NEWSLETTER

June 2026



MESSAGE FROM KATHERYN, OUR CHIEF OFFICER

Welcome to our June newsletter. We are entering an exciting time of growth and expansion for Involve. We recently moved into brand new premises for Involve on Barrington St, Tiverton. This allows all our staff to come together which is a big step as, spread across Mid Devon, we generally work remotely. It is so important for everyone to connect and share what we do, bring our ideas to the table and feel valued as a member of the team.

However, not only is it our office, but the space is also going to be our new Volunteer Hub! We are moving full circle as a charity as Involve was originally set up in 1987 as a Volunteer Centre in Tiverton. Having listened to our groups and organisations , we are re-establishing an in-person approach – see the article later in this newsletter and do come and meet us to find out more.

Our fabulous Marketing, Publicity and Events manager Holly, who since setting up all our marketing and publicity resources, has been on maternity leave is now starting a new chapter and moving to Singapore! We wish her family so much luck with their new adventure. We now have an opening for this role. See our news section.

Enjoy all our news and updates and don't hesitate to connect!

OUR MISSION

To empower people and communities through practical support, advice and connection - building resilience and wellbeing across Mid Devon.

OUR VISION

A thriving, inclusive Mid Devon where every community group has the support it needs, everyone feels they belong and can make a positive impact.

IN THIS ISSUE

- Message from Katheryn Hope
- News from Involve
- Meet the Team Spotlight
- Project Updates
- Involve Membership
- Updates from the VCSE sector
- How Charities are filling the gaps in Mid Devon
- Devon People First
- Cullompton Youth Club - the Last Year
- HOPE
- Funding Opportunities
- How to get involved

NEWS

INVOLVE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

We ran our Annual General Meeting in Cullompton at the end of March. The meeting was well attended and highlighted our impact during the last financial year of 2024-25. It included presentations covering our main projects including 'Communities that Can', Devon People First, Culm Valley Wellbeing and the Cullompton Youth Club. This was followed with networking and refreshments. Tanya Larsen, who has an impressive background in finance, was elected as treasurer bringing our board of trustees to seven. Our annual review for the year is available on the website at:
https://involve-middevon.org.uk/our-impact/

Once again our team has expanded and we wish to welcome:

Katie McKenna - our new Volunteer Support Coordinator who will be supporting the set up and running of our new Volunteer Hub. Katie is passionate about giving disabled people and other marginalised groups the opportunity to discover volunteering and the enrichment it brings. Katie joins us with years of experience both working with volunteers and as a volunteer herself. She is excited to join Involve at a time of growth and expansion and to be able to help give her support. You can contact Katie at:

volunteersupport@involve-middevon.org.uk



JOB OPPORTUNITY



A fantastic new job opportunity has arisen at Involve for the post of part time **Marketing, Publicity and Events Manager**. This role is part of our exciting Big Lottery Reaching Communities funded project 'Communities that Can' and will have a major impact on the success of the project making a difference in our Mid Devon communities. In this creative and varied role, you'll be responsible for developing and delivering effective marketing strategies to promote our volunteer-led projects, highlight their impact, and drive volunteer recruitment. Application deadline: midnight Sunday 28th June 2026 (however if we receive sufficient applications we will close earlier).

For more information and to apply go to the website at: https://involve-middevon.org.uk/

MEET THE TEAM

SPOTLIGHT: ALICE, OUR TIVERTON COMMUNITY BUILDER



About Alice:
Alice is a bundle of positivity and enthusiasm. She has a background in advertising and marketing. She is passionate about helping people and as a resident of Tiverton wants to make a positive impact on the local community.

About Community Building:
A Community Builder helps bring people together, strengthens local connections and supports communities to create positive change from within.

Alice's Impact:
Alice is already making a remarkable impact across the Tiverton community through her passion for bringing people together and creating opportunities for connection and support. Since joining the project, she has launched a new Vintage Farmers Group and a Cancer Support Group.

Alice recently hosted Tiverton's first Pre-Loved Prom Event, giving young people the opportunity to hire beautiful pre-loved prom dresses and suits at an affordable cost, helping families during the cost of living crisis while also promoting sustainability.
Alongside this, Alice has been leading the Tiverton Community Wellbeing Alliance meetings, bringing together statutory and voluntary sector organisations to share ideas, strengthen partnerships and work collaboratively to support the local community. Her energy, creativity and commitment are already helping to build a stronger, more connected Tiverton.

