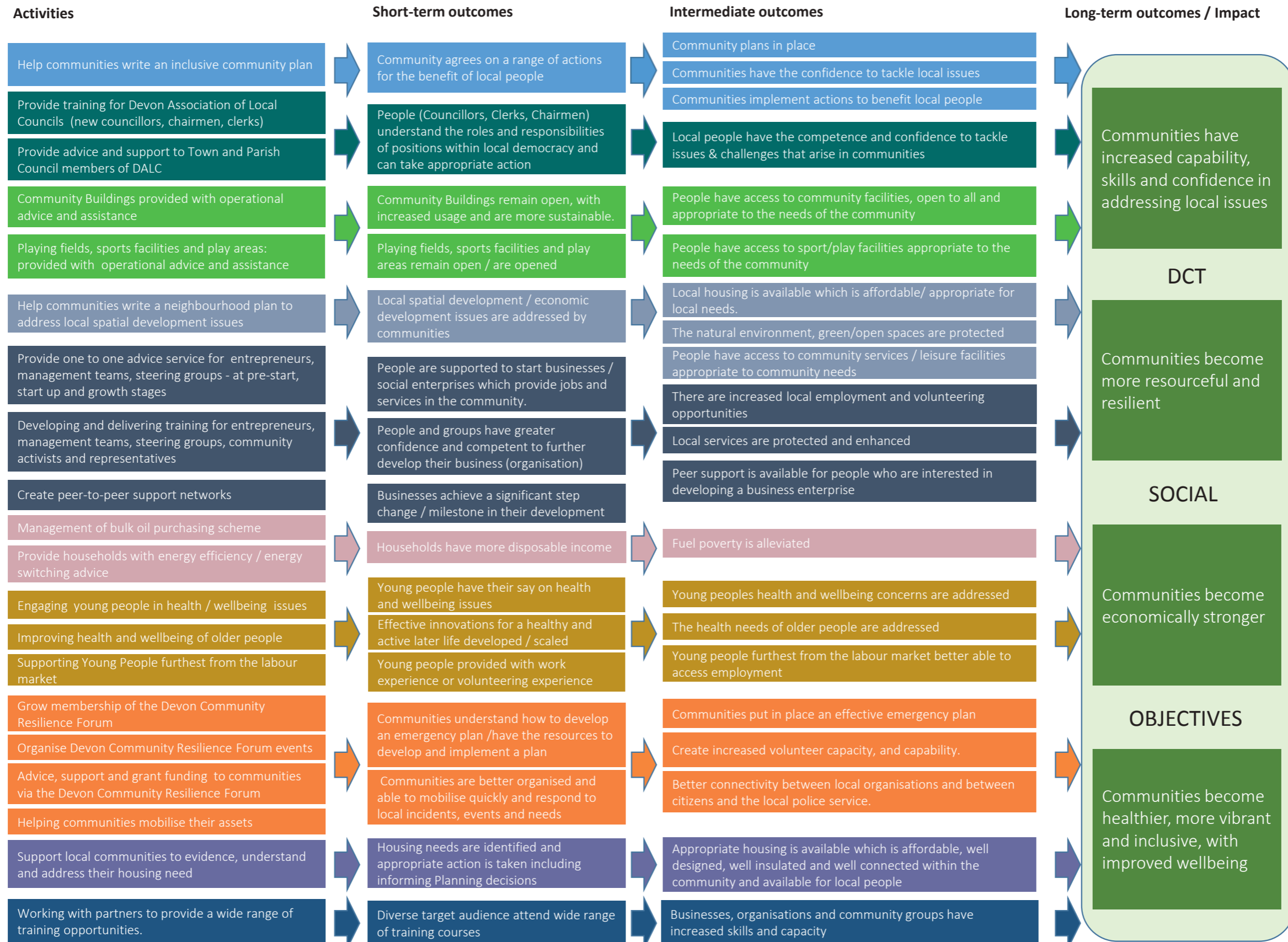
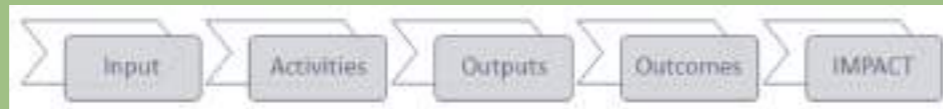
Theory of Change is a tool for telling the story of an organisation's impact. It explains how what we do, our inputs and activities, lead to outputs, outcomes and, over time, to the achievement of our longer term goals (our impact).

DCT the longer term goals, or impact, are described by our four Social Objectives. The links between our activities and our Social Objectives are illustrated in our Theory of Change diagram below.

DCT is continually developing new projects and services to support people and communities throughout Devon. The Theory of Change helps us to ensure any new activities have a direct link to achieving our Social Objectives and delivering a clear impact for people and communities.

THEORY OF CHANGE

For



UPDATES FROM 2017/18

We reported on lots of exciting projects and services in our 2017/18 Impact Report. Here is a small selection of updates to show how some of those stories have developed over the past year.

THE CONTINUING IMPACT OF OUR WORK...

