

Your Devon Senior Voice Update

August 2018



Welcome to our first Devon Senior Voice newsletter

I am very pleased to be able to report that the transfer of Devon Senior Voice (DSV) to Devon Communities Together (DCT) formally took place on the 1st June and our two organisations have now merged. I am delighted to welcome the 1,800 DSV members who came across with the transfer and look forward to meeting you all over the coming weeks and months.

We are currently working on the new DSV section of our website, devoncommunities.org.uk, which went fully live on 31 July so please do let us know your feedback. You'll find it under the 'services' menu. Please note that after this date the old website will no longer be available.

I hope you enjoy the newsletter and if you have any feedback or if you'd like to share your news or events with our members in future newsletters, please do get in touch with me by emailing elaine@devoncommunities.org.uk.

Elaine Cook, Chief Executive, Devon Communities Together

www.devoncommunities.org.uk



Thank you Sally!

On Tuesday 19th June Elaine was pleased to join some of the network at a lunch event in CREDITON where Sally Lougher was thanked for all she had done to support the network over the last 10 years and Carol McCormack spoke about DSV's legacy whilst looking forward to the new relationship with DCT. Brian Clifton from the Barnstaple branch gave an entertaining overview of the history of DSV and presented Sally with flowers on behalf of the members.

Meetings with other branch representatives are well underway and we are looking forward to meeting the branches and their members in the coming weeks and months.

Volunteers wanted!

Would you like to be a part of our growing volunteer bank? We have lots of exciting opportunities coming up for DSV members (including the Connecting Actively to Nature and Smart Energy GB projects below) and we'd love you to join us. We're also seeking volunteer marshalls for our exciting Walk for Widecombe event (see enclosed flyer). We're delighted to announce that we have a new volunteer co-ordinator who will be dedicated to looking after all our invaluable volunteers. If you think you could spare some time to help with our various projects and services please do get in touch with Lisa Morish dsv@devoncommunities.org.uk 01392 248919. We look forward to hearing from you!

Join us! Smart Energy GB in Communities



This project is being delivered across Devon by Devon Communities Together as part of the national smart meter roll out programme and aims to inform people aged 65+ and people aged 60+ with no personal internet access about the benefits of smart meters. If you're interested in getting involved with this project, email dsv@devoncommunities.org.uk or call 01392 248919.

Join us! Connecting Actively to Nature

If you are keen to help others in your community get active and stay healthy, then why not consider becoming a volunteer as part of our Connecting Actively to Nature project? You'll help to inspire and support people taking their first steps into activity and you'll play a very important part in shaping our campaign. Want to get involved? Email dsv@devoncommunities.org.uk or call 01392 248919.



#CAN volunteers needed!



DSV Strategy Group

We'd like to say thank you to those members who joined us at our DSV strategy group workshop on 26th June. It was well attended with 20 of us in total and we enjoyed a very productive session in which we discussed the direction of DSV going forward and how we can help the network reach its true potential in all sorts of areas.

The purpose of the Strategy Group is to support the network and its delivery through sharing information and expertise. If you would like to join the group email dsv@devoncommunities.org.uk or call 01392 248919.

Notes from the first strategy meeting may be found on our website: devoncommunitiestogether.org.uk/services/devon-senior-voice/about



Dates for your diary...

International Day of Older Persons 1st October 2018

Devon Senior Voice will be celebrating International Day of Older Persons on 1st October 2018 and there are already some events planned by DSV branches:

Exeter branch will be running an event on Saturday 29th September at St Stephens Church, Exeter High street. For more information contact Lisa Morish on dsv@devoncommunities.org.uk or 01392 248919.

Barnstaple Branch will be celebrating the contribution of our mature years to the wellbeing of our communities on Friday 28th September, Castle Green, Barnstaple, 10am-3pm. Contact Carol McCormac on 01271 343176 or carolmch31@yahoo.co.uk. There will be a host of stalls and activities for people to enjoy including music, dance, vintage cars, crafts and much more.