SPOTLIGHT: JANE, OUR INVOLVE ADMINISTRATOR

About Jane:
Jane has now been working for Involve for two years. She does an amazing job behind the scenes making sure Involve runs smoothly, day-to-day financial administration of the organisation, supporting our HR systems, policies and procedures, finance and budgeting covering the office support and finance roles and is our Data Protection Officer covering GDPR and all things data and administration for Involve. She loves supporting the local community.



Jane's Impact:
Jane is very committed, patient and detail conscious. She has spent hours streamlining our finance procedures often learning on the job. Jane quietly gets on with her job and has made a huge difference supporting the management of Involve and we would not be where we are today without her.

NEW PROJECTS

THE VOLUNTEER HUB BEGINS TO TAKE SHAPE



As spring begins to move towards summer, the Mid Devon Volunteer Hub is starting to take shape. Over recent months, the Hub has been out and about across Mid Devon, attending community meetings, networking events, wellbeing and volunteer fairs, and the Communities that Can Tiverton launch.

Alongside this, we have continued strengthening existing partnerships while developing new collaborative ways of working as Devon's community landscape continues to evolve. Through ongoing conversations with residents, volunteers and organisations, we have been reflecting on both the opportunities and challenges surrounding volunteering within our communities.

Feedback has highlighted important themes including volunteering as a family, volunteer retention, and ways to encourage lead volunteers and peer support within local communities. These conversations are now helping shape the future direction of the Hub through the development of new volunteer pathways, practical resources, peer support opportunities and the revitalisation of a Volunteer Directory to help strengthen connections across Mid Devon.

As the roots of the Hub continue to grow, we are also excited to welcome Katie to the team as our new Volunteer Support Coordinator. Katie will play an important role in promoting the Hub, building community partnerships and supporting volunteers throughout their journey. Another exciting milestone is that, following Involve's recent move, the Volunteer Hub now has a physical space to begin calling home. Over the coming months, the space will continue developing into a welcoming and supportive community environment where people can connect, collaborate, feel heard and discover opportunities together.

This summer, as the Hub continues to grow across Mid Devon, keep an eye on our social media channels, Devon Connect and our website for when we share volunteer stories, community highlights, upcoming campaigns and local events. The Volunteer Hub team will also be out and about at the Mid Devon Show alongside the Communities that Can team and Peninsula Cancer Alliance.



Come and see the Volunteer Hub developing at our Open Day on Tuesday 29th July, 10:00am to 3:00pm. Meet local organisations and community partners, explore the new space, network with others and discover how we can work together to strengthen volunteering and community support across Mid Devon. Plus, enjoy tea, coffee and cake while you're there!

For more information and to get involved contact Simone at:
volunteerservicelead@involve-middevon.org.uk

OUR NEW MEMBERSHIP SCHEME

We're excited to be launching a comprehensive membership scheme at Involve. This is hand in hand with the set up of our Mid Devon Volunteer Hub which is being established to help organisations do more than simply keep going. We are here to help organisations grow, strengthen and thrive.



Across Mid Devon, community organisations are facing increasing pressure, balancing rising demand with limited time, funding and capacity. Our Membership scheme has been designed to help ease that pressure while supporting organisations to build strong, sustainable foundations for the future.

Designed for organisations across Mid Devon, the membership gives you practical tools, expert guidance and ongoing support to help your organisation grow with confidence. Whether you are looking to strengthen your volunteer programme, improve governance, access funding support or develop new opportunities, the Hub is here to support your journey. Membership also opens the door to workshops, shared learning, partnership opportunities and connections with other organisations across Mid Devon. You will gain access to ready-to-use templates, tailored guidance, volunteer development support and help to work towards the Quality Assurance Mark. Organisations can begin with up to two hours of free initial support to explore their needs, gain practical advice and identify opportunities for growth and with membership this is increased. Stronger organisations create better services, stronger volunteering and stronger communities and together, we can build all three.

This is what is on offer when you become a member:

- Access to an exclusive membership area on our website where you can download Policy and Procedure templates, tips and advice and other useful information.
- Bi-monthly short funding updates, including information on the latest funding opportunities.
- Quarterly newsletter (all contacts).
- Reduced cost or free training sessions—can include quarterly volunteer induction sessions / trustee recruitment and training / funding applications / Voluntary sector CPD and more.
- Free one-to-one support including governance, organisational development, and fundraising – up to 5 hours for an existing group and 7 hours for a new group.
- Signposting and advice for when you need to undertake DBS checks.
- Support and training in setting up a profile on Devon Connect.
- Free hire of digital projector and Volunteer banners (subject to availability)
- Advance notice and access to events including 'meet the funder' online sessions and Volunteer Fairs. We also offer a table at no cost at our fairs.
- After 6 months of membership the opportunity to undertake free Quality Assurance Mark certification.
- Members networking events with speakers.

