INVOLVE
VOLUNTARY ACTION IN MID DEVON

NEWSLETTER

MARCH, 2023

WWW.INVOLVE-MIDDEVON.ORG.UK



HELLO FROM THE CO

I am delighted to be able to introduce our new revamped newsletter (together with our new logo) which we hope you will find useful and informative. We aim to issue this on a regular basis.

As you will see, 2022 was a time of expansion for us – we increased our staff numbers and took on more projects and this shows no sign of calming down as we go into 2023 with new projects and more staff joining us.

I am proud to be Chief Officer of a growing organisation which is working hard to support voluntary and community action across Mid Devon. We want to work more closely with and be more visible in our communities and have aligned staff to the three main towns of Cullompton, Tiverton and Crediton.

We will continue to work as hard as we possibly can for our communities and to make ourselves more accessible – look out for our revamped website too.
There will undoubtedly be more changes over the coming months so watch this space and in the meantime enjoy the newsletter.

Karen Nolan karen@involve-middevon.org.uk

OUR AIM

Involve aims to help communities in Mid Devon to be more resilient, improving the lives of citizens. We support existing and evolving charities, voluntary organisations, and community groups across Mid Devon

We wish all those who support Mid-Devon communities a positive and productive year ahead.

We look forward to working with you in 2023!

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OUR TEAM EXPANDED IN 2022!



Our team more than doubled last year!

We welcome Katheryn Hope, our new Voluntary Sector Support manager and Deputy CO.
Katheryn has worked in the voluntary sector for the last 20 or more years and is passionate about empowering local communities. She is enjoying the diversity of her new role.

You can contact Katheryn at:
katheryn@involve-middevon.org.uk

We also welcome Mike Atkinson, our Volunteer Services Coordinator. Mike has worked in or with the voluntary sector all his working life in a range of roles but especially with volunteers. Mike is working with the voluntary sector across Mid Devon helping support VCN's with their volunteers as well as to set up new activities.
You can contact Mike at:
mike@involve-middevon.org.uk



altogetherbetter

Mike is working on a project called 'Altogether Better' with the Tiverton PCN. Altogether Better is a model of Collaborative Practice which reduces demand on health services, while providing the social support and connection people need to improve their own health. Mike is working together with practice 'health champions' setting up new groups and activities in the area.

Alongside we have welcomed two new community builders to our team; Sally Curtis in Cullompton and Andrea Huxley in Crediton. Both are very excited to be supporting their communities and you can meet them out and about in 2023. As you will see below they are regularly available in the local libraries for you to have a chat and find out what's happening in your community.

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News



Warm Spaces

As the weather has become colder and utility prices higher, Warm Spaces are places where people are able to gather for free in a warm, safe, welcoming place and maybe enjoy a hot drink and some company. Involve has partnered with Libraries Unlimited to support their Warm Spaces initiative.

Our community builders have been busy creating information boards for Cullompton and Crediton libraries based around the monthly library themes for Warm Spaces – in February in Cullompton this was 'Our Community' and in Crediton 'Health and Wellbeing.' Involve have compiled a list of Warm Spaces in the main towns of mid-Devon to be found on our website. Warm Spaces are popping up all over mid-Devon and developing into spaces offering activities and food so do let us know if you are setting one up locally.

There is an online directory of 'warm banks' available at: https://warmspaces.org/

Health and Wellbeing Alliances

Health and Wellbeing Alliances work to develop, maintain and enhance services for people in our communities. The alliances bring together representatives from statutory agencies, the private and voluntary sector working in, or responsible for, health, social care and wellbeing across the area.

We meet quarterly in Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton working together to identify the actions required to provide services to meet that need through working collaboratively, supporting individual partners and developing a collective voice to influence other agencies' direction. Often we have key speakers to bring current information and news to our meetings.



Giving a presentation on One Devon Local Care Partnerships

Each meeting has a theme - our last one was Cost of Living and Mental Health where we looked at the impact of current challenges on our communities whether services, mental health or wider resources and then discussed ideas and solutions. Our next meetings will be held in April in and Tiverton and May in Crediton and Cullompton.

For more information or to join please contact: office@involve-middevon.org.uk

New Projects for 2023

Cullompton Youth Community Development

This exciting project is in response to there currently being no regular co-ordinated under 18 youth provision for Cullompton. PCN Youth Link Workers who work closely with young people have highlighted a lack of local opportunities both in traditional youth clubs as well as an absence of other group activities to support peer relationships, wellbeing, and healthy lifestyles for young people. This project will provide locally based, locally run, sustainable and collaborative youth provision and local engagement which draws on learning from previous models. Providing youth activities at least twice per week over a period of 3 years, the project will adopt a partnership approach with Involve, the town council, the local PCN, Space Devon and the John Tallack Centre where the provision will be run. Involve are in the process of recruiting two part-time youth development workers to get the ball rolling and hope to have the project up and running early this year. Please go to our website for more information.

Linked Up Cullompton

As part of our Winter Pressures funding we have started a project based on The Frome Model of Enhanced Primary Care (FMEPC) – aka Compassionate Frome – a project in Frome, Somerset leveraging existing social networks to improve health outcomes. Launched in 2013 as a collaboration between Frome Medical Practice and Health Connections Mendip, it is rooted in the overwhelming evidence that health is heavily influenced by social factors (even more so than smoking, reducing excessive drinking, reducing obesity and any other preventative interventions). The project has outlined these steps:



Step 1: Mapping community assets from befriending services to peer-support groups, exercise classes, walking groups etc. the project maps services and activities in the local community as well as identifying gaps.