News from around the branches

Crediton and Area branch

Following the amalgamation of DSV and DCT, we at the Crediton and Area branch are preparing for a new beginning. We were the most active of all the DSV branches, thanks in no small way to Ron Cuthbertson our Treasurer, who worked tirelessly for the branch and the Devon-wide organisation. We send huge thanks to Ron as he retires as Treasurer, and his many other roles.

Despite regular publicity in the way of press releases and posters around Crediton and surrounding villages, our membership has been slowly decreasing for the past year. A few years ago, monthly attendance was regularly over thirty, but now, sadly, it's down to only around eight. However, we are hopeful numbers will pick up following our move to more accessible premises at Housing and Care 21 and also with the support of DCT.

Our many thanks go to the folks in our group who help out every month, making tea, putting chairs out and generally supporting the branch. Thanks also to the various speakers we've had this year, all of whom have both entertained and informed - Fiona Bartlett/Ballet for the over fifties, Linda Buckle/Flexercise, Jenny Dallas/Acupuncture and Lou Webb/Massage, to name but a few.

We're looking forward to our new working relationship with DCT, and grateful that the voice of older people in Devon will continue to be heard.

Paula Kovacs, BA (Hons), Secretary, Crediton and Area Branch, Devon Senior Voice

cont...

Devon Senior Voice is back in Ivybridge!

We're pleased to announce that the dormant Ivybridge DSV branch is back in business. Former chair David Snelling kindly shares a history of the branch and invites members old and new to get in touch...

Eleven years ago, community spirited 'over 50s' recognising the impending demographic time bomb which was to affect their age group throughout the county of Devon, responded to the then Government's commitment to set up unitary councils throughout the UK to address their future needs. At a meeting in November 2007 in Old Chapel Place, the previous town hall, in Fore Street, 35 people of Ivybridge and the surrounding twelve or so hamlets and villages formed a committee to see how the council could work, submit proposals outlining priorities and approve a constitution.

In Ivybridge, with an ever increasing awareness of needs to maintain a quality of life, the number of members grew to 180, some being pro-active but most being happy to offer their opinions and concerns candidly at meetings, having a mouth piece through which they could air their concerns. Being one of the larger 'branches' in the county, meetings continued on a monthly basis, initially in some members' homes and thereafter at the Sportsman's Inn, Exeter Road.

Issues being identified, led by sub-committee members ranged from transport, housing & infrastructure development including neighbourhood planning, health & social care including dementia, consultation on the establishment of 'memory cafes, 'healthwatch' and patient participation involvement etc. The branch, together with the other 28 in the county, had diminishing resources from county council and the NHS and whilst being chaired by Mr David Snelling, who was failing in health, it ceased activities and remained 'dormant ' until such time when circumstances changed, awaiting guidance from the board.

"My diagnosis of prostate cancer combined with two total knee replacements dented my enthusiasm for continuing and maintaining the branch under a feeling of insecurity," said David Snelling.



Following the 'marriage' of DSV and DCT, David, following successful treatment, is now appealing to the previous branch DSV members to contact him in order to continue the activity in dealing with issues affecting the over 50s in Ivybridge, now being supported by the team at DCT.

"Celebrating the resurgence of one of the most active groups in Ivybridge has to be one of the highlights of this year so far," added David. "Over the past years in Ivybridge, through the local branch, a number of 'speak out' healthwatch forms have been completed, members have organised and held many events for issues around ageing, entertained stimulating and informative speakers at the monthly meetings, advised on 'the care act' implementation and had distributed over 100 newsletters to local elderly folk. Within the next six months the rejuvenation of the ivybridge branch will take place!"

All 180 past members are asked to support this unique organisation by making contact with David Snelling and ensuring continuity of action on the relevant issues effecting residents of the larger Ivybridge area. David Snelling may be contacted by calling 01752 896209 / 07718632249 or emailing davidpsnelling@gmail.com.