Special launch offer rate: £60 per annum.

If you sign up by direct debit this year you will get the same rate for the next three years.

To find out more contact us at:
membership@involve-middevon.org.uk or go to our website at:
https://involve-middevon.org.uk/get-involved/

UPDATES FROM THE VCSE SECTOR

TORBAY, PLYMOUTH AND DEVON VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL ENTERPRISE (TPD VCSE) ASSEMBLY

The TPD VCSE Assembly has formed a memorandum of understanding for NHS Devon to invest £1.2 million per annum over five years into VCSE infrastructure, outlining plans for assembly incorporation, grant distribution, and expanded sector support. The assembly will become an independent membership organisation with organisational membership open to all VCSE groups, and a new board of trustees being established from the executive and sector volunteers. NHS Devon has committed to a five-year infrastructure investment, with funds allocated for assembly operations, strategic posts, and grants to support organisations working on NHS priorities such as digital transformation, prevention, and community-based care. Grants will be distributed via local infrastructure organisations to avoid duplication, with an open call and a focus on reaching small, under-represented groups. Additional funding will support strategic fundraising, campaigning, and commissioning support, with backfill provided for organisations participating in strategic workstreams; the assembly aims to facilitate, not direct, sector expertise and will expand its remit beyond health and wellbeing over time.
If you would like more information go to: **https://www.tpdassembly.org/**

MICROPROVIDER ADVICE AND SUPPORT PROGRAMME

Disability Focus is an organisation that offers a free and structured advice and support programme for individuals wanting to set themselves up, or improve their existing enterprise to offer care and support services on a self-employed basis to people in Devon. Many people with caring skills are keen to support people locally but can be daunted by things like regulations, responsibilities or tax. The advice and support programme aims to give people with an initial idea the skills and knowledge to turn this into a reality. At the end of the journey, they can feel confident in offering a service that is safe, legal and hopefully fits in with their own work-life balance aspirations. Microproviders can offer many different types of support — not just "care" — and may look very different from one another, but they are all connected by a common thread: **a commitment to a set of standards.** In Devon Disability Focus has worked with the County Council to establish a set of standards that are simply called the Devon Microprovider Standards. You can watch a video about the programme here

For more information go to: **https://www.youngdevon.org/myway**

VCSES DRIVING DEVON'S DIGITAL INCLUSION TOGETHER

Help shape a joined up approach to tackling digital inequality across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay - Free event for VCSE's
Tuesday 23rd June 10am-4pm, Exeter Rougemont hotel by Sunday



Does your organisation work in digital inclusion across Devon, Plymouth or Torbay? Or are you interested in doing more to help people get online, access services and tackle local barriers? Join Devon Communities Together for this free, first-of-its-kind event bringing together charities, community organisations, social enterprises and public sector partners from across the county. This is a unique opportunity for the VCSE (voluntary, community and social enterprise) sector to come together, share ideas, learn from each other, and shape a stronger collective response to digital exclusion in our communities.

For more information and to book follow this link.

COMMUNITIES
that can

CTC PROJECT UPDATE

The Communities That Can project has officially celebrated its first anniversary, and the past year has brought plenty to be proud of. Across Crediton, Cullompton and Tiverton, our Community Builders have made a real and lasting contribution to strengthening local resilience, building connections and supporting people to thrive within their communities. One of the project's standout successes has been the Vintage Farmers Group, originally launched in Crediton. Due to its growing popularity and positive impact, the group has now expanded into both Tiverton and Cullompton. Bringing together retired and semi-retired farmers, the group provides a welcoming space for social connection, friendship and mutual support. For many members, it has become a genuine lifeline, helping to reduce loneliness and isolation within rural communities.

The project has also played an important role in strengthening collaboration across the voluntary sector. Through our Community Wellbeing Alliance meetings, organisations have been able to come together to share ideas, discuss challenges affecting the sector and develop valuable partnerships that support stronger joint working across Mid Devon. We are delighted that the project has already exceeded its original targets in several key areas, highlighting both the need for this work and the enthusiasm of local communities to get involved.