Payhembury Neighbourhood Plan

Following last year's support to Payhembury Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, DCT continued to support the group to produce the draft version of their plan for public consultation. Following the consultation, DCT continued to advise the steering group about potential changes and finalised the document ready for submission.

The document was submitted to East Devon District Council in September 2018. Since then an independent examiner has agreed that with minor alterations it could proceed to a referendum.

"The Neighbourhood Plan is an easy to read and understandable document.

"...the Neighbourhood Plan team, the Parish Council and the local community who engaged with the process should be justly proud of producing a Neighbourhood Plan that reflects local opinion and which successfully addresses, through its policies, the key issues arising in this rural parish."

Mary O'Rourke, Examiner

Bridgerule Village Hall

Following DCT's advice and support around the successful redevelopment of the village hall, the committee has recently been awarded £63,466 from The Lottery's Reaching Communities fund to cover the cost of replacing the asbestos/cement roof and re-designing the front porch.

Christow Community Land Trust

Following the completion of Passivhaus affordable homes for the community, Christow Community Land Trust (CLT) decided not to rest on its laurels but to continue

"Stafford Close has made a huge contribution towards making Christow a sustainable and balanced community. The CLT is determined to remain a dynamic and active force in the community into the future."

Tony Cook Chair, Christow CLT

delivering for its local community. Increasing its numbers from 40 to 113, the CLT

has provided grant funding for a number of local initiatives including junior tennis lessons and stage lighting for the village hall. It is also moving forward with its own community projects, such as creating a new circular nature walk and exploring the idea of a Teign Valley website. It is also hoping to look again at the gaps in housing need in the future.

"We are absolutely delighted, as you can imagine. This is the final piece of the jigsaw and once it is completed the hall should be self supporting and maintenance free. It will be a village hall to be proud of... Thank you so much for your assistance, support encouragement and advice over the years, it has certainly helped us all on the Village Hall committee."

Chris Hitchings, Chair, Bridgerule Village Hall Committee



Jubilee Park, Kingswear - Caledonia Play

Jubilee Park, Kingswear

Following the successful completion of a new play area for the children and families of Kingswear as reported in our 2017-18 Impact Report, DCT has received some positive feedback about how well the play area has been received, despite some initial opposition.

"Our first contact with DCT was a thought provoking and helpful parish councillor training day at Exeter Racecourse. Your Community Projects Advisor came to one of the village consultation meetings and presented a very balanced view of village communities working towards common goals.

"It is pleasing that construction of the play area eventually took place thanks to the generosity of local people and businesses. Many of the prejudices proved ill founded and the play furniture doesn't impinge on the green space. In fact it blends well with the trees on the edge of Jubilee Park and it has no impact on other users of the area. The Kingswear 'regatta'/fete which is the largest event on the Park has plenty of room and benefits from the play facility.

"It is a joy to hear the sound of children playing in the play area. Regularly families are seen sharing those special moments with their children. Sometimes it's a couple of mums with toddlers, other times it's extended families of three generations. Kingswear Primary School has been involved and this part of the village has a more engaged feel.

"Martin's support gave authority to those who were trying to help the community. He presented examples of how other villages had been successful and how change can have broad reaching effects. Interestingly a small community orchard has since been developed on the opposite side of Jubilee Park."

Rob Lovell, Kingswear Resident and Former Councillor

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



78
TRAINING & NETWORKING EVENTS

21
COMMUNITIES SUPPORTED WITH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING



9
COMMUNITIES SUPPORTED WITH A COMMUNITY PLAN



354
LOCAL COUNCILS SUPPORTED

OUR PROGRAMME INCLUDES ...

DCT receives over 400 enquiries a year from a wide range of community organisations and community activists on topics including buildings, play spaces, support with developing a community project or plan, concern about the loss of a service, funding advice, housing needs and business support. DCT has experienced and qualified staff who can invariably provide an answer, information, advice and access to the many resources freely available or signpost to further information. We want communities to know that DCT is a trusted source of independent information and advice.

Community learning and training opportunities

As well as operating the Devon Community Learning Academy (pg. 11), we continue to integrate learning opportunities within many of our projects and services, including training for Village Halls, Parish Councils and rural businesses as well as through projects such as Community Unity (pg. 15).

Neighbourhood Planning: influencing development

Neighbourhood Plans are an important step for communities who want to have a voice in the development of their local area. Our Catalyst Consultancy Service provides unbiased support and advice on legislation, help with local consultation and engagement with local planning departments, and support with writing the plan and funding bids.

Supporting communities to create Action Plans

These plans, sometimes referred to as a 'Parish or Community Plan' are often the jumping off point for community projects and initiatives. We use a design-led approach to help communities or groups identify their priorities and, together with our Ideas Factory and other innovative approaches, we have a range of tools that can help people capture what is positive about the place they live, identify gaps in services or provision, and develop their own solutions.

Devon Association of Local Councils (DALC)

DCT was contracted by DALC to provide advice, support and training to DALC's 354 parish council members, and secretariat services to the DALC committee.