Step 2: Helping local people fill gaps. The project works with local people, community groups and partners to identify where new services and activities would add value. It then helps people create those assets in a sustainable way, through support with aspects like recruitment, legalities and funding.

Step 3: Signposting. The final task is to ensure people benefit from these services and activities. This is achieved through multiple channels including training informal volunteers to signpost family, friends and neighbours to community services that could be helpful.

We have recruited Sally Curtis as our new Community Connector for Cullompton. In partnership with the Town Team and local PCN, Linked Up Cullompton has been born.
Sally is busy in the community finding local people who would like to become **Cullompton Community Friends** to support their community and help signpost people who need the services available. She has already identified 30 people who would like to take part and with help from local community members badges are being designed, information postcards printed and a landing page of resources created.

For more information please contact Sally at: sally@involve-middevon.org.uk

Meet Laura: Cullompton Wellbeing Coordinator & HOPE facilitator



Hi, I'm Laura McDonagh and I have been with Involve for nearly two years. My role is as a Wellbeing Coordinator... also known as Social Prescriber for Cullompton East.

So, what is Social Prescribing? Simply put, it's connecting individuals referred by medical and clinical professionals to local services. This could include community groups and support, counselling, or carer support. To be honest, the list could be endless! My goal is to find out 'what matters to you'. Once I know that, I can support you to achieve it. I am also the local HOPE facilitator. More about that in the next issue!

Success in this role comes in many forms. I have witnessed clients join social groups which in turn has helped them make friends, build confidence, and change their lives, but I have also linked clients to support with homelessness, addiction and financial help.

No day is the same and that's exactly why I love it!

If you feel you would benefit from social prescribing please contact your GP for a referral.

Devon Connect is Devon's online community hub - connecting people to their community and promoting social action. The platform is a free community resource for anyone wanting to share or find information about activities, events, volunteering opportunities and conversations across Devon. It is also a social networking platform for you to connect and collaborate around the things that matter in your community.

Partners from the Devon Voluntary Alliance work together to support this platform for communities across Devon. The platform is managed by DeVA partners and Torbay Community Development Trust with new partners welcome to join. Partners come together to build on experiences in the voluntary sector. Each partner supports communities in their respective areas - ensuring content is relevant and up-to-date and that local residents feel supported. Each area has it's own hub on the platform. The vision for Devon Connect is to provide all communities in Devon with the means to grow and flourish and the aim is also to bring organisations across Devon together, to foster a culture of collaboration and resource sharing, so that we can reduce social isolation and improve access to opportunities.

You can join as a member and add your organisation's events, activities and volunteer opportunities.

Take a look at:

https://devonconnect.org/mid-devon or for support contact office@involve-middevon.org.uk

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Devon People First



How did it all start?

People First began in the late 1980s when people with learning disabilities in England and around the world heard about people with learning disabilities in Norway who decided to take more control of their lives and set up an organisation to make their own choices. The idea caught on and lead to conferences being held around the world. At a conference in Canada, it was decided to call the movement 'People First'.

People First groups started springing up in the UK with peer and self-advocacy organisations employing their own staff. They became involved in many projects that were important to them including the government's learning disability white paper: 'Valuing People'.

Devon County Council realised that there was no learning disability peer advocacy in the county and contacted Central England People First to ask advice. A volunteer from Northampton stepped forward as he had had decided to move to Devon to be closer to his family and he became the first peer manager of Devon People First. This led to numerous successful projects being set up in Devon including learning disability awareness training for GP surgeries and police call handlers, learning disability friendship and Speaking Up groups amongst many others.

For more information contact Lloyd at:
dpf@involve-middevon.org.uk

Funding News

Tiverton Futures

The Tiverton Futures grant supports community organisations to improve learning opportunities for people living in the Tiverton area. Applications of between £500 and £5,000 will be considered through Devon Community Foundation. This is an ongoing grant programme with rolling deadlines and its focus is children and young people up to the age of 25 – engagement in learning (in the widest sense). The scheme aims to enhance the education and learning of people who are resident and are attending or have attended a maintained school or college within the Tiverton area. Tiverton Futures grants are available for working with beneficiaries within an eight mile radius of Tiverton town centre, and within the County of Devon. DCF will consider applications from not-for-profit, voluntary or community groups, registered charities or social enterprises that are providing services or activities for the benefit of people and communities in Devon.

For more information and to apply go to: https://devoncf.com/grants/tiverton-futures/

Devon Community Foundation Community Grant

DCF Community Grants are designed to enable small, local, grassroots organisations across Devon to support, encourage and develop thriving communities. Applications of up to £2,000 that fall within the following funding themes will be considered: Assisting Families in need /Bringing people together /Developing life skills /Enabling disabled people /Encouraging safety and resilience /Helping people find and keep a home /Keeping people safe and well /Offering training and work opportunities /Promoting access to arts, culture and nature.

For more information and to apply go to:
https://devoncf.com/grants/community-grants/

How can we support you?

We can provide you with support on an individual basis or we run informative and interactive workshops based on themes such as fundraising and grants, the role and responsibilities of a trustee, finance management and budgeting or mental health awareness. We would love to hear how we can help you in the forthcoming year. Please contact Katheryn at Involve with your ideas and suggestions at: **katheryn@involve-midevon.org.uk.**

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INVOLVE - from 1st April '23: Coggins Well House, Phoenix Lane, Tiverton EX16 6LU.
office@involve-middevon.org.uk www.involve-middevon.org.uk Registered Charity number: 1177169

Newsletter compiled by Katheryn Hope February 2023.
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