Proudly funded by:

COMMUNITY FUND









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COMMUNITY UPDATE - CREDITON

More Than a Coffee Morning: Why Our Vintage Farmers Keep Coming Back

There's something quietly special about the last Wednesday of the month in Crediton. While the rest of the world carries on at its usual pace, a group of farmers, many retired or semi-retired, but still deeply rooted in the land, gather not just for coffee, but for connection. Our Vintage Farmers Coffee Morning has become exactly that: more than a date in the diary. It's a chance to step away from the farm gate, put the kettle down, and be among people who just *get it*.

Last month, 55 farmers joined us; a fantastic turnout that speaks volumes about how much this group means. Some travel a fair distance. And while "retired" might be the label, most will tell you they still have a hand in things back home. Farming isn't something you simply switch off.
But this monthly meet-up offers something different. One attendee summed it up perfectly when they described it as "like a holiday." Not in the suitcase-and-sunshine sense, but in the opportunity to talk, laugh, reminisce, and check in with others who share the same way of life. For many living in rural locations, days can pass with very little social contact. That's why this group matters. It creates space to reconnect, to be heard, and to belong. The warmth in the room, wherever we meet, is always unmistakable.

The success of the Crediton group has already sparked something bigger. We've recently launched similar gatherings in Tiverton, and plans are underway to start one in Cullompton soon. It's clear that this simple idea is meeting a real need across our rural communities.

Looking ahead to June, we're planning something a little different - a shared lunch where we can sit down and eat together. Thanks to the generosity of the group and ongoing support, we aim to subsidise this as much as possible to keep it accessible for everyone.



We're proud to work alongside the Farming Community Network (FCN), a trusted partner who helps us make these moments happen.

We also know how much our farmers enjoy hearing from knowledgeable speakers on farming-related topics. If that's something you could offer, we'd love to hear from you. These sessions are always well received and spark great conversations.
At its heart, the Vintage Farmers Coffee Morning is about people. It's about shared stories, mutual support, and the understanding that, even after decades in farming, you're still part of something bigger. We'd love to welcome both familiar and new faces. Each month we move venues, adding a bit of variety and giving people different places to come together. The coffee will be on offer, the welcome will be warm, and the conversation will be waiting.
Please contact Kath at: CreditonCB@involve-middevon.org.uk

COMMUNITIES
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COMMUNITY UPDATE - CULLOMPTON



Over the last few months our Cullompton Community Builder, Carla, has been working hard to set up **'Cullompton Green Group'**, a group designed to tackle environmental issues and strengthen community connections. It will bring local people together to take positive action for the environment. An open public launch event is being planned, giving residents the opportunity to hear more about future plans, meet like-minded people and find out how they can get involved as volunteers. We are also working closely with other local environmental organisations to help build partnerships and encourage wider community participation. Alongside this, plans are progressing for several practical sustainability projects. These include a community repair café initiative, helping residents repair household items rather than replacing them, and a prom reuse project to provide affordable formalwear for local young people to wear to their prom while reducing waste. We recently held our 'Mid Devon Pre Loved Prom event' in Tiverton, working alongside Sustainable Tiverton and their 'Sassy' project. We held this at their hub as a trial run, and we are now looking to hold this event in both Tiverton and Cullompton next year.



As part of the Cullompton Spring Festival in April, we ran a Community Clothes Swap event This attracted over 100 visitors and saw over 70 bags of clothing donated with people being able to donate and take away clothing for free. A great

Apart from the Cullompton Green Team project, Carla has been working on a peer to peer Cancer Support group which is now up and running, a gentle exercise group for those over age 65 with health conditions, partnering with the Community Life Hub and more cookery sessions alongside The Keystone project offering locals the chance to come along, learn some cooking skills and take their finished meals home to feed their household, all at no cost to participants. Alongside all of this, she has been working on the Cancer Awareness and Prevention project sharing facts on social media and arranging pop up stalls around Mid Devon to talk to the public about symptoms and screening for gynaecological, breast, skin, bowel and lung cancers.

For more information and to get involved contact Carla at:
cullomptonCB@involve-middevon.org.uk

COMMUNITIES
that can

COMMUNITY UPDATE - TIVERTON



Over the past few months, Alice, our Tiverton Community Builder, has continued to strengthen local connections, improve access to support, and respond to emerging community needs across the town.

A key milestone this quarter was the **Communities That Can** Tiverton Launch event, a fabulous gathering which brought together a wide range of local organisations, businesses and community groups. The event created valuable space for collaboration, relationship-building and shared learning, while also helping to identify local priorities and gaps in provision.