OTHER CONTRIBUTING ACTIVITIES

Helping communities mobilise their assets

Enabling affordable housing

Supporting communities to be prepared for an emergency

Social and community business advice



DEVON COMMUNITY LEARNING ACADEMY

The Devon Community Learning Academy (DCLA) was re-branded from the Training Hub in 2018, in partnership with Devon County Council Communities Team, to reflect its position as the leading provider of community learning opportunities in Devon. During 2018/19 the DCLA facilitated 78 learning and networking events with a total of 1,166 participants who were upskilled and inspired about a broad range of subjects including: Business, Marketing and Social Media ● Citizens Advice Devon Benefits Training ● First Aid, Fire Safety and Food Hygiene ● Disability and Deaf Awareness ● Neighbourhood Planning ● Project Management ● Project Funding ● Rural Enterprise Support ● Health and Wellbeing ● Housing. As well as DCT's trainers we worked with 30 external training providers.

DCT followed up with a selection of delegates to find out how they were using their new knowledge and skills. All of the feedback was positive, with participants overwhelmingly citing the courses as informative, helpful, and useful. We learned that people were using what they'd gained from the courses to make a difference and tackle issues in their communities.

For example, two participants on the 'Get Your Community Project Funded!' course explained that they were in the early stages of applying for grants and funding for their projects concerning the upkeep and building of a village hall. Both cited the course as useful in approaching the application/grant process.

"It was useful to talk with others and understand their approach."
Get Your Community Project Funded! course participant

"[the course was] helpful as [we] award financial support to students and...need to understand how a household income that receives Universal Credit is made up, and can then identify hardship."
Universal Credit course participant

"[I am] better able to fulfill my role as a result of the course."
Pitfalls of Policy Writing course participant

IMPACT
People have new skills and confidence to achieve professional, personal and community objectives.



1,166
PARTICIPANTS AT TRAINING & NETWORKING EVENTS





ACLT's new affordable homes in Appledore, North Devon

CONSTRUCTING FUTURES DEVON



During 2018 work began on the first Constructing Futures Devon Ltd property, in Torquay. Partly funded by £574,320 from the Heart of the South West LEP's Growth Deal Funding, Constructing Futures is a sustainable social purpose business established as a trading arm of DCT. We have partnered with South Devon College to give students the opportunity to work on renovation projects and new

build properties as a "real site" work experience opportunity. Homes will be sold on the open market, with profit reinvested into Constructing Futures and DCT.

During 2018-19, two full-time apprentices and 36 other South Devon College students were involved in carrying out a complete renovation. Work maximised the input of many different trade apprentices, including bricklayers, plasterers, electricians, plumbers, heating engineers and decorators, as well as offering learning opportunities for live building site health and safety requirements, risk and method statements, and general project planning skills.

"This is a very exciting project and we're proud to be a part of it. Projects like these provide real and meaningful work activities that enable our Construction learners to hone the skills, knowledge and behaviours learnt in College on a live project. Community based projects provide stretch and challenge for all learners involved whilst enhancing their employability skills."

Dean Bowden, Head of Construction and Built Environment, South Devon College

"It's preparing me for the future a lot quicker ...I'll be more ready for work."

Ben Perkins, Constructing Futures Devon Ltd apprentice

APPLEDORE COMMUNITY LAND TRUST

Appledore Community Land Trust (ACLT), with the support of DCT's Rural Housing Enablers, has successfully delivered a project to create ten affordable new homes for the local community. The three founding members, all of whom were born and raised in Appledore, have driven forward their vision of 'homes for local people', against a backdrop of rising house prices and absentee ownership. Since buying the site, ACLT has worked in partnership with Aster Group and with the support of the Wessex Community Land Trust and Torridge District Council to achieve its vision. The ten homes, which enjoy stunning sea views, are set to be completed by May 2019.

DCT's Rural Housing Enablers supported this project by undertaking a housing needs survey in Appledore to establish the need for affordable housing. Although the need was established there were several barriers to overcome and our

Rural Housing Enablers continued to work with ACLT to overcome these, including through extensive neighbourhood consultation to win over public support for the scheme. The promise of 'homes for local people' has won wide support in the village. The Local Authority and Homes England since made substantial grant allocations to ACLT and the housing association Aster Group has contributed some of its own internal subsidy.

IMPACT

ACLT, with the support of Rural Housing Enablers, have overcome every challenge and, as a result, local people will receive ten new affordable homes. This will promote a more inclusive community as people on low incomes will be able to stay living locally. Long-term benefits are also expected, as the increase in residents will boost the economic viability of local businesses, as well as supporting the local school, clubs and societies.



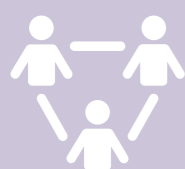
10
NEW
AFFORDABLE
HOMES FOR
LOCAL
PEOPLE

"We are extremely proud of what we have achieved for Appledore's residents. These homes will be dwellings for Appledore residents for many decades to come."

Peter Revely Founder member of Appledore CLT

IMPACT

Students from South Devon College have gained valuable real-life construction experience to support their future careers, and significantly enhance their college learning. A quality family home has been brought back on to the local market.



36
STUDENTS AND
2 FULL-TIME
APPRENTICES
RENOVATED OUR
FIRST
PROPERTY



COMMUNITY UNITY

The Community Unity pilot project ran from May 2017 to November 2018. A partnership project between Devon and Cornwall Police and DCT,

Community Unity was designed to support the Citizens in Policing Programme, in particular, the overarching strategic theme of “Safe, Resilient & Connected Communities”.

The pilot project was delivered in three deep rural towns: Holsworthy; South Molton and Lynton & Lynmouth. A programme of engagement and capacity building was delivered for each community, including: Ideas Factory Events ● Asset Mapping ● Training Needs Assessment ● Connector Events ● Local Volunteer Training Programmes ● Know Your Neighbour Campaign ● Let’s Do It Fund Awards ● Bespoke Mentoring for Local Groups.

Know Your Neighbour

Running during August and September 2018, the Know Your Neighbour campaign was developed to raise awareness of the issues around social isolation. Over 600 promotional leaflets were handed out, encouraging people to make contact with their neighbours and presenting thought provoking statistics, simple ways to help, sign-posting and risk awareness information. We also held coffee mornings, information stalls and worked with community groups to spread the word. Many people we spoke to did not realise that social isolation was such an issue and were surprised at the statistics. Using data in this way, to challenge preconceptions about their community, encourage them to take action and to cascade the issue by word of mouth, was a really positive outcome.

Let’s Do it: The Molton Meddlers

The Community Unity project ran a small grants scheme the ‘Let’s Do It’ fund. One successful application came from The Molton Meddlers; a small team of retired men who volunteer to do practical tasks around South Molton. They wanted to get more people volunteering to help beautify the town with wild flower beds and tackle areas of neglected land.

15 sites were cleared and planted with a range of perennial wild flowers

Around 20 local people including school children, scouts and retired folk volunteered during a three-day planting task in spring 2019

Over 400 wild flower plugs planted

The natural environment of South Molton has been enhanced for the enjoyment of local people and wildlife and there are aspirations of an increased “feel good factor” for elderly local people who will encounter wild flowers reminiscent of their younger lives to spark shared memories.

OUR PROGRAMME INCLUDES ...

Village hall and community buildings support

Community buildings are a key space in every community, particularly in rural communities where they may be the only public space, providing a place where increasingly vital services are delivered, community organisations meet, and social activities and family celebrations take place. DCT supports the network of Devon Village Halls and Community Buildings and increasingly is extending its support to other community-owned assets, including churches.

Supporting communities to be prepared for an emergency

DCT continues to be the delivery partner for the Devon Community Resilience Board. With additional funding during 2018, DCT was able to provide on-the-ground support to communities identified as a priority by the Resilience Board, helping them to develop an emergency plan. The bi-annual Community Resilience Forum event continues to provide an important opportunity for communities to access information and training, and to meet with statutory services and other organisations.

Helping communities mobilise their assets

DCT is continually engaged with communities who are looking to plan for the future, develop new activities or businesses, build on what already exists and rejuvenate community spaces. Recent work includes saving a rural church for the future, upgrading play facilities, supporting people living on Exmoor to find affordable homes, getting new rural businesses off the ground, helping rural young people access volunteering and work opportunities. Our Community Unity project (pg. 15) used a range of asset based community development techniques to support three rural market towns in North Devon to build on the many organisations, activities and services that already exist, increasing connectivity between local groups and encouraging more local people to become volunteers.

OTHER CONTRIBUTING ACTIVITIES

Supporting communities to create action plans

Advice & training for parish & town councils

Enabling affordable housing

Influencing development through neighbourhood planning

Social and community business advice

OBJECTIVE
COMMUNITIES
BECOME MORE
RESOURCEFUL
AND RESILIENT



74
DELEGATES AT
RESILIENCE
EVENTS



24
COMMUNITY
BUILDINGS
RECEIVED
FUNDING
ADVICE



135
COMMUNITY
BUILDINGS RECEIVED
ADVICE AND SUPPORT



IMPACT

The communities are aware of the issues facing many of their neighbours and are upskilled and inspired to address them. The communities are more resilient and community spirit is fostered.

60 +
PEOPLE FROM
40 LOCAL
COMMUNITY
GROUPS
PARTICIPATED
IN EVENTS



8 LOCAL
INITIATIVES
RECEIVED
INVESTMENT
FROM THE
LET'S DO IT
FUND



“Everyone seemed to enjoy these community events and there was much laughter!”
Brian, co-ordinator of the Meddlers’ wild flower planting project

THE DEVON COMMUNITY RESILIENCE FORUM

Devon Communities Together is contracted through the Devon Community Resilience Board to support communities to develop a useful community emergency plan. This empowers the community to act 'on the ground' in the event of an emergency such as flooding, fire, or a road accident. Completed plans are uploaded to the government portal, Resilience Direct where they can be viewed by the emergency services. First responders will be aware of the actions that the community will undertake, as well as have access to practical local knowledge such as the location of vulnerable people, resources, and shelters.



Delegates participate in an interactive game on flooding at a Devon Community Resilience Forum event, November 2018

127 Devon communities were members of the Devon Community Resilience Forum during 2018/2019. We supported them in a number of ways:

£5,270 worth of small grants provided to seven communities, enabling the purchase of a range of equipment including two-way radios to help them respond to and recover from emergencies.