Alongside this, Alice has led a comprehensive community mapping exercise, culminating in the launch of a new Tiverton directory for VCSE organisations. This fantastic resource is designed to improve visibility of local services, support better signposting, and enable both residents and professionals to more easily access relevant support. It also helps to strengthen coordination across the voluntary sector and reduce duplication. **Visit the directory here.**

In response to insights gathered through engagement and listening activity, Alice has also supported the development of new, targeted community groups:



New Vintage Farmers Group for Tiverton and the surrounding areas

Building on the success of the Crediton group, a new Vintage Farmers group has launched in Tiverton and offers space for retired and semi-retired farmers to connect. This initiative plays an important role in addressing rural isolation and supporting mental wellbeing within the farming community. The group meets on the second Wednesday of each month, at various locations around Tiverton often with a guest speaker. This is a growing group, with over 35 members.



Cancer peer-to-peer support group

A cancer peer-to-peer support group has been established to address a recognised gap in local provision. With limited cancer support available within Tiverton, this group provides a safe and accessible space for individuals affected by cancer to share experiences, build connections, and access support close to home.
The support group takes place in a local café – Sandy's café on the first Tuesday of the month 10-11am. Our next meeting is Tuesday 2nd June at 10am.
For more information don't hesitate to contact Alice at:
tivertoncb@involve-middevon.org.uk

HOW CHARITIES ARE FILLING THE GAPS IN MID DEVON



Across Mid Devon, local charities are quietly becoming the backbone of community support. As public services face financial pressure and rising demand, these organisations are stepping in to fill crucial gaps; supporting vulnerable residents, strengthening communities, and responding to challenges that statutory services alone can no longer meet.

Rising Need in Local Communities

In recent years, the demand for charitable support has increased significantly across the UK, and Mid Devon is no exception. The ongoing cost-of-living crisis has pushed more households into financial hardship, increasing reliance on services such as food banks, debt advice, and emergency aid. Nationally, over 80% of charities report rising demand for their services, with many expecting this to continue. *(cafonline.org)*

Local charities in towns like Tiverton, Cullompton, and Crediton are seeing similar patterns. Families who may never have needed help before are now seeking support with essentials such as food, heating, and housing. This shift has expanded the role of charities from supplementary support to essential service providers.

Filling Gaps Left by Public Services

Public sector budgets have been under strain for years, and in areas such as social care, mental health, and youth services, gaps have widened. Charities are increasingly stepping in to deliver services that were once provided by local authorities or the NHS.
For example, community organisations in Mid Devon often provide:

- Food banks and community pantries to address food insecurity
- Mental health support groups and counselling services
- Youth clubs and outreach programmes for young people
- Support for the elderly and isolated individuals

This reflects a wider national trend where charities are “picking up unmet needs in society” as public sector capacity tightens. *(trustees-unlimited.co.uk)*

Tackling Isolation and Mental Health

Rural areas like Mid Devon face unique challenges, particularly around isolation. Limited transport links and dispersed populations can leave individuals, especially older residents, feeling cut off from services and social networks.
Charities play a vital role here by:

- organising community events and social groups
- providing befriending services
- offering local mental health support

With mental health needs rising alongside economic pressure, these services have become increasingly important. Many charities report that they are now supporting people with more complex needs, often linked to financial stress and social isolation.

Responding to Poverty and the Cost-of-Living Crisis

Perhaps the most visible role of charities in Mid Devon is their response to poverty. Food banks, warm spaces, and hardship funds have become lifelines for individuals struggling to cope with rising costs.

Across the UK, more people are turning to charities for essentials, and some organisations have even had to turn people away due to limited capacity. This highlights both the importance of these services and the pressure they are under. Local initiatives in Mid Devon include emergency food parcels, fuel vouchers and winter support and advice on benefits and budgeting. These efforts not only address immediate need but also help people regain stability.

Supporting Young People and Future Opportunities

Youth services are another area where charities are filling critical gaps. Reductions in public funding for youth work have left many young people without structured activities or safe spaces. Charities have stepped in to provide activities such as after-school clubs, mentoring programmes and skills and employment support. This work is essential not just for individual development but also for community wellbeing, helping to prevent long-term issues such as unemployment, anti-social behaviour or social exclusion.