Two Community Resilience Forum events held in June (Cruwys Morchard) and November (Victory Hall, Broadclyst) with over 140 delegates learning about topics including: flu pandemics, the Devon Air Ambulance, the Local Resilience Forum, resilience grants, community defibrillators and real community case studies. In November 100% of delegates reported the content as 'excellent' (68%) or 'good' (32%).

'How to write your community emergency plan' event in January 2019 (Barnstaple Rugby Club), with 12 representatives from local communities receiving practical advice on how to create their plans.

Support and practical guidance to individual communities on specific topics. Following a DCT visit to the Lympstone Community Emergency Planning group, one member commented that:

"Progress has been made following the advice received from Martin Rich, of Devon Communities Together. As a result of his advice, we are closer to submitting the final draft of the Parish Council's Emergency Plan, and we have made contact with the Fire Service and a First Aid Organisation to provide training for our Flood Wardens."



COMMUNITY BUILDINGS: PROMOTION AS LOCAL VENUES

Devon Communities Together launched a new website in June 2018 and for the first time we brought the former devonvillagehalls.co.uk site under our main website to provide a new, mobile-friendly directory of village halls throughout Devon. Originally called 'Community Buildings', the section is now called 'Venue Hire' after we sought feedback and looked at what people are searching for online.

The site gives community buildings a clear digital presence, provides information on the facilities and drives enquiries to the bookings clerks. Since it launched, until the end of March 2019 (approx. 10 months) the main Venue Hire landing page received 9,510 page views, accounting for almost 10% of all traffic to the DCT site. This does not include numbers of page views for the individual building pages, so the traffic for the entire section is likely to be much higher.

"I'm very happy with [the new website] ... I'm sure it has [generated bookings]. I have editing capabilities and I've recently been able to go on and add that we've received 3 star Hallmark and now have free internet, which is a great way of letting people know about our facilities."
Jock Kirkpatrick, Whitestone Parish Hall

Other website benefits our members have reported include:

- Provides a useful map and location details for 'out of county' enquiries e.g family events, commercial users who aren't familiar with the area
- Acts as a marketplace for buildings to 'show off' their facilities and accolades, which they have invested time and money in
- A building's page provides evidence of efforts to promote a hall and the diary section highlights levels of use; all of which can be used when applying for grants and loans
- Village halls are becoming more popular for weddings and even funerals. Our directory allows users to compare facilities and make informed choices

9,510 VISITS TO THE DCT COMMUNITY BUILDINGS WEB PAGE



IMPACT

Communities are empowered to plan for an emergency in their local area and to use their local knowledge to decide on a course of action that will enable safe and resilient responses to an emergency or threat of emergency.



7 COMMUNITIES RECEIVED £5,270 IN RESILIENCE GRANTS

9 COMMUNITY EMERGENCY PLANS PUBLISHED

IMPACT

Village halls and other community buildings are supported in generating income and sharing their achievements.

OBJECTIVE

COMMUNITIES
BECOME
ECONOMICALLY
STRONGER

59

YOUNG PEOPLE
PROVIDED
WITH ACCESS
TO WORK/
VOLUNTEERING
EXPERIENCE

103

EMPLOYERS/
VOLUNTARY
GROUPS
WILLING
TO OFFER
PLACEMENTS



38

RURAL
BUSINESSES
SUPPORTED TO
START UP/GROW

ADVICE
ON SMART
METERS TO
91
VULNERABLE
HOUSEHOLDS



OUR PROGRAMME INCLUDES ...

Business support has increasingly become an important activity for DCT. Whether it is supporting a community to take ownership of their village shop or local pub, or supporting a local entrepreneur who has a great idea for a new social enterprise or business. Our range of business support includes:

Social and community business advice

In rural areas, gaps in services often create an opportunity for communities to develop a business to provide a vital service and also contribute to local society. Devon Communities Together helps such enterprises, e.g. community shops and pubs, to start up and grow.

Enterprise start up and small business support

Now in its second year with funding from the Prince's Countryside Fund this service provides a business start-up and growth package for small rural businesses and provides a peer support network and launch pad events for individual entrepreneurs, community enterprises and rural businesses. Over 300 businesses are signed up.

Empowering Enterprise

Young people are a vital part of the rural economy but some young people need extra support to find employment. DCT is working with local businesses and other partners to help these young people to identify their interests and motivations, and match them with a volunteering or job placement opportunity. The great news is that this is leading to job offers and training opportunities.

Enterprise Coaching: New Start Devon

During 2018/19 we have been working with YTKO on an exciting new European Regional Development Fund programme called New Start Devon that will empower individuals, mainly from the more deprived and disadvantaged areas of Devon, and those underrepresented in enterprise, to develop self-employment opportunities, and start and sustain micro and small businesses, including social enterprises. With a business coach now in place, the programme launches in early 2019.

OTHER CONTRIBUTING ACTIVITIES

Influencing development through neighbourhood planning

Tackling fuel poverty

Wide range of training opportunities

Enabling affordable housing

Constructing Futures Devon

RURAL ENTERPRISE SOLUTIONS

DCT's Rural Enterprise Solutions project is funded by the Prince's Countryside Fund. Phase one of the project ran from February 2017 to July 2018 and phase two runs from October 2018 to September 2019.