Challenges Faced by Charities

While charities are doing vital work, they can also be under immense pressure. Many face a difficult situation; demand is rising, but funding is becoming harder to secure. Across the sector, organisations are dealing with rising operational costs (energy, staffing, rent), declining or uncertain funding streams and increased competition for donations. This “perfect storm” has left some charities struggling to sustain their services. *(lrd.org.uk)*
Volunteer shortages are another issue. Many charities rely heavily on volunteers, yet fewer people can give their time, making it harder to meet demand.

Community-Led Solutions

Despite these challenges, charities in Mid Devon continue to innovate and collaborate. Many are working together with local councils, businesses, and community groups to create more joined-up support systems. There is power in partnership and we at Involve make the most of this by developing:

- shared community hubs
- partnerships with local authorities and other organisations
- coordinated responses to challenges in the community
- wider networking opportunities

These place-based approaches help ensure that support is targeted where it is needed most.

Conclusion

Charities in Mid Devon are playing an increasingly vital role in holding communities together. From tackling poverty and isolation to supporting young people and mental health, they are filling gaps that would otherwise leave many residents without help. However, their growing importance also highlights a broader challenge; they are being asked to do more with fewer resources. As demand continues to rise, the sustainability of these services will depend on ongoing support from funders, volunteers, and the wider community. Ultimately, the work of local charities shows the strength of community spirit in Mid Devon, but also the urgent need to ensure that this vital safety net remains in place for the future. If you would like to find out how your organisation can benefit from partnering with Involve, please do get in touch.

DEVON PEOPLE FIRST

WHAT WE HAVE BEEN UP TO

Devon People First staff, our volunteers and Friendship Group members have worked extremely hard over the year.

Online friendship groups continue to be hugely successful; we have facilitated 71 group sessions online with 566 attendances overall, not only are these groups a fantastic way for people with learning disabilities to gain peer support, but we are also able to use the sessions for self-advocacy purposes, meaning that we teach members to self-advocate with the right tools and correct information about services to achieve this. Only when a member states that they just can not do something do our staff support them in maybe writing a letter contacting a statutory service or even to make a complaint.

We have 9 volunteers from these online groups and they help Devon People First and other people with learning disabilities have a voice through the Devon County Council engagement network. Some of the meetings and projects they are involved in are; the Joint Engagement Forum, the Learning Disability Partnership Board and the Adult Health and Social Care group, They are also heavily involved in Devon County Council co-production projects such as the Quality Standards Assessment and Reviews Co-production working group, and they have their very own co-production working group called the Jargon Busters. This group has co-produced 3 videos so far and co-designed easy read and easy to understand documents such as, easy read Safeguarding leaflets and easy read guides on how to apply for a free bus pass.



Last year we set up 3 new Learning Disability in-person groups in Honiton, Crediton and Cullompton. We facilitated 28 Friendship group sessions with 261 attendances, and they are growing each month. It is hoped that some of the people that attend these new groups will go on to volunteer for Devon People First and help us have a stronger voice, quote; "*Nothing about us without us*".

This coming year will see Involve and the Devon People First project work together to support volunteers in the local communities to gradually take over the facilitation of these 3 Learning Disability Friendship groups, but we will continue to support them with our expertise.
In the year we also facilitated 6 Disability Awareness training sessions for the community and voluntary sector across Devon and supported them to set up 4 Disability Friendship groups. These groups are now up and running in Teignmouth, Barnstaple and Ilfracombe with 2 more in Tiverton and West Devon to be up and running in the early part of this coming year. Last year DPF was contracted by the OPCC to deliver victim support for people in Devon with a learning disability who had been victims of crime. We supported 21 individuals to overcome their experiences, and some joined our Friendship Groups and have begun to thrive and build confidence. Unfortunately, due to financial reasons, the OPCC have not extended this service contract.

In the coming year we will be looking at putting together an easy read peer and self-advocacy training package for our members. This will be co-produced by our volunteers who all have a learning disability alongside staff. This is dependant on us gaining grant funding and an application is awaiting the outcome.

To find out more and get involved contact Lloyd at: lloyd@involve-middevon.org.uk

CULLOMPTON YOUTH CLUB

THE LAST YEAR

It's been another great year for youth provision in Cullompton. Cullompton Youth Club has continued to grow; increasing membership and developing provision. Young people continue to play an active role in their youth club; planning all youth club activities, evaluating provision and contributing to funding applications. Young people have received support and signposting from qualified staff, and enjoyed a fantastic array of activities, including cooking, crafts, sport, games, discussions, film nights and celebrations.



Once again, Cullompton Youth Club have welcomed young people in year six to Junior sessions for their final half term of primary school. This has been a great opportunity for young people to settle into youth club before joining secondary school and assist with their transition.

Cullompton Youth Club continue to offer volunteering opportunities for young people. Senior youth club members can volunteer at Junior sessions to support session delivery and gain valuable skills.

During the past year, we have worked with numerous community partners for the benefit of young people. These have included Cullompton Town Council, Cullompton Community College, Devon and Cornwall Police, Young Devon, The Eddystone Trust and Active Devon. Working with Cullompton Town Council, members of Cullompton Youth Club have played an active role in civic life through taking part in Town Council consultations regarding the development of Cullompton, including outdoor community spaces.

Cullompton Youth Club is intended as a long-term service to provide local, sustainable youth work. We intend to develop capacity and curriculum through recruitment of volunteers. We look forward to continuing to deliver and develop youth provision with, and for, young people in Cullompton.

Join our team

We are currently recruiting for a Youth Support Worker for youth club sessions. If you, or someone you know, are interested in the Youth Support Worker vacancy or applying to become a volunteer, contact Sophia for an informal chat.

Cullompton Youth Club is managed and delivered by Involve Voluntary Action in Mid Devon.

Sessions run term time at John Tallack Youth and Community Centre:
Juniors (for young people in years 7 & 8) Mondays 6.30pm - 8.30pm
Seniors (for young people in year 9 to 18 years) Wednesdays 6.30pm - 8.30pm

Sophia Roper is our Senior Community Youth Worker (Cullompton)
For more information contact Sophia at: sophia@involve-middevon.org.uk

HOPE

HOPE AT INVOLVE

The HOPE (Help Overcoming Problems Effectively) Programme supports individuals to consider “what is important to me?” and to build the confidence and resilience to better manage their condition(s), symptoms and challenging experiences that may arise. HOPE was developed by the University of Coventry and is an evidence-based, NHS accredited programme and is delivered for free, over 6 weeks, for 2.5 hours per week.

The programme is very much person-centred, encouraging you to focus on you as an individual, not as your long-term condition. You are important, and you matter too.

HOPE aims to boost your self-confidence and resilience, to help you cope better emotionally, psychologically and practically through the sessions. In the face-to-face courses, you have the added benefit of peer support as everyone in your group is there for a similar reason as yourself. Experienced facilitators guide you through activities and discussions around the course themes such as planning and pacing, sleep hygiene and goal setting. Outcome measuring shows on average a 71% increase in participants wellbeing from the start of the course to the end, where they feel much more able to manage their long-term condition.

Common course themes include;

- Chronic Pain and Fatigue
- Low level Anxiety and Depression
- Fibromyalgia
- Cancer
- Sensory Loss
- Learning Disability / New to Disability

Many other long term conditions can be catered for and there have also been courses for volunteers or carers.

Recent feedback received has been exceptional and our facilitators work incredibly hard to deliver this valuable course to the people of Devon. You can register your interest in courses via your GP surgery or wellbeing team, look out for posters on the Involve website and Facebook page or via the website at: **HOPE Programme - MyHealth Devon**



Zoe is our HOPE coordinator at Involve. She covers Mid Devon, East Devon and Exeter areas.

We aim to run courses in each area at least twice a year, sometimes more so if you feel like you could benefit, please get in touch. If you are unable to access the link or find it difficult completing forms, contact: hope.devon@nhs.net or call 01803 320696.

FUNDING

THE BAILEY THOMAS CHARITABLE FUND

The Bailey Thomas Charitable Fund supports charities and organisations who aim to aid the research into learning disability and to aid the care and relief of those affected by learning disability. We consider projects concerning children or adults. Application for funding is normally considered for capital and revenue costs and for both specific projects and for general running/core costs. Grants are awarded for amounts from £250 and depend on a number of factors including the purpose, the total funding requirement and the potential sources of other funds including, in some cases, match funding. The Fund operates two general grant funding streams, a General Grant Programme for appeals over £5,000 and a Small Grant Programme for appeals of £5,000 and less. The deadline for general grants over £5,000 for consideration at the November 2026 meeting is 31 August 2026. There is no deadline for the smaller grants under £5000.

Find out more here: https://www.bailythomas.org.uk

THE WOLFSON FOUNDATION

The Wolfson Foundation: Funding for Places capital grants. Their main grants programme provides support for places. These grants are for capital initiatives, i.e. buildings (new build or refurbishment) and equipment. They fund a broad range of organisations working across the fields of education, science & medicine, health & disability, heritage, humanities & the arts. There is a long list of eligible areas, including disability, mental health and older people.