Phase one enabled Devon Communities Together to support existing enterprises within rural Devon (particularly Torridge, West Devon, Teignbridge and Mid Devon) to grow and develop whilst also encouraging and supporting start-ups to emerge. Support was provided with facilitated networking Launchpad events, an online peer support network with over 300 participants, one-to-one business support and a bespoke training programme at the Dartington School of Social Entrepreneurs.

Phase two has enabled Devon Communities Together to scale up the support across rural Devon. Launchpad networking events are being held across the county, the online peer support network continues to grow with over 325 participants, and one-to-one support is provided to small local businesses and start-ups. Additional support has been provided to young people with a stall at Petroc College, Barnstaple, for a progression event in March 2019, which included discussion on early stage business planning for young entrepreneurs.

Carole's story

Carole has been supported by Rural Enterprise Solutions through both phase one and phase two of the project. Carole first accessed Rural Enterprise Solutions support when she was at the ideas stage for her innovative social enterprise, Moving Together, which helps older people plan, organise and execute every aspect of a home move, or to ensure their current home is suitable as they age.

"The Rural Enterprise Solutions course with the Dartington School of Social Entrepreneurs couldn't have come at a better time for me. I...was struggling with all things to do with business, especially business planning and a marketing strategy.

"I particularly enjoyed the active learning sessions, where we problem solved by asking open questions rather than giving advice. Having the benefit of a 1:1 support session six months later through phase two of Rural Enterprise Solutions has enabled me to reflect on the last year and begin to change how we are promoting ourselves. Now I am at the stage of developing the service to reach more people. Rural Enterprise Solutions has given me a sound framework to build on, enabled me to go outside of my comfort zone and have the confidence to 'sell' my service. I can now tell real stories and share testimonials from my clients."

Carole, owner of Moving Together (pictured)

IMPACT

Rural entrepreneurs have the tools, confidence and support needed to take their ideas forward and grow their businesses, creating income and employment opportunities, and providing valuable products and services to their communities.



325+
MEMBERS OF
THE PEER-TO-
PEER SUPPORT
NETWORK



THE PRINCE'S
COUNTRYSIDE
FUND



EMPOWERING ENTERPRISE

Devon Communities Together is part of Petroc College’s partnership programme called Empowering Enterprise, which seeks to engage over 600 of Devon’s most socially-excluded young people and work with them to develop their employability and life skills giving them the confidence to return to employment, education or training. It is part of the Building Better Opportunities programme, which is jointly funded by the National Lottery Community Fund and the European Social Fund.

James’ story

James* had put a specific work experience request in, asking for an administration



placement at supported housing provider, LiveWest. After engaging with James’ mentor for further information on the young person’s talents, skills, experience and education, DCT spoke to LiveWest to make the request.

We discussed James’ talents, interests, aspirations and also mentioned some of the barriers that he is facing. We shared James’ CV and liaised between LiveWest, James’ mentor and the project manager at Young Devon to provide guidance on extending work experience, apprenticeships and employment. James’ work experience placement was eventually secured.

During his placement, James grew in confidence and developed an understanding of his skills and interests. He went on to apply for paid employment at LiveWest and was successful, commencing a paid Level 3 Advanced Apprenticeship in Finance - Assistant Accountant Standard.

LiveWest gained a valuable asset to their financial services team and developed experience of welcoming young NEETS (not in education, employment or training) into their workplace.

“He seems to be thoroughly enjoying himself and the teams have fed-back that he’s been great to have around. He’s been really keen, super engaged and asking lots of questions, so that’s great.”
LiveWest spokesperson

“This apprenticeship is an amazing opportunity for James!” *James’ mentor*

**not participant’s real name*



TACKLING FUEL POVERTY: SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES AROUND ENERGY USAGE

DEVON OIL COLLECTIVE

Devon Communities Together operates the Devon Oil Collective (DOC) in conjunction with the agricultural cooperative, AF Affinity, to enable households and community buildings in rural areas to access cheaper fuel prices through a bulk buying scheme.

DOC has 170 members as of 2018/19 and their feedback has been positive, with 100% of members reporting that they would recommend DOC to a friend and are very happy with the service. Members save between £10.40 and £19.50 on their orders per 1,000 liters of fuel, producing consistent savings for customers with minimum customer effort and excellent customer care.

SMART ENERGY GB

DCT was commissioned by Smart Energy GB to provide information about smart meter installation, use and potential savings to people over 65, those over 60 who do not use the internet and people living in fuel poverty across rural Devon.

Between September and December 2018, DCT attended thirty-one community venues, holding a rural roadshow of information events and briefing sessions to give group and one-to-one advice, and ran a social media campaign with a reach of over 1,500 individuals. We also attended a community coffee morning in Holsworthy and gave information out to approximately 100 older people.

Briefing sessions were particularly targeted towards those in the community with further reach who may come into contact with hard-to-reach individuals.

IMPACT

Communities are upskilled and empowered to make informed decisions around their energy usage and measurement, especially those who would usually find this information difficult to access. Through DOC, households can benefit from financial savings, helping to tackle fuel poverty.