More info: https://www.wolfson.org.uk/funding/funding-for-places/



HALL AND WOODHOUSE COMMUNITY CHEST

Hall and Woodhouse provides a Community Chest from which it awards small grants to voluntary and community organisations. Applications are welcome from any voluntary or community organisation with an annual income of less than £200,000 based or working in the company's trading area across the south of England. Grants of between £300 and £3,000 (but usually for less than £2,000) are available for projects and activities that improve local communities, with no specified matched funding requirement. However, applicants that have raised some funding towards their project are likely to be viewed favourably. Grants can be used towards things such as equipment and furniture, training, transport, professional assistance, specific project resources or operational costs for (please note this is not an exclusive list) with the following themes:

- Conservation and the environment.
- Elderly and people with disabilities.
- Health and social care.
- Local arts and culture.
- Sports and social clubs, and/or o Youth work and activities.

The fund opened on Thursday 14th May 2026 with a deadline for applications of 12th JULY 2026

For more information and to apply: https://www.hall-woodhouse.co.uk/about-us/community-chest/

FUNDING

DCC LOCALITY FUNDING

DCC Locality Budgets are now live for 2026/27. Each of our County Councillors has an annual Locality Budget, of £10,000. Councillors can, if they wish, make grants to support projects or activities that benefit the communities they represent. The grant funding must be spent before the end of March 2027. Please be aware that these grants should be viewed as a funder of last resort. Please be aware that your local councillor's pledge is a preliminary agreement and should not be considered a commitment until the application has been fully processed and you have been informed of the outcome. Locality budget funding is available to projects that are beneficial to local communities and should be in line with the Council's Strategic Plan which are:

- Positive futures for our young people
- Supporting independence and dignity
- A green Devon for future generations
- Economic inclusion and local prosperity
- Stronger communities and safer places

Locality funding will not generally cover salary costs and councillors often prefer to fund items of lasting value. Contact your individual councillors to make a request by email.

ST AUSTELL BREWERY CHARITABLE TRUST

St Austell Brewery: Since 2003, the St Austell Brewery Charitable Trust has been proudly supporting local charities, community causes, and individuals in need across the South West – helping to make a meaningful difference, close to home. Every penny raised by our Charitable Trust goes back into local communities, supporting people and places across the South West. In 2024 alone, we raised more than £150,000. Over a third of our funds go to individuals and small local groups. **Follow the link then click 'donation request process' for application info:**
https://www.staustellbrewery.co.uk/about-us/charitable-trust

BLUESPARK



BlueSpark is a registered charity which was set up to support the education and development of children and young people by providing grants for educational, cultural, sporting and other projects. The trustees are aware that many worthwhile projects do not get off the ground because of the absence of the funding needed to turn them into reality.
BlueSpark aims to help bridge this funding gap by providing grants for some of these projects. They provide funds for relatively small-scale projects which might not happen at all or would only happen on a lesser scale without their support.

For more information go to the website at:

https://www.bluesparkfoundation.org.uk/

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

JOIN US AT INVOLVE!

There are so many lovely ways to get *involved* with Involve Voluntary Action. You can volunteer, join a local project, or share a skill — and our team is always here to help you find something that feels like a great fit. Don't forget to sign up for our Involve newsletter and our Community Builder updates to stay in the loop with what's happening across Mid Devon.

If you would like to join our quarterly Community Wellbeing Alliance meetings in Crediton, Cullompton or Tiverton do get in touch. You can also explore opportunities on our website, follow us on Facebook for the latest news, and create a profile on Devon Connect to link up with local groups and activities.

However you choose to take part, you'll be joining a welcoming community making a real difference close to home.



Sign up for our regular online news at our website:
https://involve-middevon.org.uk/

Find us on Facebook at:
https://www.facebook.com/InvolveDevon/

Go to Devon Connect at **https://devonconnect.org/** to create your free profile and connect with other organisations or search for or create your own events, activities, volunteer and job opportunities.

Contact Jane at: **admin@involve-middevon.org.uk** if you would like to receive our quarterly newsletter or find out about our Involve membership scheme.

Involve – Voluntary Action in Mid Devon
Empowering Communities.
Supporting Voluntary Action.
Strengthening Mid Devon.

www.involve-middevon.org.uk

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@InvolveDevon

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Registered Charity No. 1177169

INVOLVE
VOLUNTARY ACTION IN MID DEVON

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