375,000 LITRES OF OIL ORDERED



170 DOC MEMBERS SAVED £5,500



IMPACT

James and other young people supported through the project gain confidence, improved wellbeing and opportunities to work towards paid employment, contributing to the local economy. Employers gain awareness and skills in working with NEETs, becoming more inclusive.



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

14
SOCIAL
ENTREPRENEURS
RECEIVED INSPIRE
GRANTS

121

NEW
AFFORDABLE
HOMES
FOR LOCAL
PEOPLE

£98,900
RECEIVED TO
TACKLE RURAL
ISOLATION AND
LONELINESS

8
SPORT
AND PLAY
FACILITIES
PROVIDED
WITH ADVICE

OUR PROGRAMME INCLUDES ...

Strategic partnerships and collaborations

In 2018/19 DCT was invited to become a member of the RSA Food Farming and Countryside Commission Health and Thriving Communities Working Group, where we contributed to research on the health and wellbeing of farmers and how we can encourage families with young children to eat more healthily. We also contributed to the recent ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England) paper submitted to the House of Commons Health and Social Care Committee in relation to the NHS Long Term Plan and healthcare in rural communities.

We have worked closely with Devon County Council Adult Social Care on their Life Chances Programme and contributed to the VCSE (Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise) engagement on Social Prescribing. We continue to represent the voluntary sector on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and a DCT director participated in an STP (Sustainability and Transformation Partnership) Leadership Programme.

Healthwatch Devon

We have continued to provide management support for Healthwatch Devon including actively undertaking engagement, facilitation, research and report writing functions.

DCT projects and services include...

Delivering a programme of affordable **Rural Housing Enablement** (pg. 13); **Transform Ageing**, which looks at new ways to make the experience of ageing more positive for older people (pg. 24); **Maternity Voices Partnership**, which brings together parents and providers of maternity services across Devon to improve maternity services; helping **Syrian refugees** improve their English language skills and get work experience; **Devon Highlights**, a new project aiming to help people over 55 at risk of social isolation (pg. 25); **Connecting Actively To Nature**, aimed at encouraging over 55s to engage with outdoor activity (pg. 23).

OTHER CONTRIBUTING ACTIVITIES

Supporting communities to create action plans

Supporting communities to be prepared for an emergency

Social and community business advice

Influencing development through neighbourhood planning



CONNECTING ACTIVELY TO NATURE

The Connecting Actively to Nature (CAN) project is funded by the National Lottery through Sport England to deliver an exciting five-year programme that will support over 3,000 older people in Devon and Torbay to discover the physical and mental benefits of activity in the natural environment. DCT's role is to recruit and support volunteers to help spread awareness of the activities on offer, and to support the development and use of the project customer relationship management (CRM) system.

Between November 2018, when recruitment of volunteers began, and March 2019, five volunteers were recruited and provided with an induction and ongoing support. They have engaged in a variety of tasks to increase the impact of CAN including: distributing publicity materials, giving presentations to community groups, liaising with community connectors, and providing practical support at CAN activities.

One volunteer, Pauline, explained how she had spoken to over 40 individuals about the CAN project and had also encouraged existing activities in her area to work with the project. Being a CAN volunteer has not only had a positive impact on the project, but on her own sense of community:

“Before I became a Devon Communities Together Connecting Actively to Nature volunteer I had time on my hands after retiring and moving; it was an unsettled time for me and I didn't feel part of my new community. Since becoming a CAN volunteer this has really changed, I no longer feel lonely or of no significance but instead I am feeling involved, useful, and part of the community.”

The CRM system not only provides an overview of the projects and participants but is a way in which to record participant data, from their first engagement as a baseline, and at three, six and 12 month points. It went 'live' on 27th February 2019. In February and March 2019 DCT worked with 17 CAN partners to support their use of the system.

IMPACT
Older people in Devon have improved mental and physical wellbeing. Project volunteers have opportunities to become active citizens and make a difference in their communities, whilst spreading a positive message about activity in nature.

OVER
3,000
OLDER PEOPLE
WILL BE
SUPPORTED TO
GET
ACTIVE

5
VOLUNTEER
CONNECTING
ACTIVELY
TO NATURE
AMBASSADORS
RECRUITED AND
TRAINED



TRANSFORM AGEING: THE INSPIRE AWARDS

Transform Ageing is a first-of-its-kind initiative to change the way society approaches and designs services for people in later life. Funded by the National Lottery Community Fund, the largest funder of community activity in the UK, Transform Ageing brings together people in later life, social entrepreneurs, and health & social care leaders to define the challenges and to support the development and delivery of new approaches to ageing.

As a delivery partner of Transform Ageing, DCT was involved in supporting the Inspire Awards programme: grants for local people to turn new ideas into action that will improve later life.

IMPACT

Social entrepreneurs with innovative ideas are supported to develop their ideas for the benefit of older people in their communities. In the case of Tea & Memories it has led to new contacts and friendships being formed and helped to reduce loneliness, which can lead to improvement in both the health and wellbeing of those involved.

"I love volunteering at Tea & Memories because I enjoy meeting the members and making the tea. Watching the old films ... makes me feel young again!"
Noelle Ingham



Living Memories CIC - Tea & Memories

DCT was approached by social entrepreneur Brian Norris from Colyton, East Devon, who was looking for help to fund his latest initiative called Tea and Memories.

DCT supported Brian to develop his Inspire Award application and organised a panel of people from later life to assess the application, before it was passed to Unltd (the funding partner in Transform Ageing). The application was successful and Brian received £500.

Brian and his team of volunteers have since been setting up monthly Tea & Memories groups in communities, particularly those in isolated rural areas in the Axe Valley. They use archive film programmes from the 1940s-60s to stimulate reminiscence and help people to feel less isolated in their local community, particularly those developing dementia and their carers. The groups have caught the eye of an NHS Social Prescribing Nurse who has brought team members along to the sessions and started to refer patients.

"For some of us, particularly those who are now developing dementia in one of its many forms, living in the present is increasingly difficult and memories of earlier years in the UK, in the decades during and after the Second World War, become evermore important."
Brian Norris (extract from blog)

DEVON HIGHLIGHTS

The Devon HIGHLIGHTS project is led by DCT in partnership with the Devon Senior Voice Network, The Creativity Centre Educational Trust (CCET) and Ageing Well Without Children. It aims to improve the quality of life and physical and mental wellbeing of people aged 55+ who are at risk of social isolation, and will support the start-up and sustainable development of new, local place-based group activities. It is funded by £98,900 from the the National Lottery Community Fund, as part of the Jo Cox Building Connections Fund.

Although very early in the project, we have begun work on identifying, reaching and engaging with the members of the community who are experiencing, or at risk of, loneliness. Asset mapping has been done in the first location, Chulmleigh, and 'connector events' have been organised to establish new collaborations and partnerships with local organisations, with the shared goal of preventing or reducing the impact of loneliness for local people in later life.

DEVON MATERNITY VOICES PARTNERSHIP

DCT recruited a new Chair, Charlotte Burrows, for the Devon MVP; a collective of parents (and parents-to-be) and providers of maternity services, working together to review and contribute to the development of local maternity care across Devon.

Charlotte has so far been touring the county with four launch events in Barnstaple, Plymouth, Torbay and Exeter, listening to the views of mums, midwives and the many involved in maternity services. Headline feedback is that while there are areas to address (such as improvement and increased need for antenatal classes) it is also important to celebrate positive birth stories and experiences - we don't spend enough time learning from what went well. This feedback will inform priorities for the coming months.

SUPPORTING SYRIAN REFUGEES

We have been working in partnership with Devon County Council and DeVA since July 2018 on a pilot project to support Syrian refugees in finding volunteer placements to improve their English language skills and employability prospects. To date four refugees have been supported by DCT to start placements, including one with Exeter Foodbank (since December 2018) and one at an Exeter charity shop (since January 2019). Placements have gone well, with two continuing longer-term and feedback shows the individuals are having as much positive impact on their workplaces as the workplaces are on the individuals.



IMPACT

People experiencing (or at risk of) isolation or who are in vulnerable situations, are listened to and supported in practical, collaborative ways. They feel more integrated into communities and their voices are heard.

"[He has] settled in well at Foodbank and the teams seem to like him ... His language is coming on, he is very friendly and always willing to help."



TIPTON ST JOHN RECREATION FIELD TRUST

DCT was approached by the trustees of the Recreation Field Association as their current children’s play area equipment was worn out and out of date at 25 years old. Several issues of concern had been raised by the annual safety inspection report by Vospa and by local parents. They wanted our help to develop a strong case for fundraising to install a modern replacement facility.

With advice from DCT’s consultancy service, Catalyst, the trustees designed a process of stakeholder engagement and evaluation of the importance of the play park to local people, to help inform a vision for the redevelopment plans and to inform funding bids.

The engagement process included three opportunities for interested people to get involved: Creative Workshops with the local



Tipton St John Playing Field

primary school in the summer term 2018; a household questionnaire-based survey designed by Catalyst undertaken in December 2018; and a community consultation event at the village hall in February 2019, facilitated by Catalyst.

The Catalyst team analysed the data and produced a report, which is being used by the trustees to: inform and evidence local need and impact for funding bids; draw up a design specification; and budget for the procurement of contractors to undertake the play area redevelopment.

- 23 children aged between 5 and 8 participated in the primary school workshops
- 44 adults, with the help of over 52 children, completed the household survey.
- 78 people from all age ranges participated in the interactive community event.
- A vision for the future equipment, style and user needs was created

The consultation process asked local people what they anticipated the impact on their lives that an improved play area would provide. They told us:

Children will be: **more physically active; enjoy playing outside more; be able to socialize together more**

Parents/guardians will **socialise more and feel more a part of the community.** They also said they had really appreciated and felt empowered by the opportunities to be involved and influence the future design of the park.

THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS AND PARTNERS



IMPACT

A community has been empowered to progress a matter that is important to them by bringing in skills and knowledge from DCT. A new play area will improve play opportunities for children and socialising opportunities for adults, promoting better health and wellbeing.



78
PEOPLE OF ALL AGES PARTICIPATED IN COMMUNITY EVENT



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UNDERSTAND
INSPIRE**

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